

Helena Citizen Conservation Board (HCCB)

Regular Board Meeting Minutes

November 12, 2020; 4:30 PM

Meeting held virtually via Zoom

Board Members Present (7 out of 13 members required for a quorum):

- 1) Lisa Fairman, Chair
- 2) Richard Sloan, Vice Chair
- 3) Ann Brodsky
- 4) Steven Costle
- 5) Diana Hammer
- 6) Patricia Heiser
- 7) Mark Juedeman
- 8) Brian Solan
- 9) Valerie Stacey

City Staff Present:

Rachel Harlow-Schalk, City Manager

Patrick Judge, Sustainability Coordinator

Others Present:

Paul Pacini, Energy & Transportation Subcommittee Member

Paden Wallace, Energy & Transportation Subcommittee Member

Dr. Gregory Thomas, Interested Citizen

Call to Order, Welcome, and Board Vacancy Report:

Lisa Fairman called the meeting to order at 4:34 pm and welcomed all participants. Rebecca Boslough was recently appointed as the newest member of the Board, but was unable to attend this meeting. Erin Grossman has announced her resignation, which creates a vacancy in one of the "Student Leader" positions.

Minutes:

Ann Brodsky moved that the October 8, 2020 meeting minutes be approved as written.

Richard Sloan seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

CCB Leadership Team Elections:

Patrick Judge made the following report: "Responses were received from all 13 board members via the Google Forms ballot. For Chair, Diana Hammer was running unopposed and was indeed elected to that position with many votes. For Vice Chair, there were three candidates, all of whom received votes, but the two who received the most votes (in alphabetical order) were Mark Juedeman and Valerie Stacey." The Board expressed its thanks and appreciation to outgoing Chair Lisa Fairman and outgoing Vice Chair Richard Sloan. It was agreed that Lisa Fairman would preside over the remainder of this meeting.

Meeting with New City Manager:

City Manager Rachel Harlow-Schalk introduced herself to the Board, and provided some background about her history and philosophy. She thanked the Board for the opportunity to attend, and expressed

her interest in learning more about the various Boards and how they operate. Her immediate priorities as Manager include:

- outreach to the community and City partners, including this Board
- facilitate Commission strategic planning, to identify priorities and working norms
- develop a draft budget that reflects these priorities & creates financial stability & resiliency

In response to a question from Mark Juedeman, Manager Harlow-Schalk mentioned that the budget process will start in earnest in March, and it's too early to comment on the likelihood of any specific budget proposal at this time (like increasing capacity in the "sustainability office" to 1.0 FTE).

Manager Rachel Harlow-Schalk delivered some additional observations to the Board:

- commissioners are meant to be "generalists" who look to Boards for "specialist" input
- to be effective, recommendations and requests should be specific
- bold goals adopted by a Commission can be effective in facilitating rapid change

Waste & Recycling Subcommittee Report:

Ann Brodsky reported the following activities:

- subcommittee is quite active, meeting most Tuesdays for 1.5 hours
- hosted another Community Conversation, this time on Recycling (Tuesday, November 10) well-attended, with a very good discussion!
- Ann participated in the second round of interviews for the Public Works Director an announcement is expected soon
- waste subcommittee members will be attending a Zero Waste Conference (December 1-3) cost is just \$36 for three days, with many presentations - contact Ann if interested
- sub-committee is proposing CCB letter requesting Commission funding for a strategic plan Helena's waste diversion rates have been rather stagnant and well below the 35% goal CCB is more than half-way through its term, and hoping to move some things along requesting funding for a third-party contractor to prepare a waste reduction study

Board members gave feedback on the general idea and specifics of the draft letter. Diana expressed appreciation for the several meetings with the City Public Works Department and suggested that we include a statement of support in the letter for the Department's intention to include funding for a 'waste audit' in the upcoming budget. Ann felt the waste audit should follow the more general strategic plan. Steven proposed using the "LEED for Cities" framework as a structure to pursue all of the CCB's programs. Manager Harlow-Schalk suggested that the CCB focus more on the desired outcomes, rather than the specific company or platform. The Board ultimately decided to postpone action pending further work by the subcommittee (to make the letter more concise, etc). Pat suggested that the CCB identify the overarching policy goal it would like to see, whether it be "Zero Waste" or some other target. If the Commission were then to adopt such a goal, through a resolution, it would allow the contractor to focus more on implementation.

Water Conservation Subcommittee Report:

Valerie Stacey reported:

- the subcommittee is continuing to make progress on the "Water Makeover Workshops"
- they will be meeting with Jessica Ahlstrom (City of Bozeman) on December 17 on the topic of how to "decouple" department revenue streams from through-put to remove structural disincentives to water conservation & waste reduction

Energy & Transportation Subcommittee Report:

Mark Juedeman reported:

- the subcommittee meets 1-2 times per month
- electric vehicle charging stations are still on-hold due to legal concerns with DEQ contract

- 50 kW renewable energy project proposed for the vehicle maintenance shop
USB application requesting \$50,000 in co-funding was submitted on 11/2/2020
- NorthWestern Energy's proposed \$1 million "Helena Pilot" project
distributed storage at the transformer level for reliability & renewables integration
may tie into the 50 kW renewable project
- NorthWestern has adopted a plan to electrify ~30% of its fleet of 1,200 vehicles by 2030
City should consider doing something similar, or better!

Paul Pacini reported:

- Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority now has 11 counties participating (of 23 along the route)
- planning to again pitch the idea, to the new L&C County Commission in January

Education and Outreach Team Report:

Lisa Fairman reported that this team remains in "placeholder" status for now.

Emerging Issues / Other Business:

Lisa Fairman proposed that the Board again hold a planning retreat (second annual) this December. She felt that last year's retreat was very beneficial, and that the Board has made some good progress on the 7 priorities it had identified at that time. Diana suggested 3-4 hours on Saturday, December 12, possibly using Zoom break-out rooms. She would like to build upon the LEED for Cities and Communities presentation the CCB will learn more about at the December meeting; suggesting that the Committees develop two-year work plans to guide their efforts for the remaining two years of the HCCB's term (the Board is set to disband in January 2023, unless re-authorized by the Commission).

Public Testimony:

Lisa Fairman invited the public to share any comments or questions they might have. There was no public testimony.

Next Meeting:

Chair Fairman announced that the next HCCB meeting will take place Thursday, December 10 at 4:30 pm (again, likely via Zoom). Please forward any suggested agenda items to Diana Hammer, as she takes the helm as the new chair.

Adjourn:

With no further comment from the board, staff, or public, Lisa adjourned the meeting at 6:01 pm.

Minutes prepared by Patrick Judge.