



**HELENA OPEN LANDS MANAGEMENT  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
AGENDA  
November 13, 2018**



City of Helena

**CITY MEMBERS REPRESENTATIVE:**

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

**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: Deedee Dowden, Nick Sovner**

**Minutes Approval – March, 2018**

- It is not practical to keep minutes while doing field trips.
- The field trip schedule was posted on the website.
- Denise suggested we post **“There were no minutes for the month of: June”** (etc.) on the website.
  - **Field trip in lieu of meeting**
- We do get the field trip information posted onto the website as well. Field trips typically begin in April.
- With no corrections noted, Eric moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Jeff seconded. All agreed. Motion carried.

**HOLMAC Action Items**

**New Business**

Election of Officers

- Brad announced that it is time for HOLMAC to nominate and approve a new Chairperson. The Chairperson will be responsible for communication with the Open Lands Manager on items such as the agenda, coordinating field trips, etc. The Chair is also responsible for conducting the meetings (i.e., keeping board members on task, etc.).
- Denise Roth Barber volunteered to be Chairperson of HOLMAC. All members are in agreement.

## Parks and Recreation Report – Brad

- We have received a request to revise the recreation portion of the 2004 work plan which will entail a two-step process. The first step will be to go through the process of finding someone who can facilitate this process. This will include a RFP (Request for Proposals) for the facilitator.
- Brad distributed the 2004 work plan and asked that board members review this plan prior to the December meeting. The plan can also be viewed at: [http://www.helenamt.gov/fileadmin/user\\_upload/City\\_Parks/Open\\_Lands/Documents/Helena\\_Open\\_Lands\\_Management\\_Plan.pdf](http://www.helenamt.gov/fileadmin/user_upload/City_Parks/Open_Lands/Documents/Helena_Open_Lands_Management_Plan.pdf). Remember this is specific to recreation.
- In December we will have a work meeting where we will decide how to structure the scope of services. In that, we will:
  - ✚ Decide how many community meetings we will have.
  - ✚ Are we going to break it out geographically? Brad added that he feels there is some purpose in doing it in that manner.
  - ✚ How will we address the different items?
- By reading through the 2004 plan, you will be able to figure out how the scope of services could be designed.
- Please work through the plan and make notes on the structuring the public meetings. To be successful, we will have to have organized structure to hand off to the facilitator so the facilitator can design effective public meetings. We will also need to look at the financial commitment involved with hiring a facilitator.
- Brad will work on:
  - ✚ A city-wide distribution list (for public meeting notifications, etc.).
  - ✚ A list of those we will send the RFP out to. Brad stated he is open to suggestions from the board of facilitators we may want to reach out to. We have used facilitators for past exercises so some of those may be revisited. We need to send the RFP out to a fairly large audience.
- There is a lot of value in having a professional facilitator run the meetings. The facilitator will have the time to take the comments from one public meeting and have them ready for the next meeting. They know how to run these meetings effectively.
- Our goal should be to get input from all portions of the community and that in turn goes into structuring how we revise the plan.
- We also need to decide if we want the facilitator to produce the revision or if we want them to just facilitate the meetings. Brad feels it is important that whoever is selected for facilitation should also produce the plan. Evan suggested perhaps we send the RFP out to similar groups that worked on the Comprehensive Parks Plan. Brad stated he will be looking at several different firms. **Brad will provide the board with the RFP from 2004 and the RFP from the 10-Mile effort.** These two reports were provided by the same firm. The survey done in 2004 and the public sessions had a lot of value. We have to have the RFP ready to present to the commission in February. In December, HOLMAC will need to work on a rough draft of the RFP. In the interim period, Brad will send out a couple of drafts of other efforts for the board to review. Just covering recreation will make this process somewhat easier. Brad reminded everyone that Beattie Street is off the table. The decision has been made.
- Denise asked for clarification. We are updating just the recreation component of the plan. As Denise understands it, the city will be looking for a facilitator that will a) be in charge of gathering public input, and/or b) assist in the development of the recreation plan. Brad stated that this is what HOLMAC needs to decide in the next couple of months. Do we want this facilitator to be responsible for running the meetings and gathering the information, or do we want them to take it through to

the rewrite of the plan? Denise stated to answer these questions, HOLMAC will need to know what the timeline looks like and what the city budget looks like. Does the city have money in the budget for the 2019 fiscal year or will this be done using the 2020 fiscal year budget? Brad stated the process will start once we get the RFP's back and make a decision on who to hire. Our goal is to start the facilitating process in the spring of 2019. We may have to dip into open space reserves. Denise then asked who will decide what the scope of services will ultimately look like? Brad stated the RFP will be presented to commission prior to sending it out for bids. Until that point, it will be the work of HOLMAC to create a scope of services. The facilitator will need a general structure that HOLMAC will create.

- **Brad will send some examples of RFP's to board members for review.** December will be a work session. At what point does the public provide input into the RFP? Generally we don't have public input on the structuring of the RFP. Public participation will be key in the planning process.
- Denise recommended we encourage our facilitator to communicate with other entities (PPLT, BLM, etc.) when working through the plan. Those other groups will have a vested interest in this process.
- Karen - for clarification, the timeline for the RFP is to have that available to the commission in February. HOLMAC can then make a determination on the submission and the selection process of proposals. Brad would like to see this process completed within the 2019 year.
- Nick Sovner then asked if it would be beneficial to reach out to the potential companies prior to sending the RFP in an effort to determine what we may need to include in the RFP. Denise stated that might be a conflict of interest – to contact one company who may or may not submit a RFP.
- It was recommended that we apply for a community development block grant for planning through the Department of Commerce's Community Development Block Grant Program. Brad stated that was a good idea. Grant funds will definitely help.
- It is the goal that the city will have an updated plan by mid-summer; possibly fall. It will depend on how many public meetings we have and on the facilitator.
- Brad then added that we (city and HOLMAC) will put all our energies in working on this RFP and update of the Recreation section of the 2004 work plan. The balance of the work plan (for forestry projects and weed projects) already has specific deadlines in place.
- Deedee mentioned that she has attended a couple of the admin meetings and was under the impression that the commission wanted the RFP draft by December. Brad stated that due to turnover (specifically Amy retiring), December would be difficult to present. Denise added that her understanding was that three of the commissioners had presented a letter requesting the information by December, but at the last admin meeting changed their minds on that date. Brad stated the more homework HOLMAC members can do now, the more effective they will be at the December work session.
- Denise asked for clarification on the moratorium. Eric stated they had concensus direction on a moratorium for all on-going and future trail and open lands projects. Is it the commission's decision to reverse their approval of the most recent work plan? They wish to put a moratorium on decisions they previously made. The commission needs to be very clear.
- Brad stated there are two different issues. There is the thought of a moratorium because we are going to go through this public process and then the question of what gets applied to the completion of the directional trail. City staff will present to the commission where we are at with the directional trail project. At this time, the project is 95% complete. Lime Kiln and DeFord projects are on hold. As Brad understands it, the Beattie Street Trailhead project will not be part of the planning process. Brad will get clarity on the engineering process.

- Denise proposes that HOLMAC submit a letter by tomorrow to the city stating that they are not in favor of the moratorium on current projects, specifically the directional trail and the Beattie Street Trailhead – both of which the city approved.
- Brad stated this is a good time for HOLMAC to express their concerns to the commission. Ales for Trails submitted a letter to commission as well.
- Denise then asked for a second to her motion that:
  - ✚ HOLMAC will submit a letter to the commission stating they are in support of no new trail plans until the recreation portion of the work plan has been updated; however,
  - ✚ HOLMAC strongly recommends lifting the moratorium on current projects that have been approved with grant funds received.
- Denise can draft the letter today. If all are in agreement, we will submit it to the city tomorrow.
- Eric stated that Beattie Street is off of the table because the decision has been made. Karen stated she is concerned because both of these items were approved for commission. The last letter Denise saw was unclear which projects were to be placed in moratorium.
- Tomorrow’s meeting will include the discussion of the directional trail. Evan stated we should leave Beattie Street out of this letter. The commission has allowed city staff to move forward with the engineering process for Beattie Street.
- **Denise will send a draft letter out to HOLMAC this evening for approval. She will leave out the Beattie Street Trailhead. However, for the record, Denise is still concerned that when we put forth a plan for the Beattie Street engineer, someone will still believe that the Beattie Street Trailhead was part of the moratorium.**
- Nick Sovner then asked about the section of the letter submitted to the commissioners that states:
  - ✚ “While HOLMAC can remain in existence, it should no longer have the recreation component under its purview”.
- Brad stated this has been revisited at the admin meeting and this is no longer on the table. That letter was a proposal by three of the commissioners. Public comment was provided and this is no longer an issue to address.
- Brad added that HOLMAC is an advisory coalition – they don’t make decisions. They advise city staff on issues as they relate to open lands.
- Evan – is there any conversation about HOLMAC expanding it’s committee? This structure was decided by commission. The way other community members can participate is sub-committees. As far as changing assignments, this would need to be done by commission.
- Denise recommended a standing agenda item: Greater Helena Trails Committee – perhaps PPLT can provide updates at this meeting.
- Brad added that there is a newly created trails steering committee that could perhaps give updates to HOLMAC.
- **Denise asked Evan if he would serve as liaison for both of these trail committees. Evan agreed to do that.**
- Deedee is confused about the use of “directional trail”. Is there a better way of describing this? Brad stated the reason it is called a directional trail is because it is not designed to ascend. The other directional trail above Davis (above the Old Shooting Range) is another trail that is not designed to ascend.
- Evan stated we need to make certain we define things like “directional trails”, etc. in the recreation plan. Eric added that 1906 is an “uphill directional trail”. Making this information more clear may help the public during the update process.
- The signage for the directional trail will be presented before commission at tomorrow’s meeting.

- Brad stated the grass seeding has been completed. He is hopeful for a lot of germination. Eric agreed that will be very beneficial! We will rake and reseed in the spring. They also reseeded After Shock Trail.
- December will be a work session. Brad will design the agenda to move the board along on how we want to create the RFP.

## **Reports from Subcommittees**

### Weeds

- None.

### Report from PPLT

- None.

### Cultural Resources

- None.

### Wildlife

- None.

### Forestry

- None.

## **Public Comment**

**Next Meeting Date: December 11, 2018 at 5:30 pm**

**Future Agenda Items:**

**Adjournment:**

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