



Helena Citizens' Council (HCC)

Minutes

April 26th, 2023, 6:00pm
In Person Only at Civic Center Ballroom

Meeting was called to order by HCC Chair Cole Rosling at 6:15 pm

Attendance: John E Andrew, John R. Andrew, Patricia Bik, Diana Hammer, Nancy Perry, Joe Lehman, Ben Kuiper, Nolan Harris, Lowell Chandler, Paige Myers, Emily Mowers, Michael Monaco, Rachel Opakal, Erinn Donnell, Cole Rosling, Heidi Friendlander, Bob Habeck, Denise Roth-Barber, Susan Steffens, Chelly Hasquet, Peggy Benkelman (coordinator)

Excused: Margaret Strachan, Dylan Klapmeier, Ryan Schwochert, Steve Allen, Susan Smith

Guests: Karen Reese citizen of District #2

A Quorum was established - yes

Approval of March 2023 Minutes – minutes approved with small changes. Change wording from sold to solid waste. Pat Bik motioned to approve and Joe Lehman seconded the motion. Minutes approved.

Public Comment – Karen Reese resident of Rodney St. Karen R. came to the meeting to further discuss the Rodney St. tree removal. She says there were 183 trees cut down with many differing answers as to why. The situation was not well planned. One of the main reasons for the tree removal was safety. Apparently the tree root balls were damaged during road improvements and the trees were then more apt to fall or blow over in a wind storm. Karen and her neighbors would like to see a plan in place, so the city never does this again. Many people living in the 9th thru 11th street areas wanted many trees saved. The city has planted many smaller caliber trees to replace the ones cut down. The city stated the smaller trees end up growing as quickly as larger trees that could have been planted. There was no ARPA funding given to replacement of trees.

Pat Bik – Pat feels the city needed a better coordinated public outreach campaign. The city has been caught up in so many department head staff changes, a good plan was not put into place.

Reports of Officers

Officer Reports

Chair- Cole Rosling – reminds members that Liz Gerhart had to step down and Dylan Klapmeier will be moving to District 7 soon so will have to step down as well – since he no longer will live in the district he represents.

Vice-Chair- Ben Kuiper– nothing new to report, other than speaking with Residents of District #2 regarding tree removal.

Treasurer-Nolan Harris – mentions budget work and if anyone wants to help please contact him.

Secretary – Diana Hammer – planned late arrival.

Unfinished Business

Add HCC members to Budget Committee Progress by Nolan Harris – Pat Bik, Diana Hammer, Denise Roth-Barber, Ben Kuiper, Nancy Perry have offered to help with the budget document.

Treasurer Nolan Harris says we are a few meetings out from official budget meetings. Nolan will again create a google doc so as to have a “working document” that everyone can add to. There will be a summary page, with a blanket statement because the budget is too massive to call out information and numbers from every department line item. Follow up with YouTube videos to re-listen to budget meetings and find more details.

Pat Bik – asks if HCC members can attend city department heads budget meetings as the HCC exists to give input on the budget.

Denise R. Barber – says let’s not be in reaction mode. She feels we could have a better strategic plan and start getting city budget information as early as December in the next budget cycle. It seems the HCC keeps getting shut out of meetings. The HCC should keep a running list of items it wants to put forth for the budget. We may have to have a pro-active discussion before actual budget sessions start, followed by a re-active discussion when putting our actual budget recommendation to the city together.

Block Parties and the City Insurance requirements – Peggy B. reads email from the Clerk of Commission. It states the city is putting together new requirements for block/neighborhood parties via the City Attorney. The Clerk will notify us when it is complete.

John R. Andrew – again states that the application process, which is now online must include insurance. He did some research and there were 82 permits given out last year, 12 of which were neighborhood parties. A lot depends on alcohol – general liability with alcohol price could vary from \$250-\$500.

Emily Mowers would like clarification if these permits and insurance liabilities will apply to having events in public parks.

Nolan Harris suggests instead of utilizing specific neighborhood districts, just use overall public spaces.

Discussion about advisory boards – HCC’s voting position on advisory boards Meeting with City Mgr and/or Commission – to be continued and an appointment will be arranged.

New Business

Have HCC approve budget FY2024 – moved to May meeting when more details are available.

NMTAC’s Budget Priorities FY 2024 Vote on Recommendation. All members received a copy of the recommendation over 48 hours before the meeting. HCC member Lowell Chandler reviewed the document with HCC members. Chair Cole Rosling called for discussion/questions and answers. Ben Kuiper says it may be a problem issuing a budget recommendation with the NMTAC proposal prior to putting out our (HCC) own budget recommendation.

Pat Bik would like to support the proposal, Denise R. Barber agrees.

There should be an HCC cover letter attached to the proposal reserving the HCC’s right to supplement the proposal in regards to the HCC’s own budget recommendation.

Bob Habeck motions to support the NMTAC proposal Nolan Harris seconds the motion.

Members vote to endorse the NMTAC recommendation. 19 yea 1 nay, no abstentions.

Support for the NMTAC proposal passes.

Commission Attendees’ Reports – two minutes

3/27 Ben Kuiper – Approval of non-controversial zoning, approved Library Board and approved new HPAC resolution which states there is no HCC member on it.

4/5 Denise Roth-Barber – had trouble retrieving notes – will do so later and forward

4/10 Susan Steffens – very lengthy meeting. Commission approved Mt.View Meadows and Westside Woods with stipulations. Commissioner Dean wants to further address western egress.

Susan S. mentions the HCC wants a clearer statement about serving on advisory boards. She mentions the HCC doorhangers as well.

4/19 Denise Roth Barber – The Facilities Budget was discussed. This department mentions how it is committed to sustainability and safety. Commissioner Logan wants to use \$300K from ARPA money to fund Solar Panels. Treatment Plant maintenance will be transferred elsewhere. The Fire and Police departments' budgets are fairly static – there will be a 4% COLA increase. In Parks and Rec Department there will be DeFord Trail changes.

4/24 Susan Smith - Minutes were all approved as read from meetings of Sidewalk Summit 3-30-23, Admin 4-5-23, Commission 4-10-23, and Budget mtg 4-12-23. The presentation and approval of confirmation of Officer Bryce Liebel and Officer Nick Leshinski was tabled. Consent was given to authorize participation in the Board of Investments of the State of Montana Short Term Investment Pool (STIP) and authorizing the execution and delivery of documents related thereto and repealing resolution No. 2062

Bid Awards were discussed and approved for a number of expenditures.

A. Transportation bid award 2023 for Chip Seal for 11.3 miles of Helena streets and roads for (\$684,000 to Helena Sand and Gravel)

B. Bid award for 2023 sidewalk improvements Program TSD-94 (\$150,000)

C. Bid awards for 2023 ADA Ramp Program Project TSD-92 (Melinda Reed added comments about required curb bulbouts, not included in the original bid. They cannot be changed easily. An addendum by Melinda Reed will be added and options explored.) (\$350,000)

D. Bid award for 2019 Cured in Place Pipe (CIPP) Sewer Main Rehabilitation Project #19-35 (\$718,500)

E. Bid award for National Avenue Water Main Replacement Project #20-04 (Melinda Reed asked if TIF matching funds could be used and if it would affect the Centennial Trail. The funds cannot be used and the trail is in no way affected.)

Communications and Resolutions were discussed and passed. Public hearings will be set up for public review of fee changes including:

A. Helena Police Dept supports Services Division amending Res. #2044

B. For use of Helena Civic Center and repeal Res.#20626

C. Establish fees for Last Chance Water Park and Pool and repeal Res. #20332

D. Establish fees for City of Helena Park and Open Space uses and repeal Res.#20602

E. Establish parade, special events, tours and vendor requirements and amending possession of intoxicating beverages code in the City of Helena

F. Approve changes in the historic Tatem House at 440 S. Park Ave.

Coordinator Report – Peggy Benkelman

Peggy B. reminds HCC members to please attend the May 10th Board Training – handout is in your packet. Members are asked to review the budget handout and make comments to Nolan Harris our Treasurer. Each HCC member has been given 50 doorhangers to hang on their neighbor's doors and discuss what HCC does etc. Since City funds were used to purchase the doorhangers, it is illegal for you to promote yourself as a candidate in the upcoming November Municipal elections. You can however remind people that the election is forthcoming. Peggy B. states that there are HCC openings in District 4,5,6. If you know of anyone who would like to be appointed and serve until Jan. 2024 that would be great. Please note the attached email about block parties and neighborhood get togethers – there will be a new link to apply for a permit. All rules regarding permitting and insurance will apply to both block parties and neighborhood parties. Please sign up to attend Commission meetings – the sign up sheet is being passed around.

Boards, & Standing Committees

Outreach – Emily Mowers – HCC will be attending the Artwalk on May 12th please sign up to help. HCC has appeared on radio and will again soon. Also planning an appearance on HCTV. Doorhangers are out – please canvas your neighborhood and drop them off before June 1st. Remember you cannot campaign for yourself because city money was used to print the doorhangers. You can mention the upcoming November municipal elections though. The Outreach Committee plans to have a Meet & Greet at the L&C Public library where the entire Helena Community will be invited to meet their HCC representatives.

City County Consolidated Planning Board – John E. Andrew No agenda items, just approved March minutes

HOLMAC – Pat Bik – will attend when meetings resume

Civic Center – tabled until future notice

HPAC – Paige Myers – Paige was unable to attend, however she did hear there were 14 submissions for the Tunnel painting.

Non-Motorized Travel – Lowell Chandler – Discussed proposal with HCC members see attached at tonight’s meeting. Western access out of Westside Woods was discussed again, also discussed was increased traffic on Granite St. especially around Kessler School. Sidewalk delays on Granite St. They may be constructed in phases.,

Transp. Coord. – Joe Lehman only meet quarterly. Can have Peggy B. send out.

Water Quality – Diana Hammer They are still working on their strategic plan

Cit. Cons. Board – Denise Roth Barber - There has been LED lighting installed at Police and Fire Stations. The Facilities department asked for money to expand its Xeri -scape garden around the Law & Justice Center. Need to remind the public about the Solar Revolving Loan program – it has \$60K in it. It provides loans to Helena Citizens at 0% when they want to install solar panels. 100K\$ was located and it will go towards public works sustainability. The city will hire a person/company to look through the entire city’s operations and find ways to conserve, sustain and save money.

Library Board – Paige Myers The library updated its employment polices. Library was concerned about HB234 in the Legislature. The Library has obtained a Virtual Reality headset. A new vendor will open within the Library in May sometime. They will have coffee and snacks, it is the *Grateful Bread*.

Golf – Ryan Schwochert - excused from meeting. He will update us soon.

Fire Department – Elizabeth Gerhart - Liz had to unexpectedly step down from HCC so did not attend the final meeting. The Fire Chief will forward their findings after it is approved from the City Manager’s office.

Paige Myers motions to adjourn the meeting. Susan Steffens seconds the motion

Chair Cole Rosling calls the Meeting Adjourned at 7:49

Next Full HCC Board Meeting May 24th 7:00 PM in person room 326 or attend via Zoom

Move to Strategic Planning Session at 8:00PM

Details of Discussion below.

Priorities Projects Describe Issue Action Who

REQUIRED

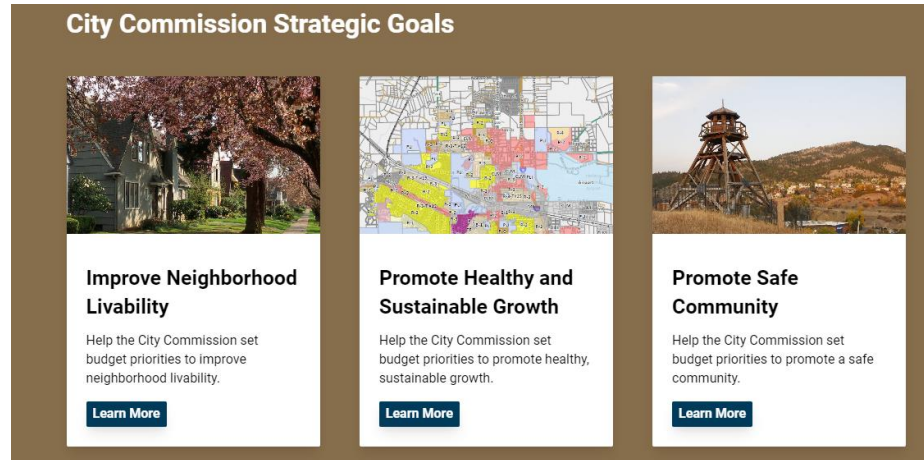
Budget – Pre and Post Topics	Marketing
Pre-Identify needs though out the year –	
Have Department Heads at meetings	Staff Boards/Committees
Vacancies	Nominations

Commission Engagement – Establish Best Practices

Citizen Engagement

HCC Recommendations – Commission Needs to Follow up & Reference City Priorities in HCC Recommendations

City Commission Strategic Goals



The image shows three strategic goal cards for the City Commission. Each card features a header image, a title, a brief description, and a 'Learn More' button.

- Improve Neighborhood Livability**
Help the City Commission set budget priorities to improve neighborhood livability.
- Promote Healthy and Sustainable Growth**
Help the City Commission set budget priorities to promote healthy, sustainable growth.
- Promote Safe Community**
Help the City Commission set budget priorities to promote a safe community.

Projects/Subject Matter

Boulevard Trees

Bicycle & Pedestrian Safety
Crosswalks and Signs

Safe Routes to School

Road Repair

Fire Safety Awareness

Waste Reduction

Housing

Waste Reduction
Incentives

Winter Road Maintenance

Public Transportation

3rd Party Short-Term Rentals
People living in vehicles Parking RVS

Land Use
Parks/Roads
Zoning/Subdivisions

Signage – Wayfaring – Welcome to Helena

Rec Center

Sustainability
Water Conservation
Clean Energy/Efficiency

Regular Bus Routes
Train

Monthly Brainstorming Sessions

Record of Issues – Inbox “Folder