



**HELENA OPEN LANDS MANAGEMENT  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
SUMMARY  
February 12, 2019**



City of Helena

**GENERAL MEMBERS:**

- Betsy Ross
- Eric Sivers
- Jeff Shirley
- Karen Reese
- Brian Barnes

**CITY OF HELENA STAFF REPRESENTATIVES:**

- Brad Langsather, Open Lands Manager
- Greta Dige, Code Enforcement
- Jennifer Schade, Recorder

**CITY-COUNTY PARKS BOARD REPRESENTATIVE:**

- Ross Johnson

**HELENA CITIZENS COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE:**

- Denise Roth Barber

**ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS:**

**Helena Tourism Alliance Representative**

- Andrea Opitz

**PPLT Representative**

- Evan Kulesa

**LOCATION: City-County Building, Room 326**

**TIME: 5:30 Pm – 7:00 pm**

**Call to Order**

**Welcome/Introductions/Visitors**

- Nick Sovner

**Minutes Approval – January 8, 2019**

- Betsy asked for clarification on the minutes. In discussing the 2019 Work Plan, she asked if the trail moratorium includes any sort of maintenance or signage. Brad stated this does not include maintenance. Maintenance is included on the update.
- With no further comments, Eric moved to approve the minutes as presented. Betsy seconded. Motion carried.

**HOLMAC Action Items**

**New Business**

New Member Introduction

- Brian was unable to attend the meeting this evening. Jeff stated Brian works for the DEQ (in finance).
- Evan then asked how the appointment process work to become a member of this board. As board vacancies become available, the city advertises for said vacancies. Brad stated interested community members will contact the Mayors office for an application. The vacancy on HOLMAC brought in about a dozen applications. The applications were reviewed by the Mayor and the Helena City Commission and they in turn selected the person to be a representative.

### HOLMAC's Representation on HOLTAC

- Brad stated we still have some time to select the HOLMAC representative for HOLTAC. If all goes according to plan and we pick a consultant, the actual meetings won't start until April. We can make our decision at the March meeting.
- Because of the makeup of the group, Brad stated most of these meetings would be held in the evening.

### HOLTAC

- Brad announced that we have had two more groups that have committed to HOLTAC (Montana Audobon and Montana Native Plant Society). This brings us (including HOLMAC) to 15 interested parties.
- Groups represented include:
  - ▶ Carroll College
  - ▶ Friends of Mount Helena
  - ▶ Helena Outdoor Club
  - ▶ Helena Hikes
  - ▶ Helena Ranger District
  - ▶ Helena Tourism Alliance
  - ▶ Helena Ultra Runners League (HURL)
  - ▶ PPLT
  - ▶ Helena United Cycling
  - ▶ Helena Area Trails Users
  - ▶ HOLMAC
  - ▶ Montana Audobon
  - ▶ Montana Native Plant Society
  - ▶ Helena Bicycle Guild
  - ▶ Narrate
- A couple of these groups are newly formed.

### Discussion of updating the rest of the Open Lands Management Plan

- Brad asked board members to review the open lands management plan in it's entirety. We are already evaluating the section of most concern. Brad then directed board members to a page taken from the work plan – Criteria to Evaluate Project Success. This section covers the following items:
  - 12.4.1 Monitoring and Evaluation
  - 12.5 Plan Updates
- If we identify areas that need to be updated, HOLMAC may decide to formally update the plan.
- Brad then stated that In 2009, we committed to a 10-year forestry plan. These chapters were very well-written and Brad does not see a need to change that part of the plan.
- We don't want to jump into an update, just to update. City finances are limited and these types of things are expensive. Our annual assessment is currently not meeting our needs and we are going into our reserves.
- We are covering many of the items with our management. Chapter 9 discusses boundaries which we have addressed. We address these issues as they come up.
- In short, Brad does not see a reason to update the rest of the plan. Again, he encouraged the board to read through the plan and highlight areas of concern.

### **Parks and Recreation Report – Brad**

#### Update on RFP

- The RFP was sent out at the end of January 2019.
- Brad stated that he sent ten requests out. Two of the companies declined immediately. There were six Montana companies and four out of state. The two that declined were from Missoula.
- Brad is concerned that the scheduling and timing is going to be an issue for multiple groups.
- The responses are due by the 1st of March.

### 2019 Open Lands Work Plan Additions/Changes

- One of the changes made to this plan was based on the presentation from the Disc Golf group at the last HOLMAC meeting (page 2; facilities; bullets 3 and 4).
- We have agreed to facilitate the installation of two-four disc golf holes in the southwest corner of Govt. Lot 1, Section 4, T.9 N., R. 3 W., Lewis and Clark County, MT (Donaldson Property).
- We will also install the segment of fence to make sure we know where that boundary is. We are already fenced on the south side so it is a matter of extending the fence to the north of the southwest corner and bringing that up to the entrance gate.
- Brad was reminded that we need to install an informational kiosk adjacent to the southwest corner of the Disc Golf Parking area. We will get this done this year. While we can't post "no smoking" signs, we will post the fire danger in the summer on the kiosk.
- There have been issues with trespassing (uncontrolled access) by contractors and adjacent homeowners. Jeff stated he has seen contractors trespassing on our property. Greta reminded board members that if they see contractors trespassing on city property to please contact our office immediately.
- Brad addressed similar issues with Beattie street. Per the work plan, the city will install approximately 2,000 feet of post and rail fencing on the western and southern borders of the SW ¼, Section 31, T. 10 N., R. 03 W., Lewis & Clark County, MT & the eastern side of the Little Moab Trail in the N1/2NE1/4SW1/4, Section 31, T. 10 N., R. 03 W., Lewis & Clark County, MT.
- The fencing does meet our requirements of identifying boundaries.
- Under Reclamation, Brad added that the city will install post and rail fencing along that portion of the DeFord Trail situated below the Archery Range access road and immediately adjacent to several unauthorized earthen bike jumps located just east of the Dry Gulch draw bottom. Machine level the earthen jumps with a skid steer to discourage further development/use and seed disturbed areas with one or more of the aforementioned native grass seed species.
- Lastly, Brad added: Trail Improvement Objectives, Trail Sign Installation, Trail Volunteer Program, Mapping, and Miscellaneous Tasks that were discussed between he and Evan.
- Brad would like to coincide the work plan final and the RFP schedule. We will put the work plan out for comment for 60 days. Brad also discussed a postcard mailing (which could potentially cost \$4,000).

### Weeds – Greta

- In reviewing the weed section of the plan, Greta stated PPLT has agreed to do some additional weed pulls throughout the summer.
- Greta added some other additional items in the hopes of getting more volunteers. She will also recruit someone who can provide information on biocontrol agents.
- Greta will continue working on the city's weed management page (posting what we do and how we do it).
- She is putting together the plan for herbicide treatments for the coming year. City contracts are requiring prevailing wage so Greta is unsure how this will affect what we do.
- Greta added that if anyone knows of a weed contractor who is looking for work to please let her know.
- Evan stated the importance of getting the word out that we will be doing more weed-related events. PPLT may be able to assist Greta with the monitoring mapping as well.

### Report from PPLT

- Evan encouraged board members to read through the objectives for PPLT.
- Early in the season, PPLT will try to work the northwest, MT Helena trails. They will seed and reclaim segments of the trails that have been artificially widened by pedestrian traffic.
- Evan then asked Brad if there is a liability issue with getting rid of the jumps in the lower Davis area. Brad stated those can be leveled out. This could fall under reclamation.

### Other

- Brad was contacted by a citizen who was concerned that there was some elk hunting on Mount Ascension that was infringing on open lands. Brad investigated this and stated there was some hunting; however, it was on private property. Brad is recommending that we post every 100 feet that this area is City of Helena Open Lands. He is also recommending we add “no hunting or off-road vehicular activity”.
- The RFP for Mount Helena will go out in about a month. Brad has asked the DNRC for an extension of the grant for an additional year on Mount Helena so we can divide the work over a two-year period.
- Burning has begun on both Mount Helena and Mount Ascension. We will go wide-open on March 1<sup>st</sup>.

### Nob Hill Property Discussion

- No discussion.

### **Public Comment**

**Next Meeting Date: March 12, 2019**

### **Future Agenda Items**

### **Adjournment**

With no further business, the February HOLMAC meeting adjourned at 6:47 pm.

### **ADA NOTICE**

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