



## MEETING MINUTES

### Attendance:

**Members Present:** A Quorum was present.

- District 1: John Andrew, Patricia Christian, Flannery Herbert
- District 2: Meg Bishop, Nancy Perry, Nick Sovner, Susan Lenard
- District 3: Sumner Sharpe, Margaret Strachan, Gary Dalton
- District 4: Tom Woodgerd, Douglas Hunsaker, Dylan Klapmeier
- District 5:
- District 6:
- District 7: Dick Sloan, Doris Davis, Denise Roth Barber, Bob Habeck

**Other Attendees:** City Manager Ana Cortez, David Knoepke Streets Department, Libbi Lovshin Assistant Public Works Director, Matt Elsaesser 406 Recycling (former City commissioner)

**Members Absent:** Eric Seidle (excused) Whitney Bausch (excused)

### Call to Order

Chairman Sumner Sharpe called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

### **Approval of the March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019, HCC Meeting Minutes.**

Chairman Sharpe noted there was no formal action taken at the March 27<sup>th</sup> 2019 meeting. Minutes were approved as submitted.

Sign-up sheets were circulated for Attendance and Commitments to attend meeting of the City Commission were also circulated.

### **Guest Speakers:**

- **City Budget Update:**  
**Water** (in 3 categories) Guest Speaker **Libbi Lovshin** discussed Wastewater Fund, Water Fund, Stormwater Fund. She also provided budget sheets on the 3 water topics – preliminary 5 year budget plans.
  - 1. WasteWater Fund** – increase Harris St., Custer St. and Airport mains - large percentage of cost, along with pipe lining and replacement.

**2. Water Fund:** largest cost will be for improvements for water storage systems at \$10M. Tenmile transmission line main improvements phase II need to be completed at \$6.6M.

**3. Stormwater Fund:** Libbi did a quick review about projects (p. 3) a malfunction junction re-route was discussed as well as Beattie St. Phase 1 & 2 Relocate were some of the larger expenses.

**Streets: David Knoepke** discussed the Street Fund (p.4) handout. The condition rating was done by a project company. HCC suggested seeing areas by neighborhood. The long range transportation plan included pavement preservations and road upgrades. A new E-W corridor could be built. HCC questions the date of the Beattie St. relocation, how effective the South Hills storm water situation will be and when Malfunction junction gets re-routed (funds should be set aside for this). Motor patrol and Air sweepers were a large part of costs.

HCC member stated the sanding this year was great, but now it is extremely dusty and streets need to be better cleaned. David K. said city is now doing a 2<sup>nd</sup> pass thru the city for clean-up. Helena used 7000 yards of sand this year vs. 12000 in 2017/2018.

Snow removal may have more determined dates next year so people are more amenable to moving cars for plowing.

HCC member asked if budget numbers are commensurate with previous years? City stated the % of increase may be from 8% to 17% in various funds.

- **Ana Cortez** – City Manager

June 2020 – predicted cash balances are trending down. City needs to look closely at long term financial help. Downtown parking rates need to have a balance for clients, customers and residents.

HCC member asked about open space fees for upkeep. There are two assessments: one for Urban Forest and one for Open Space.

The HCC member expressed concern about increases in taxes for those who don't use Open Space, and end up paying for out-of-Helena users who benefit from Open Space resources. Of particular concern are the elderly and the poor of Helena who would be required to pay for maintenance of Open Space. The City Manager was respectfully requested to consider funding sources that don't unduly tax those who don't use open space, and investigate opportunities for alternative funding from visitors

It is recommended that the city try to take a more regional approach to increase its funding.

Idea: a slight user tax from May thru October for use of open spaces.

The HCC consistently encourages businesses to help build its tax base.

Helena needs to improve the nature and extent of its job creation as well as drive growth for economic development.

The HCC may have a special meeting to further discuss.

Sunday April 28<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 Rm. 326 City County Building there is a public forum to further discuss rate increases with the City Commission.

- **Recycling Discussion Continued from previous meeting March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

**\*Motion:** Made by Denise Roth Barber seconded by Margaret Strachan

**The HCC urges the City Commission to continue its practice of plastic recycling-** option 1 on the Plastics Recycling Handout from March 27<sup>th</sup>.

Floor open for discussion/debate on motion:

Meg Bishop says the HCC should still take a realistic look at the cons (#2) on the handout as many of the ideas are factual. The carbon footprint is still less to recycle plastic rather than create new plastic.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to sell plastics. Need to provide an alternative – fee system for plastic bags?

Margaret Strachan suggested more educative efforts to use less or reuse. One doesn't want to completely remove plastic recycling because people are already in a habit of recycling that we don't want to eliminate.

Dick Sloan – no market to sell old plastic. We should educate the public better about using less. Clean #1 and #2 plastics can still be sold.

Flannery Herbet – look at the budget and see what the city should be paying to recycle plastic. Maybe a tour for fact finding would be helpful to gather more information.

Pat Christian – we should make sure that the established habit of recycling still exist.

Tom Woodgerd – continue working towards the goal of using less plastic. Educate the public.

Nick Sovner – cons (on handout) are true. Let's compare losses across the entire Solid Waste Division to see if there are other areas that are working inefficiently.

Doug Hunsaker – supports newly adopted motion. The HCC should explore bottle deposit system, storage system and look at what other cities are doing.

Denise Roth Barber – firmly wants to continue reduce, reuse and recycle options- also new refuse option.

Dylan Klapmeir – asks about subsidizing recycling and cost.

Matt Elsaesser states the subsidy is duplicative. Fees come from solid waste assessment fees. Some of the benefits of the charge are that there is less traffic to the transfer station and plastics don't weigh as much.

Dylan K. feels there are still two different issues, there needs to be more exploration.

**\*Formal Motion restated with amendment and seconded.**

Majority vote yes (17 yes 1 no) Motion so moved.

**The HCC urges the City Commission to continue its practice of plastic recycling and, in addition, launch a public education effort. The city should explore policies and strategies to further reduce the use of plastics.**

HCC has formed a committee for specific recommendations. Committee members are: Pat Christian, Meg Bishop and Denise Roth Barber.

**Public Comment:**

An opportunity for public comment was solicited.

Matt Elsaesser ( former City commissioner) has a recycling blog linked to his website <http://406recycling.com/> and Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/406Recycling/>

The HCC thanked City Manager Ana Cortez and guests Libbi Lovshin, David Knoepke, Matt Elsaesser for their input and attendance.

### **Reports**

Doug Hunsaker - Declaration of Candidacy from April 19<sup>th</sup> – June 17<sup>th</sup>. Must sign form in front of a notary.

Sumner Sharpe – Mike McConnell with give a City Growth policy update at the next HCC meeting. In July there will be community meetings in Neighborhoods – Dylan K., Margaret S., Flannery H.

HPAC – originally it was thought there would be budget cuts, but Noonan salvaged the cuts.

Montana Dept. of Transportation was involved in a discussion about a traffic light by Kessler School.

Expansion of Custer Ave still on the table, but very complex. Commissioners may want to delay or back out.

Open House to meet school board candidates 5:45 pm April 2<sup>th</sup> – DPHHS auditorium – 111 N. Sanders St.

Rodney St. may become part of Urban Renewal. Stakeholder input is needed.

**Meeting Adjourned at 9:05 PM.**