



**Helena Citizens' Council (HCC)
Monthly Meeting
May 23, 2018- 7:00 PM
City/County Building - Room 326
Helena, Montana**

Meeting Minutes

Attendance

Members Present:

District 1 John Andrew, Mary Ann George, Flannery Herbert

District 2

District 3 Sumner Sharpe, Margaret Strachan

District 4 Doug Hunsaker, Jerrod Bevan, Tom Woodgerd

District 5 Carolan Bunegar

District 6 Alyssa Townsend, Whitney Bausch

District 7 Dick Sloan, Bob Habeck, Doris Davis

Other Attendees: Marissa Rivera, Nancy Perry, Susan Lenard, citizens; Byron Dike, Helena Civic Center Manager; Ellie Ray and Sharon Haugen, Community Development Department; Mary Vandenbosch, HCC Coordinator

Call to Order

Chairman Sumner Sharpe called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Appointment of HCC Representative

Chairman Sharpe announced that the representatives of District 3 have appointed Margaret Strachan to represent District 3.

Public Comment

Chairman Sharpe called for public comment. Except as noted under agenda items, no comments were provided.

Downtown Zoning Code Update

City Planner Ellie Ray reviewed the status of the process to update the downtown zoning code. (See handouts: March 14, 2018 Memo to City Manager; Map of Downtown District Boundary.) Existing nonconforming uses are grandfathered under the Zoning Commission proposal. The first hearing is scheduled for July 16. After the code is adopted, there will be another set of public hearings to establish the district boundary. The code will not be enforceable until the boundary is established. Community Development Director Sharon Haugen stated that she anticipates the entire process will be completed in 2018.

Additional information is available on this website: <https://www.helenamt.gov/cd/planning/current-projects/downtown-zoning-code-update.html>

Proposed Downtown Urban Renewal District

Sharon Haugen explained that on May 21 the City Commission adopted a resolution of necessity for the Downtown Urban Renewal District, which is one of the steps in creation of an Urban Renewal District under Montana law. The next step required by Montana statute is preparation of an urban renewal plan. A tax increment financing provision may be included in an urban renewal district. After the urban renewal plan is adopted, the Department of Revenue must certify any tax increment financing districts.

Haugen emphasized that Montana's urban renewal statute is different from the federal urban renewal efforts that resulted in the destruction of historic buildings in the past. One of the goals is to preserve and complement historic properties.

More information is available on this website:

<https://www.helenamt.gov/cd/planning/current-projects/urban-renewal-districts-and-tax-increment-financing.html>

The HCC requested notice of upcoming meetings for the Downtown Zoning Code Update and the Downtown Urban Renewal District. Community Development staff will provide notices to the HCC Coordinator for distribution.

Helena Civic Center

Helena Civic Center Manager Byron Dike discussed efforts to follow through on recommendations made by consultant The Cultural Planning Group and the HCC. Highlights include the following:

- Staff are developing relationships with promoters.

- They are developing a strategy for selling alcohol and concessions; currently they have a pilot project for alcohol sales. They are looking into obtaining a beer and wine license to manage the revenue flow. They will tap into nonprofits to offer concessions.
- They set a goal of four ticketed concerts and one ticketed comedian for this year.
- They set a goal of increasing the number of events 16%, from 73 to 85 events per year.
- They set a goal for Civic Center staff to produce one or more events from start to finish.
- Developing a mission statement and vision is a high priority.
- General fund support is decreasing by 2% or \$10,000.

Dike explained the role of the Civic Center Advisory Board: advising on policies, providing feedback to staff, and raising funds for building improvements.

HCC member Flannery Herbert encouraged HCC members to share news about the good things happening at the Civic Center through social media.

Neighborhood Outreach

Chairman Sharpe encouraged members to set up meetings in their neighborhoods. HCC member Margaret Strachan encouraged reaching out to more citizens through fun events.

HCC Coordinator's Report

HCC Coordinator Mary Vandebosch explained that the current fiscal year is coming to an end. If committees or neighborhood councils are anticipating incurring expenses within the HCC's FY '18 budget, they should contact Treasurer Maureen Kiely for approval as soon as possible. All bills need to be submitted to Mary by June 20. It is the members' responsibility to obtain Treasurer approval before the expense is incurred. Options are:

- Pay for the purchase and get reimbursed later. Submit an invoice or receipt that includes date, what was purchased, amount of purchase, business name.
- If the vendor is willing to bill the City, contact Mary after the HCC Treasurer has approved the expense. Mary will contact the vendor. Members should not instruct vendors to bill the City.

Ad Hoc Committee to Revise Bylaws

The HCC approved a motion by Margaret Strachan to form an ad hoc committee to revise the bylaws. Jerrod Bevan and Doug Hunsaker volunteered to serve on the committee.

Survey Coordinator's Report

Bob Habeck reviewed the survey strategy. He discussed the option of having a standing survey available in support of the HCC's general mission. Chairman Sharpe asked members to provide suggestions regarding standard questions for standing surveys. Doug Hunsaker suggested including questions on controversial issues like parking and snow removal.

The HCC also discussed survey distribution methods:

- Set up portable display at events and distribute surveys. Members who sit on other city boards and committees should investigate the possibility of piggy backing on events hosted by these committees.
- Knock on doors, leaving surveys in door hangars if no one answers.
- Direct mail.

Agenda Items for Next Meeting

Chairman Sharpe requested that members submit suggestions for agenda items for the next meeting to members of the Executive Committee. Citizen Marissa Rivera expressed interest in a presentation about recycling status.

City Budget

Vice Chair Dick Sloan stated that he presented the HCC's recommendations regarding the FY '19 City Budget to the City Commission on May 7. He may recommend bringing some additional specific comments to the City Commission before June.

Reports from Boards and Committees

Dick Sloan, HCC voting representative on the Water Quality Protection District Board of Directors, explained that they are looking into creative ways to reduce pollution from phosphorous and nitrogen. They plan to propose a pilot project to discharge effluent into the Helena Valley irrigation district system. They hope this will make it possible to reduce the amount of these elements used in fertilizer.

Carolan Bunegar reported on behalf of the HCC team on Engaging Volunteers. They are working with the City's Parks and Recreation Department to organize a weed pull in mid-June.

Flannery Herbert is the HCC's voting representative on the Helena Public Art Committee (HPAC). The HPAC is starting to plan for submitting a proposal for new public art to the City Commission. Funds are budgeted for this endeavor. She asked for input from HCC members regarding locations for new public art. Are there areas in the City of Helena that you feel are lacking public art? Members may contact Flannery with suggestions.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the April 25, 2018 meeting were approved as written.

Member Identification

Chairman Sharpe asked for feedback on a handout that was distributed entitled "Clarification on HCC Membership Representation."

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:59 p.m.