

CITY OF HELENA
REGULAR CITY COMMISSION MEETING
January 22, 2018 - 6:00 P.M.
City Commission Chambers, Room 330

- Time & Place*** A regular City Commission meeting was held on Monday, January 22, 2018 at 6:00 p.m., in the Commission Chambers, 316 N. Park Avenue, Helena, Montana.
- Members Present*** Mayor Collins indicated for the record that Commissioners Farris-Olsen, Haladay, Noonan, and O’Loughlin were present. City Manager Ron Alles, City Attorney Thomas Jodoin, City Clerk Debbie Havens, and Deputy City Clerk Katya Grover were present.
HCC Representative Patricia Christian was also present.
- Pledge of Allegiance*** Mayor Collins asked those persons present to please stand and join him in the pledge of allegiance.
- Minutes*** The minutes of the Executive Session of December 18, 2017, and the regular City Commission meeting of January 8, 2018, were approved as submitted.
- Presentations*** PRESENTATIONS:
A. 2018 State of the City Address

Mayor Collins gave the 2018 State of the City Address. A copy of the address is included in the Commission packet as part of the official record.
- Consent Agenda*** CONSENT AGENDA:
A. Claims

City Manager Alles recommended approval of the claims.
- Public Comment** Mayor Collins asked for public comment, none was received.
- Motion*** **Commissioner Haladay moved approval of Item A, Claims, on the consent agenda.** Commissioner Noonan seconded the motion. All voted aye, motion carried.
- Communications From Commissioners*** COMMUNICATIONS/PROPOSALS FROM COMMISSIONERS
Commissioner Haladay congratulated Mayor Collins on delivering the State of the City Address.
- Report of the City Attorney*** REPORT OF THE CITY ATTORNEY
City Attorney Jodoin had nothing to report on.
- Report of the City Manager*** REPORT OF THE CITY MANAGER
Manager Alles reminded Commission and the public about “Pines for Perch” program; Christmas trees will be picked up to be dropped in the Canyon Ferry Lake. This program will go through the end of February.
- Report from the Helena Citizens*** REPORT FROM THE HELENA CITIZENS COUNCIL
HCC member Patricia Christian reported the first HCC meeting would take place on January 24 where results of the last year’s survey regarding citizens’ thoughts about Helena would be discussed.

Discussion

Commissioner Haladay asked Manger Alles to provide an update regarding plowing the streets and shoveling sidewalks and, specifically, whether or not the City had signed any agreements with private contractors.

City Manager Alles said that the City Commission and Directors had a good discussion regarding snow removal during the last administrative meeting: participants talked about articulating a plan utilizing all available resources. Manager Alles noted that he would provide another update regarding prioritization for snow plowing at the next administrative meeting. Manager Alles also reported sand was still being laid in various locations. With respect to downtown, Manager Alles reported the City completed a separate contract for the locations, including ADA areas and, specifically, corners.

Mayor Collins asked whether that contractor would be used on a continuous basis. Manager Alles said that it would be, and when the next storm comes in, that contractor would be able to start plowing right away.

Commissioner Noonan asked Manager Alles to provide the Commission with the information regarding locations that were being sanded. Manager Alles said that the city was divided into 6 or 7 areas for sanding purposes and trucks with sand would hit specific areas assigned to them and that the crew was also trying to sand and treat with a blade especially challenging areas. Manager Alles encouraged residents to call the City departments and pointed out that those calls were being tracked and issues compartmentalized. The City crew has been trying to treat the most dangerous areas as soon as possible. Manager Alles noted that he recognized that the staff didn't get to all streets but that they were putting a lot of effort into it with the resources that they had. Manager Alles said that he believed the City would be able to improve with managing snow plowing.

Commissioner Noonan referred to the comments submitted via City website, *mayorandcommission* email, and asked Manager Alles whether issues brought up in those comments went on a priority list. Manager Alles said that City staff was taking an effort in resolving issues that were brought up when they were specific; it was a difficult storm to deal with, with the quantity and the short period of time. Manager Alles also elaborated on slush and why the plowing team does not push slushy snow to the side of the roads: it freezes overnight and becomes even less manageable. Manager Alles also added that the City hired and would continue to hire several contractors to pick up piles of snow that were causing unsafe conditions. Manager Alles asked residents not to push the snow off their properties into streets.

Commissioner Noonan said that a concerned citizen sent a comment where she expressed her worries about Davis Gulch; she later emailed and said she was appreciative that it was sanded that day. Manager Alles thanked Commissioner Noonan for that comment and emphasized that the snow plowing crew was working hard and was doing a great job. Manager Alles asked to forward any criticism to him or to Public Works Director.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen said that it was his understanding that the Commission and City staff agreed at the administrative meeting that the snow would not be removed in the downtown like last time, creating large berms of snow blocking parking and driving areas. Manager Alles address this point saying that in one of the areas it happened, the supervisor did not receive a complaint and thus didn't act and that the City has a snow blower but it broke; the intention is that when the crew creates a berm, it would be picked up on the same night.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen emphasized that it was his understanding that the City would do its best not to create and leave berms out.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen asked Manager Alles to go over the order in which the City crew does snow plowing, the report that would not be limited to the emergency routes only. Manager Alles replied that the Engineering department has been working on analysis and noted that he and the staff from the Engineering department will have a discussion on those priorities by area.

Regular Items

REGULAR ITEMS:

- A. CONSIDER THE TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES (TA) FUNDS AGREEMENT FOR THE BENTON AVENUE PATH-HELENA UPN 9450.

Staff Report

City Engineer Ryan Leland reported the City of Helena identified several projects that were presented and approved by the City Commission to apply for TA Funds through the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT). The Benton Trail Application along the east side of Benton Avenue starting at the Centennial Trail proceeding north to Custer was selected by MDT for funding. This connection will improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety along this route. The agreement and project will require the City to pay the match of \$153,155.00 and match any cost overruns up to 10% of the project budget. All additional costs above the 10% will be 100% the responsibility of the City. The match for the project has not been budgeted but will need committal during the FY19 budgeting process.

This proposal would enhance pedestrian and bicyclist safety along Benton Avenue from Centennial Trail north to Custer and provide another north-south connection. However, expending City funds on a project that is not previously budgeted would be a disadvantage. The City would be required to pay the match of \$153,155.00 and match any cost overruns up to 10% of the project budget. The City would also be required to pay any additional costs in excess of 10% of the project budget. The City may have limited input on the project since it will be managed by MDT.

Engineer Leland recommended approval of the Transportation Alternatives Project Agreement Benton Avenue Path-Helena UPN 9450.

Discussion

Commissioner Haladay asked whether, regarding TA money in general terms, MVT's schedule is known, as it didn't appear that MVT put a call out for new applications. Engineer Leland replied that MVT hadn't put a call out yet and explained the process. Once the City signed the agreement, it would go back to MVT; then MVT would take it to the MVT's Commission for approval and then start the design process. Engineer Leland noted that it took approximately three years to do the downtown ADA ramp and that it would probably take similar length of time to complete the current project. Engineer Leland also said that today he received an email, which stated that MVT was looking at opening a call for grant applications within the next month.

Commissioner Haladay requested a meeting sometime in the course of the next month to go over what was previously submitted and hadn't been selected; this meeting would also be an opportunity to talk about some other possible projects. Manager Alles said that would be fairly consistent with some of the street-road priority discussions by the Commission; Commissioner Haladay's request could fit in within that conversation. Manager Alles also pointed out that there is a nuance with

this grant: per contract, if the amount exceeds 1.1 million dollars, the City would be responsible for that additional amount.

Commissioner Noonan thanked Engineer Leland for his work on this project.

Public Comment

Mayor Collins asked for public comment, none was received.

Motion

Commissioner Farris-Olsen moved approval of the Transportation Alternatives Project Agreement Benton Avenue Path-Helena UPN 9450. Commissioner O'Loughlin seconded the motion. All voted aye, motion carried.

Commissioner Haladay noted that comparing to other TA projects, it would be an expensive project; however, it was a relatively low match for the City and a good opportunity provided by MVT. Commissioner Alles also thanked Engineer Leland for his work.

- B. CONSIDER A RESOLUTION OF INTENTION TO AMEND SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT LIGHTING DISTRICT NO. 222 TO ALTER THE BOUNDARIES AND ADD EIGHT LIGHTS.

Staff Report

Administrative Services Director Glenn Jorgenson reported the City Commission created Special Improvement Lighting District No. 222 (SILD) in March of 2011. The SILD includes all of Antelope Trace and Craftsman Village Phase I and II of Crossroads at Mountain View Meadows. This SILD has been amended three times previously as adjacent property was developed. This amendment will increase the square feet of property in the SILD to include an additional block of Stacia Avenue annexed in December 2017 that benefits from the new lights. Exhibit A provides the list of the new properties, a copy of a portion of the final plat (map), and a lighting map provided by NorthWestern energy. The entire SILD, including the proposed amended area, has Lexington Colonial luminaries with 100-watt, high-pressure, sodium vapor lamps. These lights comply with the City's dark-skies lighting ordinance.

Staff is recommending the SILD be amended to add properties benefiting from the 8 additional lights installed on Stacia Avenue and pay the associated costs. The additional cost of the new lights is anticipated to be \$4,291 for the first year with a total cost of \$43,561 for the amended SILD. The new cost includes an additional one-half year amount to pay the electrical cost between the time this amendment is approved and the first assessments are received in December 2018. The cost was \$0.0175 per square foot for tax year 2017. The cost is estimated to be \$.01859 per square foot if amended.

If approved, staff will advertise twice in the Independent Record and send notices to all property owners in the SILD and proposed amended boundary who have the right to protest the amendment.

It would be advantageous if the current SILD would have similar lights throughout the district that benefit all property owners by providing a consistent lighting pattern. However, additional electricity will be used and paid for by the SILD property owners. And thus the current property owners will bear an increased cost per square foot of property owned as this amendment will add approximately 4% more property but add an 11% increase in electrical costs.

Director Jorgenson recommended approval of a resolution of intention to amend resolution No. 19818 that created Special

Improvement Lighting District No. 222 to alter the boundaries of and add eight lights in SILD No. 222 in the City of Helena, Montana.

Public Comment Mayor Collins asked for public comment, none was received.

Motion **Commissioner Farris-Olsen moved to approval of a resolution of intention to amend resolution No. 19818 that created Special Improvement Lighting District No. 222 to alter the boundaries of and add eight lights in SILD No. 222 in the City of Helena, Montana to hold a public hearing on the 26th day of February, 2018.** Commissioner O'Loughlin seconded the motion. All voted aye, motion carried. **Resolution 20427**

Public Communications PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS
No comments received.

Meetings of Interest MEETINGS OF INTEREST
The City-County Joint Work Session is scheduled for February 1, 2018, the Administrative Meeting is scheduled for February 7, 2018, and the next Commission Meeting is February 12, 2018.

Adjournment There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

/S/ WILMOT COLLINS
MAYOR

ATTEST:

/S/ DEBBIE HAVENS
CLERK OF THE COMMISSION