

SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING

**January 22, 2020 – 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 Logan, Haladay, O’Loughlin and Dean were present.

Staff present: Acting City Manager Steve Hagen; Assistant to the City Manager Amanda Opitz; City Attorney Thomas Jodoin; Police Chief Steve Hagen; Fire Chief Ken Wood; Interim Public Works Director Eric Urban, City Engineer Ryan Leland; Transportation Systems Director David Knoepke; Parks, Recreation and Open Lands Director Kristi Ponozzo; Human Resources Director Yolanda Franco; Community Development Director Sharon Haugen; Community Facilities Superintendent Troy Sampson; Public Information Officer Rebecca Connors; Sustainability Coordinator Patrick Judge; Parking Manager Dave Hewitt; Lucy Morell-Gengler, Michael McConnell of Planning; and Interim City Clerk Dannai Clayborn.

Others in attendance included an HCC Rep Denise Roth Barber, Herb Kulow of Our Redeemer’s Church, Dr. Gregory Thomas and Executive Director BID Micky Zurcher.

2. Administrative Meeting Summary – No summary for approval

3. Commission comments, questions –

Mayor Collins asked for a moment of silence in honor of former Commissioner Ed Noonan.

Commissioner Haladay asked for an update on several projects: RFP for the Capital Mall URD, and where the process stood at this stage. Community Development Director Haugen stated City Manager Cortez was working closely with WGM on the URD and had seen an email regarding a contract but was not made aware if the contract had been signed by WGM. Commissioner Haladay requested further information on the Cruse Ave project. Director Haugen stated again the City Manager was working with WGM and another consulting firm, and as of the end of December the Manager had stated to Ms. Haugen, she had not heard back from the consultants on the Cruse Ave. project. Commissioner Haladay stated WGM had expressed they were waiting on the City’s response to both Capital Hill Mall URD and Cruse Avenue projects and requested City Staff reach out to WGM for an update on both projects.

Commissioner O’Loughlin asked for an additional update on the parking component from City Staff related to the Capital Hill Mall URD. Commissioner Haladay asked for an update on sidewalk improvements recommended by the URD advisory board, an item which was tabled by the Commission previously to explore other funding sources. Director Haugen stated she had spoken with the external applicant this afternoon, and the applicant would be in touch with Triple Tree engineering would be bringing back the scope of work, and due to the weather conditions the project had stalled. However, since the project had already been seen by the Commission once, it could be simply be brought forward to the Commission for approval once the scope of work was submitted.

Commissioner Dean requested a Proclamation could be prepared for Commissioner Noonan. Commissioner Dean asked for an update from the PIO Connors on the discussions with Macy’s Corporate offices regarding the closing of the store. Ms.

Connors stated the contacts at the Corporate office stated their decision on the closure was final. Finally, Commissioner Dean asked to hear from Herb Kulow from Our Redeemer's Church regarding the church's condominium designation. Mr. Kulow stated the Church was hoping to speak with City Staff regarding the condominium designation the Church had procured, and if there were additional steps the Church needed to take or if there was no resolution at this time for the Church. Commissioner Haladay stated he had concerns as to what specifically could be addressed by the Commission in this specific case and advised caution in dealing with single cases as it pertained to the street assessment resolution and felt this was an administrative discussion. The Commission directed Acting City Manager Hagen and City Attorney Jodoin to set up a meeting with Mr. Kulow to further discuss the Church's concerns. City Attorney Jodoin stated for the record any interpretation Staff made at this meeting would not change this year's current assessment and this matter also involves the State and County on how they interpret the City's resolution.

Commissioner O'Loughlin gave an update on the Buy-Sell Agreement for the property known as the Bus Depot. The Commissioner stated the City and Buyer had reached a tentative agreement on the deed restrictions for the affordability of units within the new development. City Attorney Jodoin stated that a reasonable middle ground was reached with the letter of credit for the development.

Board Appointments –

The Mayor was making the following recommendations for the 2020 Commission Advisory Board appointments:

Mayor Wilmot Collins

Helena Public Art Committee
City-County Board of Health
Civic Center Steering Committee

Commissioner Andres Haladay

Mayor Pro Tem
Board of Adjustment
Montana Business Assistance Connection
Non-Motorized Travel Advisory Committee

Commissioner Heather O'Loughlin

Audit Committee
Business Improvement District
Transportation Coordinating Committee

Commissioner Emily Dean

ADA Compliance Committee
Audit Committee
Transportation Compliance Committee
IT&S Board

Commissioner Sean Logan
Audit Committee
Chamber of Commerce
Mental Health Local Advisory Committee
City-County Parks Board

4. City Manager's Report

Acting City Manager Hagen asked on behalf of Rebecca Connors for a Commission representative to serve on the Non-Profit Partnership Grant Program Review Panel. Commissioner Dean offered to serve on the panel and was accepted.

5. Litigation Strategy – No report given.

6. Department Presentations

Transportation Systems –
Parking Update

Director Knoepke updated the Commission on the current status of the parking smart meters and kiosks, including service calls, the addition of new signage for free one-hour parking, transactions and revenues over the timeline since installation, and updates on the increased use of the parking app usage.

Commissioner O'Loughlin thanked City Staff for presenting the Parking update at the Downtown Helena meeting. The Commissioner stated this data also only represented a 6-month timeline, and she would be curious if the addition of new signage for the free one-hour parking would impact the data going forward. Commissioner O'Loughlin asked if any data could be provided going forward as it relates to the usage after the first half-hour free, in order to encourage additional stay time within the area, and would the data support this, additionally, the Commissioner stated the Commission may want to consider the hours of enforcement for pay parking in other municipalities, and if the Commission would want to consider changing the hours based upon this data. Commissioner O'Loughlin stated there could be discussion on who the enforcement is applied to as opposed to courtesy tickets. The Commissioner asked if these topics could be brought back for review this spring after more data points were extracted.

Commissioner Dean asked for an update on the status of the ADA compliance of the kiosks, and if it would be worth exploring a working group between the BID and the City Staff in order to keep line of communication open. Executive Director Zurcher stated the traffic study and survey being offered by BID was still needing additional work in order to procure relevant data to bring to City Staff. Commissioner Dean asked Ms. Zurcher to bring forward an idea of a BID and City Staff working group at the next BID meeting.

Transportation Systems—
Roadway Code Enforcement Update

Director Knoepke updated the Commission on the receipt and investigation of Roadway Code service requests, including the use of new City equipment, the number of

service requests, response times, and the positive feedback from the community on the MyHelena App usage.

Commissioner Logan asked for a summary of the staff response to the service call. Director Knoepke discussed the different types of service calls received and each type had a specific response accordingly. Commissioner Logan asked how many staff people were dedicated to the service calls. Director Knoepke stated two Staff were dedicated to this as a priority but helped with other matters as needed.

Commissioner Haladay asked Director Knoepke to update the Commission on how the process dealt with repeat offenders of the code and how City Staff mitigated the time between the complaint/violation and compliance. Director Knoepke stated door hangars were utilized and outreach from staff, along with an appeal process for those unable to comply for various reasons. Director Knoepke stated the response and compliance time averaged about a week or less.

Transportation Systems – Snow Operations Update

Director Knoepke updated the Commission on the implementation of the existing snow and ice control plan, including new efficiencies with new equipment and reuse of street sweepings for ice mitigation; cul-de-sac plowing would be implemented this year, as well. New equipment has dramatically reduced response and clearance time for snow and ice removal. Director Knoepke did state the department was proposing an expansion of the snow removal area to include the ambulance route to the hospital, Lockey Park, Rodney / Sanders, and areas in the Railroad district.

Community Development – 2019 Growth Policy Update

Community Development Director Haugen introduced Planners Lucy Morell-Gengler and Michael McConnell who would be presenting the update to the Commission.

After a robust public process involving over ten stakeholder meetings, 20 public outreach events and seven Helena/Lewis and Clark County Consolidated Planning Board meetings as well as a several months of taking comments and editing, the 2019 City of Helena Growth Policy Update has been recommended for approval by the City-County Consolidated Planning Board during a special meeting held on November 6, 2019.

The current Growth Policy was adopted in 2011. State law requires that the document be reviewed every five years. However, local jurisdictions can decide when to update their individual Growth Policy. Conditions in Helena have changed enough to warrant an update to the document.

The purpose of this City Commission work session is to bring all the Commissioners up to speed on the differences and direction being proposed with this update and to gather any feedback and answer any questions concerning the document or the process.

This document carries great significance for the future growth and shape of the city. The Growth Policy forms the basis for the city's zoning code and subdivision regulations. Touching on topics ranging from parks and cultural institutions to solid waste and energy conservation, this document guides City operations and impacts

how we grow for the next several decades.

Document Changes:

- Text or Editorial Updates - Edits for grammar, punctuation, typos etc., information and data updates
- Document Organization - Chapters restructured or consolidated and inclusion of revised maps and charts
- Implementation Framework - Addition of Actions Matrix supporting new and existing goals and objectives

Policy Changes:

- Neighborhood Center Development
- Urban Standards Boundary Alteration
- Affordable Housing Emphasis
- Formalizing Public Involvement

The document changes shown above will make the document more user friendly, intuitive and organized. In addition, major policy shifts will further define the importance and methods of the public process, provide more focus for City resources, and strengthen and support existing neighborhoods with compact, amenity rich neighborhood centers.

The 2019 Growth Policy Update presented to the Planning Board can be found at <https://www.helenamt.gov/government/departments/communitydevelopment/planning/long-range-planning>. Planning Board changes to that document made at their public hearing are included in the attached Planning Board Minutes.

Commissioner Dean stated thanked the Community Development staff and the process they developed for public participation in the development of this new policy. The Commissioner stated she participated in the events held by the consultant on behalf of the City and stated they were engaging, and great feedback was given by the participants, especially as it pertained to Climate policy, Sustainability and maintaining the character of neighborhoods through “neighborhood centers.” Commissioner Dean asked for the current status of the light rail project as part of the long-term goals and projections and asked for a summary of how the short/mid/long term goals were being prioritized. Director Haugen stated she had already begun developing a workplan with Staff to address the short and mid term goals. The Community Development department hoped to have a neighborhood plan completed or nearly completed by the end of the year. Director Haugen stated the long-term goals were ongoing discussions which would include budget discussions to prioritize those goals and could involve many years of work. City Staff would be continuing work on the workplan and would be regularly updating the Commission on the development of the workplan.

Commissioner Haladay asked for further information on the Urban Zoning expansion to Sierra Road, expressing concern the City was expanding this boundary when the County had not officially expanded their own Zoning initiatives to include this area. Ms. Morrell-Gengler stated the expansion was adopted when considering the possibility of annexation by the City in the future, and thus allowing coordination with

the County on annexation and development standards in this area. Ms. Morell-Gengler stated the County was currently working on the adoption of Zoning in the rural areas outside the area in question, and once completed for the rural areas the County's intent was to work on the Urban Zoning boundary closer to the current City limits to include the Sierra Road area.

Director Haugen stated the first viewing of the Growth Policy adoption would be on February 10th and again in the first meeting in March.

8. Committee discussions – None received.

9. Review of agenda for January 27, 2020 Commission meeting – agenda reviewed.

10. Public comment –

Herb Kulow asked for clarification on the meeting being scheduled with himself and Staff, and expressed support for Commissioner Haladay's concerns over single or specific exceptions to the assessment, stating this was not the Church's intent.

Micky Zurcher stated Director Haugen and herself were working on a joint letter to the Department of Commerce for reclassification from Affiliated to Designated, which would allow for access to additional grant money and several other advantages for the City.

Diana Cameron, HCC representative, thanked the City staff for the work on the Growth Policy, and offered her support for the new policy.

11. Commission discussion and direction to City Manager – direction previously given.

Acting City Manager stated he would direct City Staff to update the Commission on the URD's for Capital Hill Mall, Cruse Avenue, and 6th Ward; have City Staff work with Our Redeemer's Church to resolve their concerns; have a parking ordinance update in the spring; and create a proclamation in honor of Commissioner Ed Noonan.

12. Adjourn – The meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.