

SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING
August 8, 2018– 4:00 p.m.
Room 326, City-County Building
316 N. Park Avenue

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 Dennis Taylor; City Attorney Thomas Jodoin; Police Chief Troy McGee; Assistant Fire Chief Ken Wood; Community Development Director Sharon Haugen; City Engineer Ryan Leland; Administrative Services Director Glenn Jorgenson; Budget Manager Libbi Lovshin; and City Clerk Debbie Havens. Others in attendance included: Emily Dean

2. July 25, 2018 Administrative Summary – The July 25, 2018 administrative meeting summary was approved as submitted.

3. Commission comments, questions –

Upcoming Appointments – There are no board appointments on the August 13, 2018 city commission meeting agenda.

Commissioner Noonan noted at the BID quarterly meeting there was discussion on the city’s insurance requirements for permits increasing to 1.25 million and most non-profits carry 1-million coverage; he asked for clarification on when the city increased the requirement. Attorney Jodoin noted the commission, in January 2018, approved the increase in insurance coverage for events where alcohol is served. The ordinance that is on the August 13th city commission meeting agenda addresses the parade permits, which will not require insurance unless it has vehicles on the pedestrian mall.

Commissioner Noonan reported he attended the NMTAC meeting and the members are requesting the city contact MRL regarding the pedestrian crossing on Henderson Avenue. Manager Taylor stated staff will contact BNSF to communicate NMTAC’s recommendation; however, receiving an easement from the railroad is very difficult. He also noted a bridge is very pricey and a long term project.

Engineer Leland reported staff has met with MRL and they were receptive to having a license, not an easement; one of the requirements is they need a specific survey completed on their coordinate system and the city is in the process of getting the survey done. This is the first step in getting a license.

Commissioner O’Loughlin asked what the difference is between an easement and license and how it operates. Engineer Leland stated a license is an “easement”; however, it can be rescinded with a thirty day notice.

4. City Manager’s Report –

Process for filling vacancy on City Commission – Manager Taylor spoke on the process to fill Commissioner Farris-Olsen’s seat on the city commission. He is still working on the details; however, there is no barrier to moving forward with the process and recruit interested candidates.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen stated he will submit a letter once Representative Eck has filed her withdrawal papers. He also noted his resignation will be effective December 17th to avoid any gap in insurance coverage.

Commissioner O’Loughlin asked what process has been used in the past. City Clerk Havens reported once a resignation was received, the vacancy was advertised and letters of interest, resumes and references were accepted for a set time; the commission met to decide the number and who to interview; held interviews; met to make a final recommendation; formal action was taken at a commission meeting.

Manager Taylor stated he will prepare a memo outlining some options for commission consideration and will present it at an upcoming administrative meeting. An initial meeting of the commission to discuss the specific decision points can be scheduled.

He noted it will be Commissioners Haladay, Noonan and O’Loughlin and Mayor Collins who will make the decision.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen commented the process needs to be a very clear and transparent. Commissioner Noonan commented if he is asked about the vacancy, he will refer them to the process. Attorney Jodoin stated the mayor/commissioners can answer general questions regarding their experience being on the commission.

Law and Justice Center – Manager Taylor reported there are issues with the boundary line relocation for the Law and Justice Center; the building codes require a “fire wall” between the two buildings. After further discussion with the committee, it is his recommendation and the county commission has concurred to go ahead and purchase the entire complex. Manager Taylor and County Administrator Baltz will meet with Mr. Casey to further negotiate the purchase and bring a recommendation back to the commission in the next few weeks. There are sufficient funds to purchase the property by using 440 funds.

Commissioner Haladay asked with the purchase of the second building, will the occupants still be solely limited to law enforcement and emergency services or could it be rented to non-law enforcement agencies. Manager Taylor stated the building would be intended for agencies connected to city and county operations.

Commissioner O’Loughlin asked if there are any tenants in the building. Manager Taylor stated not at this time. Commissioner O’Loughlin asked if there is adequate parking for the two buildings. Manager Taylor stated two parking lots will be acquired with the purchase, which will enhance the parking for the building. The lots will be improved and ADA parking spaces will be installed.

Commissioner O’Loughlin asked what the costs are to construct the fire wall. Director Haugen stated she does not have a cost estimate; however, it is a 3-hour rated fire wall which is a cement wall from the basement to top floor. You can also use glass, but it more expensive. The buy-sell agreement states both parties would be responsible for the installation of the fire wall.

Commissioner Haladay asked why the purchase is preferred to condominiums. Manager Taylor stated the city and county would control of entire building and future costs. Further discussion was held on when a fire wall is required.

Manager Taylor will bring a final proposal forward to the commission and noted the cost of the fire wall and access to the building made it apparent the recommendation is to purchase the second building.

5. Department Discussions

Public Works

Sidewalk Projects – FY19 – City Engineer Leland presented the following four projects and noted these projects are for commission consideration and prioritization:

1. **Squaring up the Neil and Fuller intersection.** The project will improve pedestrian connectivity for pedestrians and has received public support. – MDT’s estimate is \$300,000, city staff estimate is \$200,000, which is on the high end.
2. **Squaring up the Lawrence and Warren Intersection by the new Central School.** This project will improve pedestrian connectivity to the new Central School and the Cathedral. Estimated cost is \$100,000.
3. **Install sidewalks along National from the end of Centennial Trail to Lyndale.** This project will complete a section of missing sidewalk on Centennial Trail. Currently, Centennial Trail dead ends at National with no receiving sidewalk and staff have received complaints. Estimated cost is \$50,000.
4. **Bulb-out at Highland and Montana.** This project will improve the pedestrian cross walk at Highland and Montana. Estimated cost is \$80,000.

All these projects have been brought up during various meetings and/or the projects have received public support. These projects could be implemented and constructed fairly quickly. Engineer Leland stated his recommendation is to keep these as an individual projects; that way if the city is dealing with MDT on a project, it will not stall the others. Staff is looking for consensus direction on the projects and budgets.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen asked if the Neil and Fuller intersection would require approval from MDT. Engineer Leland stated yes, the current design is less complicated than the original proposal and should be easier to get MDT approval. The monument that currently is at this intersection will be removed by the state Historical Society.

Commissioner Noonan stated NMTAC’s number one priority is installing sidewalks along Fee Avenue between Prospect and 11th Avenue; safety is a concern with pedestrians walking to PureView. Engineer Leland commented the commission could consider ordering in sidewalks on Fee Avenue and noted it is on MDT right of way.

Commissioner Noonan stated NMTAC members also expressed concern that CR Anderson Middle School is lacking in sidewalks. Engineer Leland commented in the past, city staff attempted to do a CTEP project and the adjacent property owners did not want to move forward with the project. Staff will find the original designs and go forward if there is commission consensus. After additional discussion on the need for connectivity adjacent to CR Anderson, there was commission consensus to move forward with a design for a project.

Commissioner Haladay asked is NMTAC's recommendation to install sidewalks just in front of Albertsons. Commissioner Noonan further explained there are no sidewalks on the east side of the street; it would be to install sidewalks on both sides of Fee between 11th Avenue and Prospect Avenue. Manager Taylor stated staff would approach the Days Inn and Albertsons to see if they are interested in participating with the installation of sidewalks. Engineer Leland stated NMTAC members have approached both Albertsons and the Days Inn and were told if they are required to install sidewalks, they will do so.

After additional discussion, there was commission concurrence to order in sidewalks on both sides of Fee Street between Prospect and 11th Avenues.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen stated the other two projects that make sense are the Highland and Montana bulb-outs and the Lawrence and Warren intersection, as both projects are safe routes to schools. Commissioner Farris-Olsen stated he would also be fine with ordering in sidewalks on National Avenue.

Commissioner Haladay commented the Highland pedestrian cross walk project is important; a discussion needs to be held on how far the sidewalks will extend and connect to Jefferson School. Engineer Leland stated if there commission consensus on a budget amount, staff can begin the design for the project.

Manager Taylor stated staff will begin the design of the four recommended projects plus the sidewalks on Fee Avenue and the project adjacent to CR Anderson and move them forward as individual projects. Staff will report back on the designs and costs at an administrative meeting.

Commissioner Haladay asked staff to look at installing sidewalks from the Highland bulb-outs to Jefferson School and to look at the previous studies on safe routes to schools on Knight Street. Staff will make an informed decision on the design and report back to the commission.

Manager Taylor stated an analysis of all of the city's traffic control devices will be presented to the commission in October.

Commissioner O'Loughlin asked if the Lawrence and Warren project is considered a safe route to school project. Engineer Leland stated yes as Central School is adjacent to Lawrence. She then commented the Highland and Montana bulb out project, Lawrence and Warren Intersection and installation of sidewalks on Knight Avenue, all could be classified as Safe Routes to Schools projects; and the commission could order in the sidewalks on Fee Avenue.

Commissioner O'Loughlin stated she likes the idea of prioritizing the safe routes to schools projects for the city's own budget purposes. It is good for the city to look at what criteria to use when prioritizing projects. Engineer Leland stated the projects presented today, staff was asked to look at and also the safe routes to schools was a criteria.

Commissioner Haladay asked in reference to Knight Street will it be the recommendation to install boulevard sidewalks with trees or curbside sidewalks. Engineer Leland stated both types of sidewalks will be installed and staff will work with the individual property owners. Where possible, boulevard sidewalks will be installed.

Commissioner Haladay noted Knight Street is wide and asked if it is possible to narrow the street and install boulevard sidewalks. Engineer Leland stated he could not answer that question; he will have to research the question and report back to the commission.

Commissioner Haladay stated staff will bring these projects back in September and asked that NMTAC be kept informed on where they are in the process.

Commissioner Noonan stated at some point the commission needs to talk about Clarke Street; the street and sidewalks are in very bad condition and creates safety issues.

Mayor Collins noted there are no street markings on the corner of Neill Avenue and Last Chance Gulch. Manager Taylor noted there are several intersections that need to be painted and staff will follow-up with MDT.

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 -- No report
- 7. Review of agenda for August 13, 2018 Commission meeting -- No discussion held.**
- 8. Public comment -- No public comment received.**
- 9. Commission discussion and direction to City Manager --** Mayor referenced a letter submitted by Steve Wagner with the Expedition League and asked that it be put on the August 22nd administrative meeting agenda.
- 10. Adjourn --** The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.