Helena Citizens Conservation Board Retreat
December 14, 2019
9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
City-County Building, Rm. 326

Purpose: Develop work plans for the Board and its committees to accomplish its goals

Desired Outcomes: Multiple work plans identifying strategies, timelines, and specific steps for identified Board members to follow in accomplishing tasks

NOTE: All times set before are approximate and intended to ensure the meeting moves forward. The Board may decide to rearrange or reallocate times in this meeting.

Attendance (5-10 minutes—end no later than 9:10): Introductions of facilitator, Board members and sustainability coordinator

- ↓ Lisa Fairman, Chair
- ↓ Brian Fadie, Vice Chair
- ↓ Dick Sloan, Vice Chair
- ↓ Denise Roth Barber
- ↓ Ann Brodsky

- ↓ Elaine Dahl, Facilitator
- ↓ Erin Grossman
- ↓ Diana Hammer
- ↓ Bridget Johnston, City staff
- ↓ Patrick Judge, Coordinator

- ↓ Mark Juedeman, guest
- ↓ Sarah Norcott
- ↓ Greg Ross
- ↓ Morgan Shimkus
- ↓ Valerie Stacey
- ↓ Other guests

Housekeeping items (5-10 minutes—end no later than 9:20):
- ☐ Agenda review. This is an opportunity to address any questions about the agenda.
- ☐ Ground rules. Unless the group decides more specific rules are necessary, this is a general agreement that all will behave professionally and respectfully and that, on an "as needed" basis, the facilitator may intervene with individuals and/or institute more formal ground rules for the whole group.
- ☐ Any other housekeeping. This is an opportunity to ensure that everyone knows where the restrooms are, any food/drink options for break times, or anything else that participants may need to ensure they are comfortable.

Goals for the day (15-20 minutes—end no later than 9:40)
- ☐ Overview of processes for today.
  - o Templates. Beginning with the end in mind, Elaine will briefly introduce templates for project plans and a calendar for the Board to use during meetings to check in on plan progress.
  - o Mission, vision, values check-in. Are there any concerns or needs for clarification about the Board's mission, vision or values as reflected in its purpose statement? If yes, we will carve out some time before "diving in."

- o **Commitment.** Once work plans are developed, will the Board commit to devoting at least half of its monthly meeting time to focusing on the plan(s), checking in on progress, addressing barriers or obstacles, possibly doing work such as group edits, etc.? This will mean both empowering the Chair and holding her accountable to setting agendas in accordance with this commitment. Or is there another proposal for a commitment to ensure the plan doesn't "disappear"?
- o **Time frames.** As of now, this Board is set to dissolve in three years. Given that, and the general desire to get things done, it may make sense to focus on activities for Year 1 (2020) during this meeting. This doesn't mean that activities that will take longer necessarily go away, but that the group would frame a specific activity for 2020 that might be Step 1 (or Milestone 1) of a larger project. Or does the group want to use this time to develop plans for multi-year projects?
- o **Basics on planning process.**
  - o **Clarity.** Plans should be clear so that you--or anyone stepping into your shoes—can understand what you are doing. The level of detail depends in part on you and your skills and experience, and in part on how much detail will be in records maintained by the Board and/or City staff.
  - o **Flexible.** Plans should be inherently flexible, meaning that:
    - ▪ timelines are generous to allow for "life happens" events,
    - ▪ there may be "fill in the blank" or "plan to plan" activities, and
    - ▪ the plans themselves can be easily changed as needed.
  - o **Scope and scale.** The plan should be for activities that help further goals as efficiently as possible—a balance of resources versus results.
    - ▪ Is it too little? Is it a "why bother if that's all we're doing" situation?
    - ▪ Is it too much? What advantage is there to a "big" project versus a smaller scope or scale?

Diving in—First Project Plan (45 minutes—end no later than 10:25)
This is an opportunity for the whole group to decide on a "definite yes" project and go through one planning process together with the templates. If the first plan goes quickly, the group may decide to work on a second plan as a large group, break into smaller groups to do more plans, or move up the agenda.
- ☐ Select one project from the draft initial ideas for project work to do together.
- ☐ Fill in the template work plan.
- ☐ In the last 5-10 minutes of this time, check in about:
  - o Any questions on the process
  - o Does the group want to stay together or break into subgroups for future plans?
  - o Any "finalizing" steps that may be needed for this and other plans drafted today (e.g., do you want to ask the sustainability coordinator to "clean up" the draft plans and circulate the finals for approval by email?)

BREAK 1 (10-15 minutes—end no later than 10:40)

Refining the List of Projects (30-60 minutes—end no later than 11:40)
Having gone through one planning process, the Board can now identify which projects of the draft initial ideas for project work to plan for. Given that you will be focusing significant time and resources on them, do the ideas need to be further defined? Should some be eliminated or added? NOTE: Patrick's presentation also includes a slide on factors to consider, which can be pulled up if needed. The purpose of this discussion isn't to pin down all the details, but to specify which projects will go forward to the planning stage. In considering this, it may be helpful to break into smaller groups and/or to factor in the following questions:

- Alignment. Does this project reflect or resonate with the Climate Action Plan or purpose statement in a way that other possible projects do not? Does it align with other Board activities?
- Outputs/outcomes. If you do this activity, will you be able to point to particular measures showing success? Are the outputs and outcomes something that could lead to future support for Board activities?
- Achievability. Is it something that will give the Board a "win" or is it something that will lead to frustration because no one could ever accomplish it? Are there known barriers or challenges that would present difficulties? If it's not achievable, is there a reason to pursue it anyway (e.g., "move the needle")? If so, should it be reframed?
- Capacity. Does this group (including the individuals belonging to it) have the capacity (time, money, connections, other resources) to take this on?
- Duplication? Is there another group doing something similar? If yes, how is this NOT duplicative? Will the Board coordinate with the other group(s) and, if so, how?
- Position/Role. Is there a reason this Board, as opposed to anyone else, should be doing this activity? For example, is it something that requires a tie to city government?
- Other. Is there another reason either to adopt this project or reject it?

BREAK 2 (10-15 minutes—end no later than 11:55)

More planning (35-45 minutes—end no later than 12:40)
The Board may decide to break into committees and or project teams at this point, or to stay together in one group. Realizing that time is limited to accomplish what may be 12 or more project plans, it is recommended that the group(s) prioritize working during this meeting time on plans that require the most discussion and input, and consider delegating plan drafting duties for simpler projects to individual members to continue after the meeting.

Wrap-Up and Next Steps (20-30 minutes—end no later than 1:00).
- What has been accomplished today?
- What is left for the Board to feel it has solid work plans?
- If any tasks remain, who will do them? For example, will an individual committee member draft a plan for a project and circulate by email for other members?
- Any lingering questions or items to discuss?