

SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING

October 24, 2018– 4:00 p.m.

Room 326, City-County Building

316 N. Park Avenue

1. Call to order, introductions, opening comments – Mayor Pro Tem Noonan called the meeting to order. Commissioners Farris-Olsen and O’Loughlin were present. Mayor Collins and Commissioner Haladay were excused. Staff present was: City Manager Dennis Taylor; Assistant to the Manager Alan Miller; City Attorney Thomas Jodoin; Deputy City Attorney Iryna O’Connor; Police Chief Troy McGee; Assistant Fire Chief Ken Wood; Community Development Director Sharon Haugen; Planners Lucy Morell-Gengler and Mike McConnell; Public Works Director Randall Camp; City Engineer Ryan Leland; Parks & Recreation Director Amy Teegarden; Code Enforcement Officer Greta Dige; Administrative Services Director Glenn Jorgenson; Human Resources Director James Fehr and City Clerk Debbie Havens.

Others in attendance included: HCC Representative Sumner Sharpe; BikeWalk Montana representative Doug Habermann; HOLMAC members Denise Barber; Tony Z, TJ Leiman, Chris Charlton, Christian Clays, Dan Wirak, Joan Miles, DD Dowden, Claudia Clifford, Mary Hollow, Jane Kollmeyer, Lisa Bay, Sanna Porte, Phil Johnson, IR Reporter Michael Woodel, Andrea Opitz., Jeff Bradley, Eric Grove, Dave, Eric Sievers, Lois Olsen, Curt Larson and Kevin Hamm.

2. October 10, 2018 Administrative Summary – The October 10, 2018 administrative meeting summary was approved as submitted.

3. Commission comments, questions –

Upcoming Appointments – There are no board appointments on the October 29th city commission meeting agenda.

Commissioner O’Loughlin thanked Chief McGee for being Interim City Manager for the last two weeks.

Mayor Pro Tem Noonan noted the first week of November is the joint BID/DHI meeting and they have invited Public Works staff to attend to discuss the snow removal plan.

Mayor Pro Tem Noonan recognized and thanked Director Teegarden for her service to the City of Helena. Director Teegarden thanked Mayor Pro Tem Noonan for his comments and highlighted some of the accomplishments and experiences during her tenure with the city.

Commission Trails Letter – Mayor Pro Tem Noonan referred to the letter submitted by Commissioners Haladay, O’Loughlin and himself noting there is consensus for the following directives:

- **Develop a plan and framework for community input and vetting of trail projects** – This must include outreach to stakeholders, community partners and diverse user groups. A proposed plan and framework should be presented to the City Commission and be available for public comment by December 1, 2018.
- **Update the Recreation component of the City of Helena’s Open Lands Management Plan and update the South Hills Trails Plan** – This includes immediately beginning design of an RFP. Any proposed RFP must include outreach to and solicit input from stakeholders, community partners and diverse user groups. A proposed RFP should be presented for public comment and Commission approval by December 1, 2018.
- **Provide an update on all ongoing trail projects, planned trail amenities at an administrative meeting** – This must happen before November 21, 2018. All presentation materials must be available beforehand so members of the public can comment and participate.
- And ask for consensus that until the three above items are accomplished, to the commission’s satisfaction, there will be a moratorium on new trails and trail infrastructure. Any ongoing projects or new items staff feel are immediate needs must be brought to the Commission on a case-by-case basis.

Mayor Pro Tem Noonan stated the intent of the letter was not done on a negative basis; however, he supports taking a step back and look at our processes for new trails and trail infrastructure. The

discussion on Beattie Street revealed some serious issues and concerns throughout the broad public input.

Commissioner O'Loughlin spoke on the intent of the letter and how much passion there is for the trails in the community. The Beattie Street conversation was an eye opener for her; and there were comments from the commission to assure an adequate and transparent process moving forward. This letter asked staff to do three specific pieces and she hopes city staff, over the next several months, will move forward with the three items. She spoke on each individual item and explained the intent of the requests. This letter is meant to kick-off the conversation and no decisions should be made at this point.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen stated he doesn't have much to add; however, there seems to be a lack of process in involving the public and stakeholders; it is important to keep the process transparent. Mayor Pro Tem Noonan concurred with the previous comments and thanked those in attendance for sharing their comments.

Manager Taylor stated the idea of a moratorium was a surprise to him; in regards to the public engagement component with the current trails. The larger issue is the update to the Open Lands Management Plan, which staff planned to bring a recommendation forward during the FY2020 budget process. He asked what the appropriate timelines are and how these projects will be funded.

Manager Taylor referenced the letter and the deadline of December 1, 2018, and asked that it be extended to the end of January 2019. Staff is prepared to address the items in the letter; however, it will take time to develop a process to bring back to the commission. He asked what the expectations of the moratorium is on new trails and trails infrastructure that are currently moving forward. Staff has not brought back each trail to the commission for discussion. Some of the work being done is dependent on completing it before increment weather arrives.

Manager Taylor noted he spoke with Commissioner Haladay who explained the moratorium is designed to make sure we not go too far down the road and we actually address a number of things that came up during the Beattie Street Trailhead process or through the various planning processes. Manager Taylor stated staff is comfortable with the recommendations with the exception of not moving forward the current projects that may have a seasonal opportunity to complete.

Director Teegarden commented city staff made the recommendation to update the Open Lands Management Plan and budgeted it for FY2020; it also folds nicely into the Comprehensive Parks Plan. There is no funding in the FY19 budget to update the Open Lands Management Plan; however, staff recognizes it is time to update the plan, which would include the public process.

Mayor Pro Tem Noonan noted the moratorium was the commission recommendation due to being asked about topics they did not have a lot of information on. The commission's desire is not to micro-manage trail maintenance. Manager Taylor spoke of the current directional trail that is being constructed and the only new trail being worked on, which includes some of the features that may create potential conflicts with the various users. Again, he addressed the moratorium recommendation and noted it was brought forward without engaging all the stakeholders and not giving notice, which gave him pause as well. So now we have notice and the public and stakeholders are involved in the public process and staff will now come back with recommendations and a timeline to accomplish the three specific issues. He also addressed using private consultants and the costs associated with that. Manager Taylor asked the commission to again to postpone the moratorium until a new city manager is on board. He believes the deadlines outlined in the letter are very ambitious.

Commissioner O'Loughlin stated she believes the directional trail is a significant development in the south hills and it is not clear on what the process has been and how it fits into our exiting maintenance and what criteria has been determined in making the decisions. She worries about building trails before the plan is updated. The plan should be updated before changes to the trail system is completed. She is flexible with the timeline outlined in the letter. The moratorium language was included to assure staff could provide the commission a clear timeline and recommendation.

Director Teegarden noted the Open Lands Division has an annual work plan that is developed by staff, the public, stakeholders and HOLMAC. All meetings are open and the agenda/minutes are on the city's web page. All recreational projects, including trails are included in the work plan and ultimately is brought forward for commission approval.

The Open Space Management Plan was last updated in 2004; and the annual plan is based on the 2004 Open Space Management Plan and other changing conditions. Commissioner O'Loughlin stated she is worried there is not an adequate open process for trail development and management. She worries about not updating the Open Lands Management Plan for another year due to the feedback the

commission has received on this topic. Commissioner O'Loughlin stated she is flexible with the timeline within reason.

Mayor Pro Tem Noonan asked that an update on the directional trail be given at the October 31st administrative meeting. Manager Taylor stated improving our engagement with the public and stakeholders will happen. It is important to address how we improve our community engagement and continue to work with the advisory boards and stakeholders to continue the discussion of updating the Open Lands Management Plan and the annual work plan.

There is a lot of items happening and there are a limited amount of administrative meetings remaining in 2018. Staff will give an update at the October 31st administrative meeting. He will also be prepared to announce the Interim Director for Parks & Recreation Department.

Public Comment – Mayor Pro Tem Noonan allowed 20-minutes for public

Denise Barber, HCC/HOLMAC, noted she is not speaking on behalf of HCC. Ms. Barber stated she supports updating the 2004 Open Land Management Plan and improving the public involvement process. She stated she is perplexed with the recommendation to take out the “recreational component” of HOLMAC and feels it retaliatory. HOLMAC is an advisory board, is highly effective and all agenda/minutes and meetings are open to the public.

DD Dowden stated she served on HOLMAC and helped write the original Open Lands Management Plan; if the money becomes a problem, it may be cost effective to ask stakeholders to work on the update.

Dr. Christian Clays asked for a clarification on the proposed moratorium; the 2018 Open Lands Work Plan went through the process and was approved by the city commission. The directional trail is nearly completed with the exception of signage, which is a safety component, and seeding. Dr. Clays referenced the letter, which he felt read negatively toward HOLMAC, and noted all processes are transparent and open to the public. Commissioner O'Loughlin clarified the commission approved completing the seeding.

Mary Hollow, Executive Director of Prickly Pear Land Trust, stated there is no shortage in interest in what is happening in the south hills; there is an expanding user base and that should be looked as a positive thing. However, there has been some confusion on the process and there is an opportunity to improve the process to allow for broader communications that will result in a better product. It is essential that there is partnership between public and private entities. Ms. Hollow stated the update of the plans is not being objected to by anyone. Over the last 18-months the City, BLM, Forest Service and PPTL has discussed a regional trail area and there is a lot of benefit to looking at the broader area. Maintenance costs are always an issue and suggested combining forces to have one process used by all.

Lisa Bays, Helena Hikes; stated the members of Helena Hikes have mentioned they are confused or in the dark on how to become involved with the trails process. People are not aware of how to become involved and the City needs to do more outreach. Helena Hikes has started looking into what other cities do and will provide the information to the commission. Helena Hikes' platform encourages a moratorium because the lack of information on how the public can get involved. There are concerns regarding the directional trail and encouraged the commission to go look at the directional trail to see the difference from other trails.

HCC Chair Sumner Sharpe noted the HCC has a fact-finding committee on public process and is preparing a recommendation for the commission. He noted it is essential to start the public process as early as possible. Timely notice and engaging the citizens is important; there also needs to be time for feedback on alternatives and citizens understanding the process on how decisions are made.

Dan Wirak, former member of HOLMAC, spoke of the good intentions of the members of HOLMAC and noted all of their meetings are open and they have never tried to hide anything and have provided good recommendations. HOLMAC should continue to be involved in the “recreational” component of open lands. He noted there are a lot of citizens who enjoy using the directional trail and the commission should allow one directional trail within the entire trail system. City trails should stay under the purview of HOLMAC.

Andrea Opitz, Tourism Business Improvement District, asked for clarification if the Helena Area Trails Commission is a sub-committee of HOLMAC. Director Teegarden stated that is not the case and noted at one time Prickly Pear Trails Committee was involved with HOLMAC.

Jeff Bradley stated he has volunteered on trail building with Prickly Pear and appreciates the work they do. However, they should not be in charge of city trails; HOLMAC should continue to oversee the city trails and make recommendations. The update of the plan is a great idea; he is distressed that current projects are going to be stalled.

Eric Grove stated he has been involved with the south hill trails for over 30 years; there has been a lot of different processes. He supports the plan update and try and figure out how the process moves forward is also a good idea. He does not support a moratorium, there is a process in place that has worked. Let's look how to improve moving forward. He noted the approval of the directional trail went through the process, played by the rules and now a moratorium is being recommended. He will work with all stakeholders to continue to do positive things on the trails.

Dean Mills stated he agrees with the suggestion that the moratorium be lifted; the signage should be installed for safety reasons.

Lois Olsen noted she had sent an email to the commission; she also stated HOLMAC is a good advisory committee with local citizens serving on this committee. These are public lands and citizens can use them. HOLMAC is an open committee and is available to the public. Ms. Olsen stated the letter was very negative to her and encouraged the commission to get both sides of the issue.

Tony Z. agreed the Open Lands Management Plan should be updated; HOLMAC is a process that works and is open to the public. Directional trails were included in the annual plan and was approved by the commission. There is a lot of volunteer hours and private donations in the development of the directional trails. He encouraged the commission to reconsider the moratorium; there is already directional trails in the south trails.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen stated part of the problem is not everyone knew the specific details of the directional trail. The commission needs to look at the projects on a case by case basis. He supports the trail but there was a surprise of the design. He suggested the updated information be put on the city's web page and get more people involved. If the directional trail needs to be completed this year; he believes that can be accomplished. He asked when the next administrative meeting is scheduled. Manager Taylor stated it is on October 31st. Manager Taylor and Director Teegarden will work on developing an update for the meeting to begin the conversation.

Commissioner O'Loughlin stated the commission has never gotten an update on the directional trail. Director Teegarden stated the directional trail was brought forward in April/May with the approval of the annual work plan.

Commissioner O'Loughlin asked that the commission get an update on the directional trail at the October 31st administrative meeting and be provided with the process that HOLMAC uses. She then asked if there is one or two directional trails, how complete are they, and are there other plans for additional amenities. Director Teegarden stated there is one directional trail with two loops and the signage will provide directions. It is different from pedestrian trails and the features will be marked. The trail is wider during the construction phase and the contract outlines the details of the project.

Chris Charlton stated the first portion of the trail is done with the exception of signage and seeding; the 2nd portion is raked out and there are plans to install two additional wooden features.

Commissioner O'Loughlin asked how typical is it that machinery is used to develop a trail in the south hills. Director Teegarden stated typically machinery is not used; however, there is nothing that prohibits the use of machinery. This is new construction and designed in an area that required machinery.

Mayor Pro Tem Noonan stated he would like to move forward with the process and not have the tone of the Beattie Street discussion. Commissioner Farris-Olsen clarified the commission will get an update at the October 31st meeting on where the directional trails are located would; in addition the commission needs to make a decision on whether or not the trails are going to be completed and the signage be installed. Director Teegarden stated she has given staff direction to install the signs.

Commissioner O'Loughlin asked if the signage is consistent with the current signage. Director Teegarden stated the design is not yet completed.

The Helena Area Trails group is trying to figure out consistent signage for the entire shared recreational area.

4. City Manager's Report –

A. BikeWalk Montana Presentation/Pop-Up Projects – Manager Taylor introduced Doug Habermann with BikeWalk Montana who gave a presentation on what BikeWalk Montana does in the community to educate people on non-motorized transportation. Pop-Up projects are being funded by an ARP grant; which are temporary traffic calming experiences.

Commissioner O'Loughlin welcomed Mr. Habermann to Helena; she noted some of the locations on the list are the same locations the commission has discussed. Engineer Leland noted staff is working

with Bike/Walk Montana and have made several recommendations for locating the temporary traffic calming and does not affect the projects the commission has approved.

Manager Taylor recommended tabling agenda items 4B, 4C, 4D, and 4F to the October 31, 2018 administrative meeting.

B. Director Residency – Manager Taylor asked the commission to review the material in the packet prior to the October 31st administrative meeting.

C. Replacement of Municipal Judge Bob Wood

D. Selection Process to Fill City Commission Vacancy – Manager Taylor reported staff will work backwards from December 17, 2018, the effective date of Commissioner Farris-Olsen's resignation, and develop a process for commission review. The vacancy will be announced on Monday, October 29th with applications due by Friday, November 16th. The four remaining commission members will develop criteria and refine the process for reviewing, scoring and selecting applicants to be interviewed; will meet to review applicants' cover letters and resumes and score applicants and narrow the field to finalists; will interview the finalists and may choose to hold an open house for the public to meet the finalist and offer feedback. If the vacancy occurs on December 17, 2018, the commission is not obligated to fill it until January 16, 2018.

E. Update on Fuller Avenue Building Purchase

F. Update on installation of LED street lights – Administrative Services Director Glenn Jorgenson referred the commission to a copy of the Email from Howard Skjervem regarding Northwestern Energy Street Light Conversion to LED. Manager Taylor stated this is an exciting project and staff will keep the commission posted as the project moves forward.

5. Department Discussions

Public Works

Micotrenching Update – City Engineer Leland reported staff received a lot of comments regarding VisionNet's installation of fiber-optic throughout the city. Staff has submitted a schedule on fixing the substandard work.

Engineer Leland reviewed the process used for review and approval for installing utilities in the city's right-of-way that includes the submitting plans for staff review and approval; a street opening permit is required that includes a traffic control plan to assure safety to the community. A private company can install the utilities or they can hire private contractors. Mini/micro trenching was used to install the utilities.

VisionNet hired two private contractors to install the fiber optic; one contractor installed the fiber optic by the city standards and one was substandard work. Staff continues to work with VisionNet; their design was approved by the commission.

At this time, staff is waiting to receive a street opening permit request with traffic control plan from Treasure State. There are standards for traffic control to assure safety for the contractor and the public. Staff has provided information to Treasure State and has asked them to pick a small project and work with staff to move forward. Once the process has been determined then a bigger project can move forward.

Treasure State representative Kevin Hamm stated he could not find the specifications for trenches that VisionNet used to install the fiber optic. This is an ongoing issues as Treasure State has not been able to use the trenches they proposed; however, staff has given them guidelines on trenches they would prefer be used. Mr. Hamm gave examples of the work VisionNet completed that does not meet the guidelines.

Engineer Leland stated VisionNet's plans met the city guidelines; which were approved by the commission. Staff is working with VisionNet to assure the project is completed to meet the guidelines.

Engineer Leland commented staff has asked Treasure State to provide information and tell staff where they are going to install the utility and what material is going to be used to backfill the trench and what material will be used to seal the crack. Staff provided a couple of suggestions.

Commissioner O'Loughlin asked how deep the utility is supposed to go. Engineer Leland stated it should be 18" deep. She then asked how does that get approved. Engineer Leland stated the

company submits a set of plans with details that shows the location and the depth. At times, staff goes out and verifies the depth.

Commissioner Farris-Olsen asked if the commission approved the standards for micro-trenching. Engineer Leland stated it is his understanding there was commission consensus on the proposed standards. The recommended standards will be included in the Engineering Standards that will be approved in 2019.

Community Development

Growth Policy Update – Community Development Director Haugen and Mike O’Connell reported to date, the Request for Proposal (RFP) has been created and published in several trade publications as well as in the Independent Record. The RFP lays out the timeline for submittal of proposals as well as a timeline for the Growth Policy update to completion, next October. A copy of the RFP is attached to this memo. We will receive proposals by November 13th and begin an immediate review with the hope to have a contract negotiated for the Commission’s approval in December.

The RFP development process involved staff members distributing a draft to the RFP working comments. Staff members compiled the diverse comments and utilized them to further narrow down the scope of the RFP into a comprehensive RFP document detailing the scope of service, staff responsibilities, and timeline for the process.

Currently, staff members and the Planning Board are working to compile detailed notes on the current Growth Policy in order to form consensus on the document's main strengths and weaknesses by the time the consultant is approved. Staff is also working diligently to assemble a diverse group of individuals to serve on the working group to guide development of the content of the Growth Policy Update. Among others, groups under consideration are Lewis & Clark County, East Helena, Helena School district, and Housing and Climate Change Task Forces. In addition, staff members are also beginning to contact topic-specific groups with the goal of holding focus-group meetings throughout the process to better inform on specific areas of the Growth Policy such as housing, recreation, culture, and the economy. Staff members can, at the discretion of the Commission, provide updates as needed throughout the RFP and update process.

Community Development Director Haugen addressed the importance of public involvement and encouraged the commission to forward ideas on how to encourage more involvement.

Planner O’Connell referred the commission to the following draft time line:

Draft Growth Policy Time Line

2018

October

- Send out draft RFP to working group: *Completed*
- Meet with working group to determine scope of service: *Completed*
- Advertise RFP: *Completed*
- Establish steering committee/working group
- Contact potential focus group members
- Establish working group meeting schedule (once a month)
- Planning Board begin to take detailed notes of current Growth Policy

November

- Review Proposals
- Interview top consultant(s)
- Contact potential focus group members
- Establish a schedule for meetings
- Gather relevant plans – Transportation plan, Capital Improvements Plan, etc.

December

- Select a consultant/formalize contract
- Planning Board work session (dependent on workload)

2019

January

- Steering committee and consultant work on concepts
- Gather information – demographics, housing information, maps

February - May

- Start public engagement – community meetings, focus groups, etc.
- Begin drafting document

June – July

- Planning Board work sessions

August- September

- Planning Board public hearing
- City Commission work sessions/administrative meetings

October

- City Commission public hearing

Also included in the packet was a copy of the Request for Proposals (RFP) – Growth Policy Update.

Commissioner O’Loughlin encouraged the consultant to be present when the commission receives the updates. She then referenced the 12-month process and asked what is the first main steps and where does the public outreach begin. Director Haugen stated the first step is to put together a working group and then finalize the scope of work. The consultant will do background work which includes focus group and public meetings. If the commission has ideas to include in the stakeholder meetings please let staff know. The public engagement process will be ongoing throughout the entire process.

Mayor Pro Tem Noonan asked that the commission receive a copy of the current Growth Policy. Planner Morell-Gengler encouraged the commission and the public to read through the current Growth Policy and submit any comments to staff. Planners Morell-Gengler and McConnell also spoke of the importance of public outreach during the entire process.

Parking

Capitol Parking Request – Parking Supervisor Dave Hewitt reported last summer the Montana General Services Division reconstructed the south parking area at the Capitol Building adjacent to Lockett Avenue. The work included making two new drive approaches where there were none before, and in doing so the state created a standard boulevard area with a sidewalk, boulevard, and curb and gutter. As a result with the redesign it created three additional on-street parking spaces for the public to access the Capitol building.

Currently, the enforcement of the Capitol Complex’s on-street parking is patrolled by the Helena Parking Commission and the Capitol’s security company Securitas and would not change with proposed restrictions.

Montana General Services Division has requested on-street parking to be restricted between the new west entrance of the south parking lot of the Capitol Building along Lockett Avenue to Montana Avenue for approximately 9 spaces for “1 Hour Parking,” and in the newly created area between the new entrances to the south lot 3 spaces for “15 minute Passenger Loading and Unloading Zone.”

Commissioner O’Loughlin asked what kind of criteria is used when considering this type of request. Engineer Leland explained what staff typically looks at is what are we taking parking away from and how are we going to enforce this request. This particular area is within the parking district; if it wasn’t the city has no enforcement authority other than the Police Department. Staff usually looks at the recommendation from the applicant.

Commissioner O’Loughlin stated previous to re-design the one-hour parking was in the circular drive and enforced by the capital security; however, with the recommendation, the enforcement is now shifted to the city of Helena. She then asked why the state is requesting the 9 on-street spots for one-hour parking and 3 spaces for “15 minutes passenger loading and unloading zone”. Code Enforcement Officer Dige explained not only was the parking in the circular drive redesigned, safety improvements were made for pedestrians.

Commissioner O’Loughlin stated the parking on the west side of the circle is designated for specific users; she expressed concerns with the parking in the area being very challenging. She asked has the state conveyed they have adequate parking for all employees in the parking lots and what is driving their request. Engineer Leland noted the state has provided some justifications; however, staff will request that a representative from the state be present to answer specific questions, either at a regular city commission meeting or an admin meeting.

Manager Taylor noted the GSD has the responsibility of the entire capital complex and noted city has worked well with them. Another issue is with the demolition of the capital hill mall, the previous shuttle service during the legislative session will not be available at that location.

Mayor Pro Tem Noonan asked what staff's recommendation is. Parking Supervisor Hewitt noted the Parking Commission already enforces some of the area; however, they do not have staff to monitor it on an hourly basis. He needs to have the conversation with the state on what their expectations are.

6. Committee discussions

- A. Helena Citizens Council – HCC Chair Sharpe stated he will give his report at the October 29th city commission meeting.

7. Review of agenda for October 29, 2018 Commission meeting – No discussion held.

8. Public comment – No public comment received.

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

10. Adjourn – The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.