

CITY OF HELENA
Administrative Meeting
January 5, 2022 - 4:00 PM
Zoom Online Meeting; <https://zoom.us/j/97346975371>

Time & Place

A City Commission Administrative meeting was held on Wednesday, January 5, 2022, at 4:00 p.m. via Zoom Online Meeting ID: <https://zoom.us/j/97346975371>.

Call to Order and Roll Call

(00:00:48) Mayor Collins requested City Clerk Clayborn call roll call: City Attorney Jodoin, City Manager Harlow-Schalk, Commissioner Dean, Commissioner Logan, Commissioner Feaver, Commissioner Reed, and Mayor Collins all responded present and participated virtually via Zoom.

Commission Comments, Questions

(00:01:14) Mayor Collins, Commissioner Dean and Commissioner Logan welcomed Commissioners Feaver and Reed to their first official public meeting.

(00:02:39) There were no further comments or questions by the Commission.

Recommendations from the Helena Citizen Council

(00:02:46) Mayor Collins informed the Commission that they did not have updates from the HCC at this time and would receive recommendations from the HCC at their next regular City Commission meeting.

City Manager's Report

(00:03:04) City Manager Harlow-Schalk gave a brief explanation to the new Commissioners regarding the purpose of the Administrative Meetings and her role.

(00:04:47) City Manager Harlow-Schalk informed the Commission of a previously approved 2.2% increase that went to all employees except for seasonal employees. However, beginning in March 2022, this increase will also be applied to seasonal employees. There are three (3) seasonal positions whose wage will be increasing to meet the new state minimum wage of \$9.20/hour in addition to the 2.2% increase.

(00:06:03) City Manager Harlow-Schalk informed the Commission that she would be emailing them information surrounding recreational marijuana and the City's current processes for implementing it.

(00:07:09) City Manager Harlow-Schalk gave a brief summary of the Director's retreat and the feedback she received.

(00:10:27) Discussion was had between the Commission and City Manager Harlow-Schalk regarding how to improve the work-life balance for city employees to ensure retention.

A. Fire Service Study Stakeholder Update

(00:15:34) Fire Chief Campbell addressed the Commission and gave a report on the Fire Service Study Stakeholder Update.

(00:18:35) Discussion was had between Commissioner Dean and Chief Campbell on whether this study would help the fire department address calls for service more effectively and efficiently.

(00:20:30) Discussion was had between Commissioner Feaver and city staff regarding whether this study could help address calls for folks under mental duress.

(00:24:19) Commissioner Logan spoke in approval of the study. The Commissioner and Chief Campbell discussed the public engagement process and whether the information was coming from individuals or corporations.

B. Update on American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Spending Summary

(00:28:00) City Manager Harlow-Schalk gave an update on ARPA Spending Summary. Manager Harlow-Schalk requested direction for next steps from the Commission.

(00:30:16) There were no public comments.

City Clerk Update

(00:30:21) Board Application Review: Affordable Housing Trust Fund Advisory Board; Helena Citizen Conservation Board (CCB); Solid Waste Steering Committee.

City Commission Committee (00:31:30)

Board and Committee assignments for the Mayor and Commissioners:

Mayor Wilmot Collins
Helena Public Art Committee
City-County Board of Health
Civic Center Steering Committee

Commissioner Emily Dean
Mayor Pro Tem
Business Improvement District
Audit Committee
Transportation Compliance Committee
IT&S Board

Commissioner Sean Logan
Audit Committee
Chamber of Commerce
Behavioral Health Local Advisory Committee
City-County Parks Board

Commissioner Eric Feaver
Board of Adjustment
Montana Business Assistance Connection
Non-Motorized Travel Advisory Committee

Commissioner Melinda Reed
ADA Compliance Committee
Audit Committee
Transportation Coordinating Committee

Affordable Housing Trust Fund Advisory Board (00:32:33)

Appointment of Riley Hanson to a first term on the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Advisory Board a community member with direct experience in housing insecurity. Term will begin upon appointment and expire on January 31, 2024.

Appointment of Chris Hunter to a first term on the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Advisory Board as a Citizen-at-Large. Term will begin upon appointment and expire on January 31, 2023.

Appointment of Michael O'Neil to a first term on the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Advisory Board as a member of the non-profit housing sector. Term will begin upon appointment and expire on January 31, 2024.

Appointment of John Rausch to a first term on the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Advisory Board as a member of the real estate sector. Term will begin upon appointment and expire on January 31, 2024.

Appointment of Rachel Ballweber to a first term on the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Advisory Board as a member with a background in engineering or architecture. Term will begin upon appointment and expire on January 31, 2023.

Appointment of Byron Beley to a first term on the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Advisory Board as a member from the field of

banking or finance. Term will begin upon appointment and expire on January 31, 2024.

Appointment of Stephanie Bull to a first term on the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Advisory Board as a member from the field of banking or finance. Term will begin upon appointment and expire on January 31, 2023.

Helena Citizen Conservation Board (00:34:28)

Interim Appointment* of Patrick Judge to the Helena Citizen Conservation Board as a representative of an environmental organization. Term will begin upon appointment and expire on January 29, 2023.

Solid Waste Steering Committee (00:34:42)

Appointment of Tyler Emmert to a first term on the Solid Waste Steering Committee as a city resident representative. Term will begin upon appointment and expire on January 31, 2024.

(00:35:11) Commissioner Logan spoke in support of the board assignments.

(00:36:04) Discussion was had amongst the Commission regarding the board assignments.

(00:38:02) City Manager Harlow-Schalk informed the Commission that the Solid Waste Steering Committee was not an "official City Commission board." The Mayor and City Manager Harlow-Schalk discussed why the appointment was on the agenda for the Commission's approval.

(00:39:46) Commissioner Dean expressed a need for and spoke in favor of reviving past Commission discussions for an update to the Boards By-Laws. The Commissioner recalled the Committee came from the city's Master Plan process and spoke in favor of including it with the other boards. Specifically, due to the appointment being for a city representative, it's important to keep these considerations in a public meeting and to ensure a clear application process.

(00:41:55) City Manager Harlow-Schalk concurred with Commissioner Dean's statements and added that she wanted to ensure the Commission was consulted. In conclusion, Manager Harlow-Schalk stated she was just making sure "we all know this isn't actually a full Commission board."

(00:42:22) There was no further discussion.

(00:42:30) There were no public comments.

Department Direction/Feedback Needed

(00:42:49) City Manager Harlow-Schalk informed the Commission they were no requesting any feedback at this time.

(00:43:39) Commissioner Reed asked City Manager Harlow-Schalk what the next steps would be for ARPA funding. City Manager Harlow-Schalk directed the Commission to their meeting packet and gave a report on the information.

(00:46:12) Commissioner Logan recalled the Commission discussed potential projects at a previous Administrative Commission meeting in December 2021, and the Commission had expressed their favored projects and came to a consensus. However, Commissioner Logan queried whether new Commissioners Reed and Feaver would have an opportunity to contribute to that census.

(00:47:47) The Commission and City Manager Harlow-Schalk discussed the process for the new Commissioners to offer feedback.

(00:49:09) Commissioner Dean spoke in favor of allocating ARPA funding for emergency, transitional, and permanent housing, such as the proposed homeless emergency shelter. The Commissioner expressed the need for the Commission to have a public discussion regarding local housing issues. In conclusion, Commissioner Dean spoke in favor of reserving a portion of ARPA funding to combat a potential spike in Covid cases.

(00:52:34) Commissioner Feaver expressed appreciation for Commissioner Dean's comments and added that he would be more comfortable after he received further information on the homeless emergency shelter. Commissioner Feaver spoke in support of Commissioner Dean's recommendation to further talks with local organizations, in addition to feedback from the new Affordable Housing Trust Fund Advisory Board. In conclusion,

Commissioner Feaver spoke in favor of allocating ARPA funding for the Cahoots program as well as acknowledged the many public comments received in support of funding improvements to Centennial Trail.

(00:56:05) Commissioner Reed spoke in support of including housing insecurity as a top priority and agreed with Commissioner Feaver's comment regarding the need for more information. However, the Commissioner acknowledged this could be accomplished when the Commission is presented robust presentations from city staff in the next steps.

(00:57:00) City Manager Harlow-Schalk addressed Commissioner Feaver's suggestion of allocating ARPA funding for improvements to Centennial Trail and explained that the project was not eligible, in addition to "anything transportation related."

(00:57:23) Commissioner Logan spoke in favor of spending the "bulk, if not all" on improvements to the city's water and wastewater infrastructure. The Commissioner referenced a study that was previously presented to the Commission that determined nearly 40% of our pipes are 50 years old, and 15% were more than 75 years old. Commissioner Logan reasoned that there were multiple locally established organizations that could assist those who are struggling with homelessness and housing insecurity, but that the city was the only organization responsible for maintaining the city's water infrastructure.

(01:01:07) Discussion was had between Commissioner Dean and Public Works Director, Ryan Leland regarding how the allocation of \$1.8 million in ARPA funding could be used to meet a match requirement for a state grant that would result in a total of \$13 million for water and wastewater infrastructure improvements.

(01:04:30) Commissioner Dean spoke in favor of developing a tool that could evaluate the impact of this funding stating the city could improve upon communicating their successes to the public.

(01:06:05) Commissioner Reed spoke in favor of making water and wastewater infrastructure a priority as well as proposed a report in future meetings that would notify them to whether one project being funded could result in another project losing out on funding. In addition, the Commissioner spoke in favor of making critical housing issues a priority.

Public Comment

(01:07:42) There were no public comments.

Commission discussion and direction to the City Manager

(01:08:00) City Manager Harlow-Schalk summarized the following direction moving forward:

- Staff will continue to move forward with the stakeholder engagement list presented by Chief Campbell;
- Staff will ensure both internal and external presentations are an important part of future ARPA funding discussions;
- The city will continue to improve upon educating the community on active and proposed projects; and
- To look at metrics for ARPA dollars.

Adjournment

(01:09:20) There being no further business to come before the City Commission, the meeting adjourned at 5:09 p.m.

MAYOR

ATTEST:

CLERK OF THE CITY COMMISSION