

SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING
February 7, 2018– 4:00 p.m.
Commission Chambers, Room330
City-County Building
316 N. Park Avenue, Helena

1. Call to order, introductions, opening comments – Mayor Collins called the meeting to order. Commissioners Farris-Olsen, Haladay, Noonan and O’Loughlin were present. Staff present was: City Manager Ron Alles; Executive Assistant Sarah Elkins; City Attorney Thomas Jodoin and City Clerk Debbie Havens.

2. January 17, 2018 Summary – The January 17, 2018 administrative meeting summary was approved as submitted.

Mayor Collins announced it is the intention of the commission to cover agenda items 1-4 and move the remaining items to an administrative meeting scheduled for February 14, 2018.

3. Commission comments, questions –

Upcoming Appointment – Mayor Collins recommended the following appointments:

Board of Adjustment	Appointment Burton Federman to the Board of Adjustment. The unexpired term will begin upon appointment and expire October 1, 2020.
Civic Center Board	Reappointment of Joann Christnacht, Mike DaSilva, Steve Crider, Bonnie Lorang, Rick Schlenker and Tim Andridge. Terms will begin upon appointment and expire March 1, 2021.
Helena Public Art Committee	Reappointment of Chris Riccardo to the Helena Public Art Committee. Term will begin upon appointment and expire December 31, 2020.

Open Container Discussion – Manager Alles referred the commission to the petition (resolution) that has been submitted by individuals and property owners. A map of the proposed open container boundary was included in the packet.

Manager Alles noted there will be no decision today; the commission will give staff direction whether to move this agenda item forward or not.

Mayor Collins announced he will allow 20-minutes for proponents and 20-minutes for opponents and then called for public comment.

The following persons spoke in support of the proposal on open containers:

Kevin Hamm noted he has spearheaded this proposal and spoke strongly in support of moving forward. He also noted the 400 Block of Last Chance Gulch was left out of the proposal and should be included. Mr. Hamm addressed the potential noise and open containers concerns.

Colleen Casey, Hawthorne Bottle Shop, spoke in support of the open container proposal. She believes it is worth delving into it to see if it can work.

Matt Schmechel, Windbag Saloon, stated he is broadly supportive of the initiative; specific details will need to be addressed and ironed out.

Ethan Kohetek, Ten Mile Creek Brewery –spoke in support and recognizes there are issues that will need to be addressed.

The following persons spoke against the proposal on open containers:

Lee Holmes, Last Chance Tour Train, spoke against the proposal and expressed concerns with the safety of the passengers of the tour train.

Ruth MCardle, 21 N. Last Chance Gulch (Placer) spoke strongly against the proposal. She listed a number of concerns including litter, noise and smoke.

Michele Fairclough, Youth Connections, noted the Board of Directors of Youth Connections has expressed their concern and objection to the proposed ordinance.

Ed Stevenson, 21 N. Last Chance Gulch (Placer) spoke against the proposal and commented on what it takes to revive a downtown area. This proposal runs counter to having a vibrant downtown.

Mary Jo Pierson, Saddle Drive, spoke against the proposal and as a former resident of the Placer spoke of how residents regularly had to clean up the area. Ms. Pierson stated the city should encourage activities that are conducive to both commercial and residential uses.

Ted Dick, 21 N. Last Chance Gulch, stated he lives on the north side of the Placer and experiences the noise from the bar next door and he believes the proposal would perpetuate that type of behavior.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen thanked those who spoke and noted he heard several ideas on how to improve the downtown area and specifically helping clean up the walking mall adjacent to the Placer. If this proposal moves forward, it has potential to have additional litter. Commissioner Farris Olsen stated he would like to consider an ordinance that addresses the open container and asked staff to draft an ordinance and involve the residents of the Placer. He commented the city may do it on a more limited basis, or just for special events and the last option would be not to do it at all.

Commissioner Noonan concurred with Commissioner Farris-Olsen, he would like to look at some options; however, not as proposed. He spoke of his experience with managing the Myrna Loy and the responsibility and liability of serving alcohol. Commissioner Noonan stated he was glad to hear from some of the businesses and noted a person with an open container cannot go into other businesses that serve alcohol. Commissioner Noonan asked what liability the city would encounter. He then spoke of his experience at Carroll College and the difficulty of enforcement and budget ramifications with the need of additional law enforcement. Commissioner Noonan stated the question of the Placer needs to be addressed regarding noise and litter; the commission approved the additional gaming machines at the Sapphire and the noise it creates.

Commissioner Haladay stated he supports moving forward with drafting of an ordinance that would include several bullets for different ideas. The commission would then review the draft ordinance and there may be a number of iterations before an ordinance is considered.

Manager Alles stated staff will draft ordinance with parameters and bring it back for commission discussion prior to first reading at a city commission meeting. Commissioner Haladay concurred and stated there needs to be parameters discussed but it is worth looking at draft language with choices.

Commissioner O'Loughlin stated she would like to know what the current ordinance is, what the requirements are for special events and what are the parameters for getting an outdoor seating area approved for a business. She also asked where are we with the zoning changes for the downtown area; her impression is the process has been very thoughtful and would the zoning mesh with the open container proposal.

Commissioner Haladay stated he would support moving forward, he does not want this to be a proxy battle between businesses and residents about being good neighbors. The idea that open containers are going to result in "that behavior" when he is not sure what "that behavior" is. Commissioner Haladay asked that staff look at what communities have done where an open container ordinance is successful. The commission needs to be thoughtful on why or why not we would move forward.

Mayor Collins stated he has received a number of emails from residents from Placer; whether the ordinance moves forward or not, we need to address the concerns of the Placer residents.

Commissioner Noonan suggested another option would be to consider allowing open containers during seasonal events along with special events.

Consensus direction to the Manager – Staff will draft an ordinance with parameters and include interested parties in the discussion; provide the commission a copy of the current permitting processes; and look at communities where open containers are successful.

Commissioner comments - Commissioner Noonan stated he would like to discuss the Civic Center Board members not having term limits. This is the only city board that does not have term limits. Commissioner Noonan stated he sent an email proposing a special meeting on snow removal sometime in March/April to discuss new ideas.

Commissioner Haladay suggested the commission discuss the Civic Center Board at a regular administrative meeting and invite the Civic Center Board members to attend. Commissioner Noonan concurred and noted it has been a question the commission needs to answer.

Manager Alles stated a special meeting on snow removal will be scheduled.

Mayor Collins stated he has received a lot of compliments on the snow removal from the last storm. Commissioner O'Loughlin stated she too has received compliments on the snow removal,

specifically on the ADA ramps in the downtown area. She then asked that the commission get an update on how the contract is working for the snow removal on the ADA ramps. Engineer Leland reported the contractor removed all the ice from the ADA ramps from the previous storm and the same contractor is back to assist in cleaning the ramps again after the recent storm. Looking ahead to next year, staff is working on hiring a contractor for the entire season.

Commissioner O'Loughlin asked how the decision was made to have Hard Rock begin clearing the ADA ramps today instead of yesterday. Engineer Leland stated staff contacted Hard Rock and they could start today; however, they will be available for the rest of the winter season.

Commissioner Haladay asked what is the estimated costs for the ADA ramps to be cleared. Engineer Leland stated the estimated costs would be \$3,000 per storm to have all ADA corners in the downtown area cleared.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen stated it is nice seeing the corners cleaned downtown.

4. City Manager's Report

I-183 – Manager Alles reported he has signed a contract with Browning, Kaleczyc, Berry and Hoven to represent the city regarding I-183. He also noted MMIA will contribute toward the cost of the contract.

Beattie Street Trailhead Update – Manager Alles invited Director Teegarden and Open Lands Manager Langsather to answer questions from the commission.

Director Teegarden gave an overview of the Beattie Street Trailhead which is the main access point for the Mount Ascension trail system. She then reviewed the process on how staff has moved forward with the current recommendation for the improvements. The city was successful in receiving a grant to install a restroom at the trailhead. -There is an open house meeting on the Beattie Street Trailhead scheduled for February 20th and the proposed design will be available. Director Teegarden stated staff pays attention to all the trailheads the city is responsible for.

Open Lands Manager Langsather stated this improvement project has been on-going since 2011, when staff reviewed the current conditions. He also gave an overview of the improvements that have been completed at the Mount Helena trailhead and how well received they have been. At this time, the Beattie Street trailhead is not ADA accessible and staff has been pro-active in improving the trailheads.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen asked if the restroom will be connected to water & sewer. Manager Langsather stated there will be a vaulted pit toilet and noted there have been no problems with the one on Mount Helena.

Commissioner Haladay stated something needs to be done; however, it is hard to determine what when the design is not available. He asked if there are there some sideboards on the size of the proposed parking lot. Open Lands Manager Langsather stated there will not be a great change in capacity for the parking lot; staff does not have an exact number at this time. Manager Langsather stated the engineering division is working diligently to make sure it is a low impact parking lot.

Commissioner Haladay recognized the increase in traffic will have an impact on the neighborhood and should include traffic calming. Engineer Leland apologized for not having the conventional design completed. Staff has hired a private consultant to complete an overall traffic review, which included looking at the existing traffic and the projected traffic with the improvements to the trailhead. The consultant is scheduled to deliver their report and recommendations in May 2018.

Commissioner Haladay stated currently there is room for 20 cars to park and asked if staff can predict the number of additional cars. Engineer Leland stated staff is looking at the expansion and a recommendation to present at the open house meeting.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen asked if staff is looking at installing ADA curb ramps and paving Beattie Street. Engineer Leland stated the overall plan is to look at the parking lot; there are no plans for street improvements and sidewalk installation.

Mayor Collins asked for public comment – none were received.

SAFER Grant Update – Manager Alles referred the commission to the estimated personnel costs for the SAFER Grant application and reviewed the costs per individual and totals costs. He also indicated the costs do not include training, gear, or other ongoing operational costs. The grant period is not currently open.

Fire Levy Discussion – Manager Alles noted Mayor Collins requested this item be on the agenda for discussion and then referred the commission to the estimated mills and cost to homeowners for one, six and twelve additional firefighters. Also included were the 2018 election dates and estimated costs of an election.

Manager Alles referred the commission to the estimated personnel costs for one firefighter; which is approximately \$95,000 per year. In addition to the personnel costs, the commission needs to have the discussion of future capital equipment replacement. Another option would be to include a continuing levy for the purchase of capital equipment for the Fire Department.

Manager Alles reviewed the timelines on what election a mill levy could be placed on; including the May 8th School Election; June 6th the primary election and November 6th general election.

Chief Emert stated the Fire Department is prepared to move forward with any direction from the commission. It is the recommendation of the department to pursue an ongoing mill levy and plan on it being on the June 6th ballot.

Commissioner O’Loughlin Heather referred to the city’s estimated costs for each of the election and asked for clarification on the cost difference between the June 6th and the November 6th elections. Commissioner O’Loughlin asked if it would be possible for the city to apply for the SAFER grant and move forward with the mill levy vote. Manager Alles stated the city could apply for the grant and prepare for the mill levy vote. Manager Alles stated it would not be surplanted the grant funding if the levy were to pass. Commissioner O’Loughlin asked staff to provide the details of what does having six additional firefighters costs, personnel and capital. Fire Chief Emert stated with additional six firefighters it would allow 12 person shifts instead of the current 10 per shift and it would eliminate the not able to respond to calls.

Commissioner Noonan commented as we look at the number of people and the overtime funds allotted, would there still be a need for those funds or could they be used for the additional firefighters. Chief Emert stated the overtime costs would likely decrease, however, not eliminated. The overtime line item for FY18 is currently on schedule to come in less than the budgeted amount.

Commissioner Haladay commented the proposal is to use mill levy funds to pay for the additional staff and sustain them after the grant funds end. The levy can be levied up to the maximum, however, the commission could choose not to levy the full amount.

Commissioner Haladay stated the discussion on the number of additional firefighters goes back and forth and the capital needs; he asked Chief Emert if there is an estimate on the capital needs. Chief Emert commented the capital purchases have a wide range that could include a third station or sharing a facility and equipment. As far as equipment a good estimate would be to look at the current value and then add 10% for each year. He also spoke of replacing the two rescue units.

Commissioner Haladay stated when looking at the number for the long term capital support, what is the estimated amount, \$100,000 to \$200,000. Manager Alles stated staff will look at the different capital items; however, what we are talking about is a continuing levy for operations. Additional research will need to happen before a final recommendation is brought forward.

Additional discussion was held on the mill levy; issuing a revenue bond and an INTERCAP loan for capital purchases.

Administrative Services Director Jorgenson recommended the bond counsel be involved from the beginning, if that is the route the commission goes. He also clarified for Commissioner O’Loughlin the costs difference between the June primary and the November general election is the June primary is partisan; which requires two sets of ballots to be printed.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen stated he would support pursuing some type of capital improvement bond and aim for the June 6th ballot. He noted that this levy should not burden the homeowners too much. He recommended looking at adding six firefighters and capital purchases. Chief Emert concurred with the recommendation.

Consensus direction to Manager - Work on a resolution for a mill levy and placing it on the June 6th primary ballot. Staff will also apply for the SAFER grant when it is open.

**5. Department discussions:
Items were moved to the February 14th administrative meeting agenda.**

6. Committee discussions:

- a) Audit Committee, City-County Board of Health, L&C County Mental Health Advisory Committee, Montana League of Cities & Towns – Mayor Wilmot Collins – No report given.
- b) Mayor Pro-Tem, Audit Committee, Helena Chamber of Commerce Liaison, Information Technology Committee, Public Art Committee – Commissioner Andres Haladay – No report given.
- c) Board of Adjustment, Civic Center Board, Non-Motorized Travel Advisory Board, Transportation Coordinating Committee – Commissioner Rob Farris-Olsen – No report given.
- d) ADA Compliance Committee, Business Improvement District/Helena Parking Commission, City-County Administration Building (CCAB), Montana Business Assistance Connection – Commissioner Ed Noonan – No report given.
- e) Audit Committee, City-County Parks Board, Transportation Coordinating Committee – Commissioner Heather O’Loughlin – No report given.
- f) Helena Citizens Council – HCC Chair Sumner Sharpe thanked staff for meeting with HCC members regarding the FY19 budget. The HCC is also interested in the snow removal policy. The HCC has a report and recommendation ready to present to the commission.

7. Review of agenda for January 22, 2018 - No discussion held.

8. Public Comment – No public comment.

9. Commission discussion and direction to the City Manager – No discussion held.

10. Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.