



Helena Citizens' Council (HCC)
Minutes
January 26th, 2022
Via Zoom & Live at Civic Center

Meeting was called to order by HCC Chair Dylan Klapmier at 7:00pm

Attendance: Eric Seidle, John Andrew, Diana Hammer, Patricia Bik, Nancy Perry, Joe Lehman, Mike Rooney, Nolan Harris, Lowell Chandler, Paige Myers, Margaret Strachan, Emily Mowers, Michael Monaco, Rachel Okapal, Dylan Klapmeier, Benjamin Webster, Ryan Schwochert, TJ Lehman, Cole Rosling, Heidi Freidlander, Elizabeth Maida-Gerhart, Chelly Hasquet, Bob Habeck, Denise Roth-Barber, Susan Steffens, Peggy Benkelman

Excused: Karen Wilson

Guests: Mayor Wilmot Collins, Commissioner Eric Feaver, Tom Woodgerd, Ben Kuiper, Dr. G Thomas, Christina Kranich, Angela Steffens and family.

A Quorum was established

Mayor Gives the Oath of Office - Mayor Collins also thanks all HCC members for the work they do and reiterates how important that work is.

Approval of November Minutes – Minutes stand approved with no changes.

Break Out Session for Members at each Neighborhood District Table – during this time members introduce themselves and get to know each other on a more personal note. They talk about what is important to them in their neighborhood.

2021 Chair Dylan Klapmeier – Dylan K. talk about how the HCC was created by City Charter and they are unique from other advisory boards in that the members are elected. HCC advises the Commission on the City Budget and the Future Development of the City. He explains the HCC is comprised of 7 Neighborhood districts with 4 HCC representatives in each district. Dylan K. also encourages HCC members to sign up and attend Commission Meetings. The Commission and the Mayor make up the legislative body of Helena. They set the rules and regulations. HCC meets the 4th Wednesday of the month currently via Zoom. Ideas for Agendas and Recommendations are driven by HCC members and their neighborhoods, so please let us know of your ideas. Monthly, the HCC typically has a guest speaker. For example, it may be a department head whose expertise is centered around a specific topic. HCC meetings are a little less formal than Commission meetings, but we ask that only one person speaks at a time and that people are respectful.

Coordinator Peggy Benkelman: Peggy B. reiterates that everyone review the HCC purpose and mission. The HCC is not a social service agency. We do not provide direct help to our neighbors. Peggy says she is here to coordinate activities, take minutes and advise on protocol. She does not have a vote and cannot tell you what to do or how to vote. Peggy does not live within the city limits, so she has no voting or input into the activities of the city. As a private citizen you can always make a recommendation to the Commission but you must state it is your private recommendation and you cannot do so during the time allotted for HCC during commission meetings, you can give private citizen information during the public comment period. An official recommendation by the HCC is written, discussed and brought forward at an HCC

meeting. Upon a majority approval and official vote, the recommendation is then placed in the NOVUS software and approved as an agenda item for the Commissioners to discuss, review and vote upon.

This year the HCC is being more strict about meeting attendance, if you have 3 unexcused absences, then you are automatically removed from the board. So please contact me or the chair, or any member of the Ex. Committee if you will be missing a meeting. Peggy B. also says you should feel free to always ask questions or speak up. No question is too silly or unimportant. Please feel free to contact me personally too. You can text or phone my mobile – 406-459-3612.

I only work 20 hours per week, with hours usually from 8AM – 1:00PM Monday thru Thursday. I have Fridays off. You should feel free to reach me after hours though if you need to. I am currently working remotely and will continue to do so. I usually go into the office at least once per week to check on things.

Sumner Sharpe – 2021 Vice-Chair – Sumner S. reminds HCC members that there are several other advisory boards/committees you can join. Although HCC may not have a voting position on them, it is helpful to have feed-back on what these committees' proposals are.

John Andrew – 2021 Secretary Update: John reminds HCC members to sign up for Commission meetings. The sheet is circulating now. The Secretary will also check minutes and attendance records. Now, the Secretary will be a member of the Outreach Committee and promote Facebook and Nextdoor postings while trying to reach more neighborhood residents.

Nancy Perry – 2021 Treasurer Update: Nancy reminds members that when they listen to Commission meetings, think of issues that may impact the neighborhoods that you represent. Treasurer approves expenditures. Also, reviews the City Budget and presents a large recommendation proposal to both HCC and the Commission on how to spend their funds.

Sumner Sharpe – Sumner S. thanks Tom Woodgerd and Bob Habeck for their service on the Nominating Committee. Sumner also mentions that Bob H. has a long history of serving on the HCC and has good information should you have questions. Sumner also reviews the Executive Committee's job descriptions – see handout:

Chair – drafts upcoming agenda in a timely fashion. He/She is a primary contact to the Commission and Mayor.

Vice-Chair – Succeeds Chair if vacant or missing from meeting. Is aware of city programs/services. Works with Budget Committee and has special assignments.

Secretary – checks minutes, attendance, promotes sign-ups for Commission meetings, is a member of the Outreach Committee. Will help to expand HCC exposure via Facebook and Nextdoor. Helps gather new neighborhood contacts.

Treasurer – Reviews the City Budget, its priorities and program changes. This is a large budget document that HCC members also review and make expenditure recommendations to the Commission. The treasurer also keeps track of HCC expenditures and approves them.

Sumner Sharpe reminds all HCC members that there are thousands of refrigerator magnets with the HCC logo on them. Please generously try to get them out to the public (jokingly).

Sumner Sharpe – head of HCC Nominating Committee announces the slate of HCC candidates for Executive Office. Sumner asks that each give a brief introduction about themselves.

Chair – Cole Rosling – Lifelong resident of Montana. Attended University of Montana with degrees in Political Science and Russian. He is interested in serving his community.

Vice Chair – Dylan Klapmeier – Has served on HCC for 3 years. Has been the Chair of HCC for the last two years. Dylan has degrees from University of Montana in Political Science and an

MBA in Public Administration. He is interested in economic development, education, city outreach and the budget process within the City of Helena.

Secretary – Michael Rooney – Michael has a Bachelor's in English & Anthropology from the University of Notre Dame. He has been serving on HCC in District #2. He is excited about expanding the HCC's outreach via social media. He thinks this will be a great year.

Treasurer – Nolan Harris – Nolan mentions he is from the Flathead Valley and has moved to Helena with his wife. He is the treasurer for the *New Leaders Council*. Nolan attended the University of Montana and has a bachelor's degree in Political Science as well as an MBA in Public Administration. Nolan is active in local sports officiating. He is interested in the City of Helena's budget process.

Sumner Sharpe now opens the floor for both nominations and self-nominations. None announced.

A motion is made to accept the slate of candidates. Motion is seconded. All in favor – unanimous. Non-opposed. No abstentions.

Welcome to HCC Executive Committee Officers. Sumner Sharpe also thanks Peggy Benkelman (coordinator) for all her hard work. She is the glue that holds us together. Sumner S. reminds members that the HCC coordinator only works 20 hours per week, so please be mindful of her time.

Dylan Klapmeier thanks Sumner Sharpe for all his successful efforts in bringing the HCC to its respected position within the Helena community. Dylan K. also thanks John Andrew (former secretary) and Nancy Perry (former treasurer) for all the work they have performed in their positions as well. Please feel free to contact any of them with questions.

Meeting now handed over to new Chair: Cole Rosling. Cole R. states the floor is open to new business.

Diana Hammer – District #1. Diana H. mentions they have a recommendation that they would like to bring forward about the Westside Development. They would like to discuss and possibly vote on it at the February HCC meeting.

Eric Seidle – District #1 . Eric would like to start a conversation promoting that the City of Helena opt in on the Marijuana tax. It could enhance both the County and the City with income that it generates.

Heidi Friedlander – District #6 – Heidi mentions she is trying to establish a new lighting district in #6. There is a process that has to be followed via Sheila Danielson in the finance department and then outreach to District #6 residents regarding an increase in their taxes. HCC does not get a vote on this process as it has to do with an increase in residents' taxes. Heidi will keep the HCC informed about how everything is coming along. Heidi also asks about the Passenger Rail Service that may go thru Helena. The HCC already has a recommendation regarding the rail service ;

https://www.helenacitizenscouncil.com/fileadmin/user_upload/HCC_Passenger_Rail_Service_Resolution_9-28-16.pdf

Perhaps the recommendation should be updated and re-presented to the City of Helena Commission.

Denise Roth-Barber- District #7 – Denise RB mentions that there is a template in your member packet to use for recommendations. She encourages members to make recommendations.

Peggy Benkelman (HCC Coordinator) reminds members that there is a two week delay in getting items/recommendations on City Agendas. The info must be submitted into NOVUS software and

then approved. Without this process and deadlines, Commission meetings would go on forever with too many agenda items.

Cole Rosling (new HCC Chair) asks if there is any more new business. No replies. He asks if any public comment from Zoom? No comments.

Cole Rosling adjourns the meeting

Meeting Adjourned at 8:15 PM

Next meeting will be February 23rd, via Zoom

DRAFT