



**Helena Citizens' Council (HCC)
Monthly Meeting
September 27, 2017- 7:00 PM
City/County Building - Room 326
Helena, Montana**

Meeting Minutes

Attendance

Members Present:

District 1 Mary Ann George, Pat Christian, Paul Pacini

District 2 Gary Spaeth

District 3 Sumner Sharpe

District 4 Tom Woodgerd, Art Pembroke

District 5

District 6 Terry Ray, Maureen Kiely

District 7 Dick Sloan, Bob Habeck

Guests Present: Brian Coplin, HELP; Cory Bailey, Helena Police Department; Scott Ferguson, Alan Hughes, and Troy Christensen, Lewis & Clark County Sheriff's Office; Andy Hunthausen, Lewis & Clark County Board of County Commissioners; Doris Davis, District 7 resident; Carolan Benegar, citizen; Abigail St. Lawrence, Annie Maixner, and Kiley Gage, Citizens for Justice; Clair Swain, Lewis & Clark County Detention; Bethany Springsdorf, Jackie-Teresa Hart, Colin, and Matthew, Montana Conservation Corps; Roger Baltz, Lewis & Clark County Administrative Officer

Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions

Chair Gary Spaeth called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and all present were introduced.

Vacancies

Art Pembroke was appointed to serve District 4.

Helena Police Department (HPD)

Cory Bailey reported that the HPD will be fully staffed if all of the new hires make it through the academy and field training. HCC members asked questions about noisy vehicles, abandoned vehicles and theft. Bailey encouraged reporting of these issues. While the HPD may have to prioritize more serious crimes at certain times, it is important to report potential violations.

Jail Levy

Andy Hunthausen, Lewis & Clark County Commissioner, and Roger Baltz, Lewis & Clark County Administrative Officer, presented information about the jail and the operations and maintenance (O&M) levy that is on the ballot for the November election. The voters have already approved spending \$6.5 million to renovate the jail; however, the renovation cannot move forward without approval of the O & M levy that will raise about \$4 million per year for 15 years. They distributed a handout entitled "Protect Public Safety: A Modern Jail for Lewis and Clark County." The county's role is to educate and provide information. The county may not advocate for an outcome. There is additional information on the county website (<http://www.lccountymt.gov/home.html>). Key points include:

- The renovations and O & M funding are needed to protect the safety of detainees, officers, and citizens.
- The current jail was built for 54 people. It can functionally serve 43 people due to the need to separate different types of detainees. Currently the facility does not meet national standards; the facility sleeps 80 people with more detainees on a daily basis.

- There will be approximately 150-160 beds if the jail is renovated.
- The county is offering tours of the existing facility and members of the public are encouraged to take a tour.
- The levy also funds pretrial services and services to reduce the number of repeat offenders. People who do not pose a risk can be supervised in the community instead of being detained.
- The County has already invested in a Restorative Justice and Community Services Director, a mental health crisis house, and a mental health drop-in center.
- The bond does not cover the cost of a new building for police and sheriff administration.

Bob Habeck expressed interest in knowing more specific information about the cost and benefit. For example, if he pays a certain amount to fund these costs, what is the return on his investment? Mary Ann George encouraged informing citizens that some of the money raised goes to keeping people out of jail. Baltz explained that almost \$3.2 million of the \$4 million raised each year pays for personnel costs. A little more than \$700,000 is allocated for restorative justice activities.

Abigail St. Lawrence, Helena resident representing Citizens for Justice, explained that she supported the levy for three reasons: 1) improve public safety; 2) support law enforcement; and achieve efficient use of public funds. She noted that Lewis & Clark County pays to transport and house detainees outside of the county because we don't have the facilities to accommodate them in this county.

Annie Maixner, representing Citizens for Justice, explained that she formerly managed programs at more than one hundred facilities for the Georgia Department of Corrections. The Lewis & Clark County jail is 20 years behind the rest of the country.

Malfunction Junction and Access to Sixth Ward

Maureen Kiely stated that she supported the recommendation made by the HCC at the last meeting and explained why she abstained from the vote. She thinks the resolution presented is

a good one that the HCC should support. However, she has concerns that the residents are not aware of and providing input regarding all of the ideas that are being proposed. She hopes to post more on the HCC District 6 Facebook page to help inform residents.

Terry Ray reported that the Midtowne recommendations were presented at a City Commission administrative meeting.

HCC Recommendations

Chair Gary Spaeth reported that the City Commission approved the Passenger Rail Resolution recommended by the HCC. Dave Maslowski presented the HCC recommendations for the Civic Center to the City Commission at an administrative meeting.

HCC Survey Update

More than 230 survey responses have been received. The HCC decided to extend the deadline for responding to the survey to October 10. Vice Chair Sumner Sharpe recommended that the HCC summarize the results and send them to the City Manager and Mayor. The HCC can use the survey results to identify issues to work on.

Reports on Boards and Committees

In introducing this topic, Secretary Mary Ann George noted that the fact finding teams are helpful; but it is also important to hear from those who represent the HCC on or attend meetings of Boards and Committees. She also stated that those serving on Boards or Committees should not be expected to also participate in a fact-finding team. George suggested that representatives send an email summarizing significant activities of Boards and Committees to the coordinator for redistribution to HCC members. Dick Sloan suggested that representatives report at each HCC meeting.

Maureen Kiely is a voting member of the Non-Motorized Transportation Advisory Council. The Council is seeking additional members. The NMTAC conducts bicyclist-pedestrian counts twice a

year. A concern was raised about the need for a light at the corner of Placer and Fuller. Several HCC members agreed on the need for a light. A friend brought to her attention concerns about a possible significant expansion of the parking lot at the top of Beattie Street and the need for citizen input. This issue has not yet been discussed by the NMTAC. Mary Ann George suggested contacting Gary Dalton, who is the HCC's observer of the Parks and Recreation Board.

Dick Sloan is a voting member of the Water Quality Protection District Board of Directors. He reminded members that the City faces a significant investment to mitigate zinc in effluent from the wastewater treatment plant. The City is working on a zinc reduction strategy. A significant depression in water levels has been observed in several areas in the Helena Valley.

Paul Pacini reported that the Parking Commission has heard complaints about homeless people harassing others on Cruse and also Last Chance Gulch and Neill Avenue.

Terry Ray reported that the Joint Land Use Study has been completed for Fort Harrison.

Mary Ann George reported that she would like to clean up the fact finding teams and start fresh in January.

Chair Gary Spaeth announced that Denise Roth Barber was appointed to be the HCC's representative to the Citizen Conservation Board. Dick Sloan was also appointed to serve as an engineer on this Board.

HCC Budget

Treasurer Dick Sloan reported that the HCC budget is in excellent shape and money is available for outreach and district gatherings.

Publicity

Sumner Sharpe and Mary Ann George will work on a portable display. There was discussion of connecting the HCC Facebook page with the HCC District 6 Facebook page.

August 23, 2017 Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the August 23, 2017 meeting were approved as written.

Coordinator's Report

HCC Coordinator Mary Vandebosch reported that representatives for District 1 will be elected on November 7, 2017. District 1 is contested and there are 5 candidates. Elections in District 2-7 were canceled by the City Commission because they are uncontested.

Representatives from Districts 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7 are needed to complete the current term which ends on December 31, 2017. Representatives from Districts 2 through 7 are needed to serve for the 2018-2019 term.

Reports from Districts

District 6 representative Terry Ray reported that lamp posts must be installed before the Quiet Zone can be certified.

Public Comment

Commenting on the jail levy discussion and diversion programs, Brian Coplin explained that the nuts and bolts of the diversion process were laid out in the Sequential Intercept Mapping workshop and documented in a [report](#). He referenced the flow chart on page 6.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.