



City of Helena

**HELENA OPEN LANDS MANAGEMENT  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
SUMMARY  
December 13, 2016**

**City Members Representative**

- Betsy Miller
- Eric Sivers
- Jeff Shirley
- Dan Wirak
- Vacant

**City-County Parks Board Representative**

- Dave Payne

**Helena Citizens Council Representative**

- Vacant

**City of Helena Staff Representatives**

- Brad Langsather, Open Lands Manager
- Greta Dige, Code Enforcement

**Helena Tourism Alliance Representative**

- Jennifer Davis

**LOCATION: City of Helena Parks and Recreation – Room 326**

**TIME: 5:30 Pm – 7:00 pm**

**Call to Order**

- Chairman, Dan Wirak called the Helena Open Lands Management Advisory Committee to order at 5:30 pm. A quorum was present.

**Welcome/Introductions/Visitors**

Nate Kopp

**Minutes Approval:**

- The minutes from the December 13, 2016 were approved as presented.

**HOLMAC Action Items**

- Mutt Mitt advertising
  - Nothing to report. Per Brad – this needs to be removed from further agendas.
- Lodge pole parcel access/sale to residence
  - Brad reported no change on this.
- Van Hook raised walkway and land purchase
  - Brad distributed a map for members to review. The wetlands conservation committee met with Hurni who has the property located at the top of the map off of Silsbee. We were hoping that with the last of their grant funds that this lot could be acquired to locate a kiosk and some parking spots, but unfortunately this property was sold to another party. So this lot is off the list. Everything else on the grant has been acquired except for the parcel south of Willow. Amy, Greta and Brad will meet with Wetlands Conservation Committee to review the strategy for the price parcel. The walkway is hold for now.
- Davis St. parking lot, Water line parking on Orofino, Beattie street parking.

- Brad has met with the street department and they have approved us expanding the Davis Street parking areas. The committee discussed soft expansion opportunities in this area. Brad still needs to meet with the state highway department to see where they are with the water line parking on Orofino, but Brad hopes to move forward with this in the spring.
- Brad distributed the letter he received regarding the Beattie street parking. The BLM has determined the construction of a trailhead parking area (approximately 40,000 square feet) as described on the application BLM received on 09.16.2016, is consistent with the intended use of the land patented to the City of Helena for the Beattie Street Park. The area that houses the restroom, the kiosk, and the mutt mitt station, will occupy another 6,000 – 7,000 square feet. Amy and Brad have met with the engineering department and they will begin the formal plan. Where we built the new fence on the east side, Brad has asked engineering to include a bus parking area. There will be continued conversation of the best area for the restroom, parking spots, etc. When asked if the trails will have to be ADA compliant, Brad stated no; however, the restrooms and the kiosk area will have to be ADA compliant. Brad has asked engineering to design the lot as a graveled area and not paved.
- Brad then stated that the Recreation Trails Grant application is due on the first of February so Brad is hoping to have cost estimates back from engineering. The grant will be more focused on the kiosk and restrooms.
- The next step after we receive everything back from engineering is to go to the commission to present our plan. We will also have a meeting with the public neighborhood to discuss these changes.
- PPLT trails committee report, Nate or Dan
  - Per Nate – PPLT Trails Committee did not meet so there is nothing to report. Next meeting is scheduled for January 9, 2017.
- Counters, any further discussion?
  - Nate stated they have completed the season. 6-months of trail counts indicate we are averaging about 2,000 – 3,000 hits per week. We did experience loss of some of the information as the counter at Mt. Helena was tampered with. By moving around some of the counters, Nate was able to gather additional information on mountain bike traffic vs. hiking traffic. The numbers were pretty consistent between the four trailheads. In speaking with Brad, Nate would like to see a more permanent set up on Mt. Helena. Brad stated it will be interesting to look at the mountain bike data from this last year. Per Dan – it is important to know who our biggest trailheads users are. Nate stated that in the City of Helena, there is still definitely more hiker traffic.
- Trail improvement discussion\ Ideas for 2017 work plan
  - Brad will meet with PPTL in January to begin this process. He is requesting thoughts from HOLMAC for any major new trails suggestions or major reroute suggestions and any major maintenance projects. One carry-over project from this year will be the extension of the Bull Run trail that goes from Saddle Drive to California. We want to extend this trail from California to Golf Rush but we will need to do a survey before we begin this project. All other new construction and major maintenance projects have been accomplished. **Brad requested that committee members submit suggestions via email at [blangsather@helenamt.gov](mailto:blangsather@helenamt.gov), and he will include that information in his discussion with PPLT.**
- Other?
  - None.

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

- We had a project up by the communication tower (cleanup – forestry project) that was underway as of a week ago. We had a second contractor working in that area. The grant that is paying for this project ends at the end of February 2017. Depending on weather, we may have to terminate these projects.
- Brad is processing final paperwork for all of our grants.
- We are still working on getting into the new maintenance facility.
- Brad will be bringing in a seasonal worker to get the burning done on Mt. Ascension. We did get our winter burn permit.
- Brad is still contemplating the possibility of a two-month cross country ski track on Mt. Ascension. Road isn't formally plowed at this time so we would need to consider that if we move forward with this project.
- Forestry projects are almost complete.

### **Reports from Subcommittees**

- Weeds - Greta
  - We are very fortunate that we have a very active group with the wetland conservation group. They pulled a little over 100 pounds of weeds in the Charles Van Hook area.
  - Greta submitted a noxious weed trust fund grant application. This grant encompasses all of the south hill trails and any adjacent property. Out of the 186 support letters sent to property owners, Greta has received approximately 35% of the letters back in favor of this project.
  - Total funds we are requesting are \$14,492. Grant presentations are at the end of February 2017. We partnered on the forest service with this.
  - Greta will be attending the Montana Weed Control Association (MWCA) conference in Great Falls in January. MWCA is looking to add to the noxious weed list this year at the legislature.
  - Greta and several others in the weed community were contacted by a gentleman from Colorado State University looking to study Toadflax and the difference between Yellow and Dalmatian Toadflax and the hybridization trying to figure out where this could crop up. Greta gave our insect release sights to the student for his study.
  - Dan stated the chair for the FWP Subcommittee is trying to put together a bill for this legislative session that would encompass all weed control. Dan then said he will email Greta the gentleman's name to contact.
- Report from PPLT
  - None.
- Cultural Resources
  - None.
- Wildlife
  - **None**
- Forestry
  - None

### **Public Comment**

- None.

**Next Meeting Date: February 14, 2016**

**Future Agenda Items:**

- None listed.

**Adjournment:**

- With no further business, HOLMAC adjourned at 7:11 pm.

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