

## Helena Citizens' Council (HCC) Meeting Minutes

August 24, 2016, 7:00 pm

Room 326, City County Building

### Attendance

#### Members Present

District 1 Mary Ann George, Paul Pacini, Sarah Sadowski, Pat Christian

District 2 Eric Kiltz, Gary Spaeth, Bob Funk, John Rundquist

District 3 Gary Dalton, Sumner Sharpe

District 4 Tom Woodgerd, Sharon Hubbell

District 5

District 6 Ria Steffins, Terry Ray

District 7 John Forbes, Dick Sloan, Denise Roth Barber

Absent: Carol Ann Frisch, Terry Frisch, Bob Habeck, Jeanette Blize, Flannery Harpole, Dave Maslowski, Maureen Kiely,

Guests: Rob Farris-Olsen, City Commissioner, Doris Davis (District 7), Brian Coplin (Director, HELP!)

### Call to Order / General Business and Announcements

#### Welcome and Introductions

Chair Spaeth called the meeting to order at 7:02.

Brian Coplin, Director of HELP! introduced himself. He will return at a later date and give a presentation about his program. He was recently appointed to the ADA Advisory Board.

Officer Bailey was in attendance.

Chair Spaeth introduced Mary Vandenbosch, HCC's new Coordinator.

#### Approval of Minutes

Chair Spaeth called for approval of the July 27 meeting minutes as corrected. The motion passed unanimously.

#### Remarks by City Commissioner Rob Farris-Olsen

Commissioner Farris-Olsen addressed the group. His remarks were followed by a question and answer session. Topics included rate increases, the Trinity Development project and better

communication with the public regarding infrastructure. He gave an update on the ladder truck. The truck will be repaired.

### OLD/ONGOING BUSINESS

#### Gas Tax Update

Gary and Sumner presented the Gas Tax at the joint City/County Administration meeting. Commissioner Good Geise was not as supportive as others.

What happens next? Good Geise will look at the complete proposal at the urging of other commissioners. There will be no movement on the tax until the jail bond passes. Would like to see City Commissioners send a letter or resolution to consider the tax. HCC should request a formal resolution by the City Commission.

#### Approved Rates, Fees and Assessments in the City of Helena – Fiscal Year 2017

Ron Alles and Phil Hauck were unavailable to present. Commissioner Farris-Olsen reviewed the rates, fees, and assessments that were approved by the City Commission.

#### Welcome to the new HCC Coordinator

Mary Vandebosch introduced herself to members and shared her background and previous experiences.

#### Adoption of proposed template for use by Fact-Finding Teams/Committees to provide reports to the HCC and City Officials and Staff – ACTION ITEM

Form amended: Remove “To” and “From” and replace with “Recipient” and bold bullets. Pat Christian made a motion and Dick Sloan seconded to accept amended form. Motion passed.

#### Passenger Rail Service Resolution-Action Item

Paul Pacini made a motion and Bob Funk seconded the motion to adopt the resolution of the HCC to support passenger rail service through Helena, MT. After discussion on the motion, Mary Ann George made a substitute motion, seconded by Bob Funk, to table the motion until next month. The motion was tabled until two “whereas statements” – concerning rail systems in Europe and Asia, and roadway congestion – could be deleted. All members interested in submitting suggestions about the content and or wording of the resolution should submit suggestions to Paul Pacini or John Rundquist. The motion passed with one abstention.

#### Fact-Finding Team Reports-Mourning Cloak and Bitterroot

Denise Barber from the Mourning Cloak group reported on their research on running red lights and cell phone use.

The group made no recommendation regarding red lights.

The group offered the following report regarding cell phone use when driving. There has been a decline in distracted driving citations most likely because of the reduction of officers on patrol. Cellphone use is a primary offense in Helena (you can be pulled over for it). There has been an increase in accidents and deaths and the assumption is that it is related to increased cell phone use.

After the presentation and discussion, Sumner Sharpe made a motion and Ria Steffins seconded to support the resolution, "We would like the HCC to recommend to the Helena City Commission that police officers increase their enforcement of Helena's ban on mobile devices while driving." Denise made a substitute motion seconded by John Rundquist, to table the original motion until next month to allow the Mourning Cloak team to further discuss possible solutions. It passed with a unanimous vote.

#### Helena Business Improvement District (BID) initiative regarding school closure

Paul Pacini reported that he had attended a BID meeting. The BID discussed the Central School closing and lack of movement. Central has been closed for three years. They are interested in providing an educational effort in the schools and challenges regarding closures. They have invited HCC to partner with them by hosting a public forum. Chair Spaeth asked Paul Pacini to return to the BID and look for another issue on which to partner.

#### Open Forum/Other items

Terry reported that the 6<sup>th</sup> Ward is the only neighborhood association. The 6<sup>th</sup> Ward neighborhood association hosted 2 neighborhood fairs to bring people into the area – these events were called the Railroad Rendezvous. They are interested in working with HCC to provide flyers and door hangers.

Sarah reported that the block party on Benton was successful.

Tom Woodgerd reported that he had reviewed the Transportation Coordinating Committee's Long Range Transportation Planning document and the Montana Ave Railroad Grade Separation project is included as number two on the list. The cost is estimated to be around 26 million dollars if completed in year 2020.

#### Vacancies

Chair Gary Spaeth would like to discuss and expand how vacancies are filled on the HCC. He recommended newspaper ads as an example of drawing from a larger population in each district.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:02.