

Helena Citizen Conservation Board

May 12, 2023 Final Meeting Minutes

The Meeting was both In Room 426 of the City-County Building and via Zoom

1. Roll Call and Welcome (2:09)

- Members Present: Mark Juedeman, Dick Sloan, Lori Fitzgerald, Devon Malizia, Jason Selong, and Diana Hammer
- Members Excused: Denise Roth Barber
- Public present: Dr. G
- City staff present: Leea Anderson & Miranda Griffis, Kim Carly, Jacki Pierson

2. Review and Approval of April 13, 2023 Meeting Minutes (3:05)

Dick moved and Devon seconded the approval of the meeting minutes. Motion was approved unanimously

3. Officers' Report (4:20)

New Board members? No applications at this time

Appointment timing?

- CCB Representative to the Consultant Selection Committee for the Sustainability Audit

4. Recap of City/County Advisory Board Training May 11, 2023

Per the Board training, we are to have no 'subcommittees' or 'committees' to avoid the closed meeting issues. But informal gatherings can happen, so long as they do not constitute a quorum of the whole Board. Key is to not formally call the groups 'committees' or 'subcommittees' or else open meeting rules require an agenda, sufficient public notice, minutes, etc.

5. Report from the Public Works Department – Miranda Griffis and Leea Anderson

- FY24 Budget Highlights. Leea said there is nothing really new since the last time. PWD and Transportation Depts presented to their budget. Warm storage unit will be looked at by the Transportation Dept.

- Follow-up re:

- Meeting minutes availability - no platform has been decided, so no update. Meeting minutes will be made available on the CCB page no later than 30 days, but they typically upload them within a week. We need to send them the final, not draft, versions of the minutes right after the meetings so they can post them
- City residential water meters: They have replaced ~4,500 meters between 2005-2006. They try to replace between 500-700/year but during Covid, the supplies were lower. There are ~13,000 total accounts with water meters so the City is looking at contracting with a company to replace the remaining ones all at once.

Dr. G asked what is being done to shield residents from the electromagnetic field in the smart meters that are going to be installed. Leea did not know and said she would look into that.

- Water usage bar graph: the new billing system is not capable of producing those similar to what the power bill produces. Jason suggested providing monthly usage median figures to be added to the insert of the bills, so that customers could see where their usage falls.
- WaterWise Garden Tour Story Map: the City lost its GIS specialist, so Leea is going to reach out to Eric Spangler, for some training. Also, Leea said the City needs to have the property owners sign a release before the City can move forward. Diana noted that the plan originally was to have this information available to the public in early spring, in time for summer and that the legal issue had been raised months earlier.
- Sustainability priorities and project updates:
 - The City received a final report from the MSU capstone, with three options to separate the glass from the plastic flow controls), and it will be put on the website soon. Leea and Miranda toured the AshGrove plant and the company said it is interested in taking glass again, if any of those options pan out.
 - The RFP for the Sustainability Audit opened this week and it will be closed the first (or 2nd) week of June. It has not yet been posted yet, but when it is posted, it will be on [this page](#) of the City's website.

After proposals are reviewed for completeness, they will schedule the

interim committee meeting. It will be closer to July when the review is finished. CCB may not have a representative on this committee as it may be deemed as outside of our scope.

- PWD's FY24 Budget priorities

- The City will be using ARPA funds to improve the flumes from the Scott to Chessman reservoir, since only ~20% of the water that gets pumped gets to Chessman. PWD is also doing filter replacements at TenMile and further improving the water rights for 3 wells at the Missouri River plant. And replacing the piping for the methane boiler with stainless steel pipes and doing a lot of electricity upgrades. PWD also wants to replace the Spencer blower with a turbine blower which will result in a reduction of electricity usage. This year or next, we are also hoping to replace the mixers which will result in significant energy savings. Mark asked about the zero interest renewable energy revolving loan fund program. Leea said that right now, there is about \$300,000 and the Commission is anticipating another \$60,000 to be added in the FY24 budget.. About \$500,000 has been lent so far.
- The Solar project is nearly finished. The EV charging stations project is also coming along but not yet operational. The electric street sweeper has had some mechanical issues so was out of commission for a bit, which was anticipated. The charging station at the Golf Course can charge the sweeper if it is running low. Regarding the payment, MT Law used to require that these charging stations can only charge by time, but soon they can charge by time and KW usage, per a bill on the Governor's desk to be signed. New charging stations are going to be added too - a new one near the Valley Bank/Murdochs on Montana and another one by Electrify America near Target, and a new one at the new Town Pump going into at E Helena (will be the 2nd largest one in the state).
- Advisory Board Bylaws - will be coming up with the June 20th work session

5. Unfinished Business (48:56)

Budget Recommendations and Discussion. Commissioner Logan will be asking for ARPA funds to go towards solar at the May 25th Administrative meeting.

6. Emerging Issues / Other Business (50:00)

Miranda is looking into applying for a USDA grant for a composting pilot project in June. Stay tuned.

Election of officers: June meeting

Guest speakers at future meetings: Diana reached out to Natalie Myers, Sustainability Coordinator in Bozeman, and Caroline Bean, SC in Missoula to discuss their Sustainability programs with the Board and confirmed Caroline will join us in June and Natalie in August.

7. Issue Reports (54:25)

- Waste Reduction - Dick expressed concern that people are still throwing away recyclables. The Integrated Solid Waste Plan is progressing but the survey that was sent out received ~1800 responses from city and county responses.
- Energy and Transportation - no report
- Water Conservation - Devon mentioned that Growing Friends will donate several trees for the xeriscaping demonstration at the Law & Justice Center. AERO is having its annual Expo in Helena Oct 20-21st. The GoodKind building was reserved for a water conservation display during the month of August. Rain Barrel and other water conservation workshops are being planned for summer.

8. Announcements (1:06) - NONE

9. Public Testimony (1:06:15) - NONE

10. Action Items from this meeting

- CCB will check with Dannai about when the CCB will be presenting its annual report to the Commission
- Leea and Miranda can send a link to the RFP for the Sustainability report when it is posted
- The Exec Cmte will meet and reach out to our upcoming speakers

11. Agenda for Next Month's Meeting – June 8, 2023 (1:08)

- Elect Officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary)

- Speaker: Caroline Bean, Missoula Sustainability Program Manager

The meeting was **adjourned at minute 1:15:20**