



**HELENA OPEN LANDS MANAGEMENT  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Meeting Minutes/Time Stamped Summary  
September 13, 2022**



**GENERAL MEMBERS**

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- Grant Jackson
- Joel Peden
- Lindsay Gilstrap

**CITY OF HELENA STAFF**

- Brad Langsather, Open Lands Manager
  
- Heather Kahler, Recorder

**CITY-COUNTY PARKS BOARD**

- David McGuire

**HELENA CITIZENS COUNCIL**

- T.J. Lehmann

**ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS**

- Helena Tourism Alliance Representative
- Andrea Opitz

**PPLT REPRESENTATIVE**

- Nate Kopp
- Tim Lawrence

**Meeting Date and Time: September 13, 2022 // 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm**

**Zoom Link:**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/1gmbz59Ntujwui-ZsVYRb-X6zdDvhlJaWld4lNcuji9SttrAZ2pHZhbhqiej1GD.xiyWeb0etg3lstdB>

Call to Order – TS: 01:06

Welcome/Introductions/Visitors – TS: 1:08

Guests: Dr. G – Member of the public

TS: 02:14 Established there were not enough board members present to establish a quorum

Minutes Approval N/A no quorum

- April 12, 2022

HOLMAC Action Items N/A no quorum

- Elect a new HOLMAC Chairperson

New Business

- Determine board vacancies – **TS: 04:00**
  - Heather had a list of names and appointment dates, went around the room/zoom to go through with each member present and their knowledge of their own term
  - Heather stated that she would gather this information and let the Clerk of the Commission's Office know what vacancies this board has and to begin the filling process.
  - Further board member process discussion continued and the importance of keeping member terms and information up to date between the Parks office and the Mayor's office.
  
- Public Comments Upper DeFord Project – **TS: 10:55**
  - Brad mentioned that the next step is to carry this project to the City Commission but the process was delayed based on there was not a HOLMAC meeting this past summer and the Parks Department hadn't had a Parks Director until recently. This project will soon get run through the City Commission for approval then to begin develop a strategy to begin funding for this project.
  
- Open Lands Annexation Parcels – **TS: 12:12**
  - As our growth has occurred, some of the added parcels are not in Helena City limits and Brad would like to get these annexed into the City limits. One property is on Mount Helena and the other on Mount Ascension. They can only annex in the locations in Lewis and Clark County.
  - Brad and the Parks Director will be working with the City Community Development Department.
  
- Mount Helena Fire Report - **TS: 16:55**
  - Brad reported the location of where the fire began and what volunteer groups came out to help. The air fire fighting was very efficient.
  - 18 acres was caught in the fire.
  - Brad said fire mitigation helped and is all in favor of continuing fire mitigating
  - A group is hired to go up and take out the burnt trees, roughly 1000 trees were impacted and will be removed
  - Brad explained the Open Lands role and they had to close trails, close trail head parking lots, put up signage, and just help keep people out of the area.
  
- Lower DeFord Project Update – **TS: 24:30**
  - Volunteers and helpers are all very happy and satisfied with the outcome.
  - The bike skills and ride by trail are in and constructed and is functioning very well. A large portion of bike traffic is using the new trail.
  - A picnic table was installed for visitors
  - Decided not to do a divider fence because there hasn't seem to be a need.
  - Lindsay had asked for clarification on the funding of the project and where the funds came from. Brad said the Ales for Trails event, a social media campaign and the Montana Bicycle Guild donated as well.
  - Lindsay asked Brad to give updates on a couple projects the working group was curious where he was at in the process– **TS 28:08**

- Lindsay addressed to a few concerns from the public comments of DeFord Project and how best to respond to those.
- Ambrose Accessible Trail Update - **TS: 39:51**
  - The overlook is now finished and is getting a ton of use. More resting benches were requested so they've installed 3 additional benches.
  - It was an interesting year for the new trail as it endured a flood, then a fire and some more sprucing up needs to be done. There was a counter put in and the accessible trail is getting lots of use.
- Property line issues are occurring on Mount Ascension that Brad is dealing with.

Public Comment – **TS: 49:09**

- Andrea Opitz shared her gratitude of the hard work during the Mount Helena fire. She then asked if there had been any social or environmental issues as it relates to more use from tourists. Brad said at covid there was a big surge of increased usage, but in all functional trailheads, things are going very well. Restrooms are being cleaned about 3 times per week and the department is doing well keeping up with maintenance.
- Discussion continued about the bike/van tours and where that program is currently standing, its challenges and benefits.

Future Agenda Items

Adjournment – TS: 01:07:07

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