



**Helena Citizens' Council (HCC)  
Minutes  
January 22nd, 2020 7:00pm  
City/County Building - Room 326**

**Members Present:** A quorum was present (7 members from 4 different districts = quorum)

District 1: John Andrew, Patricia Christian, Timothy Chisman, Diana Hammer

District 2: Meg Bishop, Nancy Perry, Susan Lenard, Nick Sovner

District 3: Sumner Sharpe, Margaret Strachan, Gary Dalton

District 4: Dylan Klapmeier, Tom Woodgerd, Samson Boyd, David Beach, Doug Hunsaker

District 5: TJ Lehman, Ryan Schwochert, Joseph Lehman, Jason Welnel

District 6: Ben Kennedy, Steve Allen, Tim Dwyer, Tim Uhl

District 7: Bob Habeck, Denise Roth Barber, Doris Davis, Chelly Hasquet

**Other Attendees:** Mayor Collins, Commissioner Emily Dean, James Driggers of Growing Friends

**Excused:** John Perkins (District 3)

**Call to order:** HCC Chair, Sumner Sharpe called the meeting to order 7:00pm

**Introduction of Guests** Sumner Sharpe introduced guests that were present.

**Mayor Wilmot Collins Conducted the Swearing in Ceremony**

Several of the members were late, so Commissioner Dean was kind enough to swear them in.

**Social:** Members were seated with other mutual district representatives, giving them the time to interact, eat and introduce themselves to each other.

Doug Hunsaker( Secretary) submitted his resignation in writing.

**Old Business:**

**Approval of the November 2019 HCC meeting minutes** Margaret Strachan moved to approve and Denise Roth Barber seconded the motion. So moved. Minutes approved.

**Speaker – James Driggers of Growing Friends**

The non-profit organization Growing Friends intends to make a presentation to the City Commission. They want to determine what needs should be addressed right now regarding the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). Should the city be taking a proactive approach? Should the city be determining the appropriate number of ash trees to be saved or treated? The second portion of the presentation concentrated on Post Arrival of the EAB, which included planning strategy for containment, incentives for private citizens to save trees, prohibiting transport of infested trees and other points of interest. It is hard to determine early stages of infestation just by looking at a tree. Questions asked by HCC members included: how is containment achieved, are Emerald

Ash trees native to Montana, who are the experts on EAB and what is the cost to treat trees?  
Peggy will keep the recommendations of the Growing Friends on file.

### **General Business:**

**Orientation to HCC – Sumner Sharpe** made reference to the City Charter. This is the only city board that is elected not appointed. If members resign, then the HCC can appointment its own members. The HCC has both a neighborhood and a geographic focus. The HCC recommends to the City Commission on Budget and Future Development within the City. HCC members should stay informed about citywide topics and make recommendations as far as a topic or speaker for HCC meetings. Make an effort to understand how the city is organized – an organizational chart is in your binder. HCC members should watch press releases and IR announcements. It is important as a neighborhood representative to do outreach in your area. HCC members should also take the time to serve on other boards /committees and then report back to the entire HCC. HCC can utilize Survey Monkey if you would like to conduct a new survey. HCC has a presence on Facebook (Tom Woodgerd) and a Webpage (Peggy Benkelman) – they are updated regularly. Before making a presentation or recommendation to the HCC, please gather as much information as possible. The HCC will then vote on the recommendation – e.g. whether to forward the information on to the City Commission or not. During Commission meetings when the Mayor or City Manager asks for updates from the HCC please respond with updates from our meetings, never just say “nothing to report”.

**Etiquette and Expectations: Doug Hunsaker** instructed all as to the status of the HCC as it relates to City. The HCC is an independent advisory body that reports directly to the Commission. Its purpose is to advise the 1.City on its budget 2. Advise the City about future developments. Please refer to the foundation documents: Bylaws, City Charter and the HCC’s Purpose and Guiding Principles. The HCC cannot use the word “endorse” on its recommendations as per the city attorney. The HCC has made many recommendations to the City – they are listed on the HCC website. It is a good idea that you wear the nametag given to when you represent the HCC at meetings. The HCC districts do not align with voter districts. The districts will be re-aligned yet again after this year’s census. Please don’t attend a Commission meeting and state “nothing to report” on behalf of the HCC. When there is a speaker at an HCC meeting, please prepare your questions ahead of time. We hope to have interactive discussion. Please follow the etiquette and voting protocol information provided in your binder. The HCC monthly agenda is set by the Chair along with the Executive Committee. These monthly meetings are open to the public and you are welcome to attend. They are the first Monday of the month at 5:15 in room 319 of the City County Building.

**Coordinator’s report: Peggy Benkelman** Peggy welcomed everyone and thanked them for their service as an HCC District Representative. Peggy spoke about her limited time as coordinator for both HCC and HPAC. She works 15 hours per week. Office hours are 8-12noon M thru W and 8-11AM on Thursday. She passed out member binders with

useful information in them. Peggy did say to refer often to the HCC webpage <https://www.helenacitizenscouncil.com/home.html> It contains updates and most of the information contained in your binder. It can also direct you to the City of Helena webpage, Commission agendas & minutes and the City Budget.

### **Nominating Committee Report and Procedure**

The Executive Committee job descriptions were verbally given by Bob Habeck. He then explained the Nominating Committee (Bob Habeck, Margaret Strachan, Doug Hunsaker) compiled nominations and interested HCC members to serve HCC in the four executive positions. Nominees were:

Chair – Dylan Klapmeier

Vice Chair – Samson Boyd, Sumner Sharpe

Secretary – Steve Allen, Meg Bishop

Treasurer – Nancy Perry, Tim Uhl

Nominees spoke and introduced themselves - giving background information and why they would like to serve in the position. Samson Boyd stated that while he was interested, he wishes to remove his name for the office of Vice-Chair. In the future, after familiarizing himself with the HCC, he may run again. Steve Allen also wished to remove his name as Secretary. He too will likely run for Executive Committee in the future after having served for a while on the board. There was a tie in votes for Treasurer. The Nominating Committee then had a second round of voting and Nancy Perry was the winner.

### **New Executive Committee Announced and Seating of New Ex. Committee Members**

New Chair – Dylan Klapmeier

Vice Chair - Sumner Sharpe

Secretary – Meg Bishop

Treasurer – Nancy Perry

Dylan Klapmeier spoke to the committee. He is excited about the longevity of some members of the HCC and realizes the benefit of what they can contribute. Dylan hopes to keep the spirit of openness at the meetings while streamlining the meetings. Feel free to contact him.

**Public Comment:** Margaret Strachan and Sumner Sharpe asked that they write an article for the IR about Commissioner Ed Noon on behalf of the HCC. The Board approved.

### **Meeting Adjourned 9:00PM**

Next Meeting is February 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:00PM room 326