

Helena Citizens Council Regular Meeting
January 24, 2007

Members present: Al Tompkins, Bill Roberts, Bob Habeck, Ellen Bell, Jim Christnacht, Justin Trafton, Larry Mitchell, Mark McDonnell, Marshall Gingery, Mary Ann Dunwell, Matthew Cohn, Rebecca Ridenour, Thom Warsinski, and Teresa Klotz. Also present: City Clerk Debbie Havens and Deputy City Clerk Robyn Brown.

Members absent: Amy Glasscock, George Hoff, George McCauley, Jim Tucker Jr., Ken Saunders and Lynne Boone

Visitors: Lieutenant Kelly Tuck, Helena Firefighters Union #448

December 20, 2006 HCC Meeting minutes

The December 20, 2006 minutes were approved as submitted.

Helena Fire Department Report

Helena Fire Department (HFD) Lt. Kelly Tuck clarified he is attending the HCC meetings as a representative from the Firefighters Union #448, not as a representative from the Helena Fire Department, and suggested changing the "Fire Department Report" to the "Firefighters Union Report" on future agendas. Lt. Tuck encouraged the HCC to advertise on city fire trucks as well as other city vehicles. He also spoke about a proposed resolution to create a Fire Service Review committee, which would review the Fire Service Protection Review study and provide recommendations to the City Commission. The resolution will be considered by the Commission on Monday, January 29, 2007. One HCC member will sit on the committee.

Helena Police Department Report

Sergeant Foskett reported a new joint city/county Civil Disorder Team has been formed to deal with occasions where civil disobedience could occur, such as protests. It consists of eighteen members, split between the Helena Police Department and the Lewis & Clark County Sheriff's Office. Sgt. Foskett announced the Sweetheart Passion Plunge, which benefits Special Olympics Montana, will be held on February 10, 2007 at Spring Meadow Lake. A comment was made about there being a lot of panhandlers soliciting money due to the nice weather. Sgt Foskett explained panhandling is not illegal if it is done on public property.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Jim Christnacht reported to date \$2,749 is remaining of the \$3,818 HCC budget; this amount includes the costs associated with the water bill insert. Chair Justin Trafton noted the HCC preliminary budget is due to City Clerk Havens on February 5, 2007.

District Discussions

District 5 – Marshall Gingery passed out an invitation from Mayor Smith to attend the State of the City Address at the January 29, 2007 City Commission Meeting. He gave an overview of today's Administrative Meeting including new subdivision status and joint city/county development standards. Mr. Gingery indicated he would like to serve on the HCC's budget committee.

District 1 – Matthew Cohn announced Urban Wildlife Town Hall Meetings will be held on January 25, 2007 and February 14, 2007 from 7:00 – 9:00pm at the Civic Center. The next step will be to present the Task Force's findings to the City Commission.

The deer count has been completed and the task force will recommend it be ongoing, as controlling the deer population will be a continuing issue in the area. He will also recommended that an HCC member continue to be involved. He noted a DVD will be made of the Town Meeting, in hopes that it can be kept at the library and available for checkout.

District 3 – Bill Roberts reminded everyone the public hearing on the proposed Resolution to Create the Open Space Maintenance District would be held at the January 29, 2007 City Commission Meeting. There cannot be any increase to the fee without notifying the public.

District 6 – Chair Trafton stated at the last Water Quality Protection District (WQPD) Board meeting, discussion was held on future growth and how it is affecting water quality in the valley. Also, the board voted to increase water rates in 2007. Currently the WQPD Board is working on a five-year plan. Chair Trafton would like to invite a member of the board to give a presentation to the HCC about water quality in the valley.

The Midtown/6th Ward Neighborhood Association is in the process of obtaining 501c3 status as a non-profit. They will be electing a formal board and adopting bylaws in March. Their next meeting is Thursday, January 25, 2007 at 5:30pm at HCT.

Old Business

Water Bill Stuffer – Chair Trafton handed out the listing of locations for each district's quarterly neighborhood meetings. It was suggested that the HCC develop a core agenda to use at each neighborhood meeting.

Chair Trafton stated the verbiage of the insert hasn't been finalized. The water bill stuffer committee would like to send out the insert in the February bills (mailed to customers in early March). The committee has contacted the media regarding the information included on the insert. There was \$500.00 allotted for the insert. Two sided printing and folding would cause the project to become \$69.00 over budget and require council expenditure approval.

Motion: Matthew Cohn moved to approve an additional \$69.00 in funding for the water bill stuffer. Thom Warsinski seconded the motion. All voted aye, motion carried.

Discussion was held on how to help people identify what district they reside in. Suggestions were to include language notifying citizens their voting and HCC districts are the same; and add a link to the HCC map on the website. Comments were made on the wording of the insert. Chair Trafton asked members to note their suggested revisions in the margin.

Monthly meeting with City Manager Burton and HCC District Chairs – Chair Trafton noted he is still working with city staff to set up this meeting.

Quality of Life (QOL) Survey Results – Rebecca Ridenour gave a summary of the survey results. Teresa Klotz invited everyone to attend the next QOL survey committee meeting at the Pattern House on February 19, 2007 at 10:00am. The council thanked the committee for all their hard work on the survey. Bill Roberts stated he would talk to IT & S Employee David Anson about putting the survey results on the HCC website. Teresa noted the committee has sent out a press release regarding the survey and will contact the radio stations to see about getting interviews.

New Business

Election of 2007 Officers – The following people were nominated for 2007 HCC Officer positions:

Chair – Justin Trafton

Vice Chair – Lynne Boone

Secretary – Rebecca Ridenour

Treasurer – Bill Roberts

Motion: Marshall Gingery moved to close the nomination period. Bob Habeck seconded the motion. All voted aye, motion carried.

Motion: Matthew Cohn moved to approve the proposed slate of officers by unanimous consent. Allen Tompkins seconded the motion. All voted aye, motion carried.

Recap of 2006 HCC Activities – The following accomplishments were discussed: Help Helena Shine, Disaster & Emergency Preparedness Town Hall Meeting, Meth Awareness Town Hall Meeting, Quality of Life Survey, Government 101.

Many positive comments were given about the HCC's work with the city and community in 2006. Suggestions were also given on how to get more involved in 2007.

VISTA Volunteer – Chair Trafton reported Commissioner Peura has suggested the HCC apply for a VISTA volunteer to help with redevelopment of the neighborhood council structure within the city. The volunteer would be funded through grants and city matching funds and it would be a three-year program. The deadline to apply for VISTA assistance is March 16, 2007. Chair Trafton recommended forming a committee to discuss the viability of using a VISTA volunteer. Chair Trafton and Ellen Bell volunteered to sit on the committee, an email will be sent out asking for other members. Marshall Gingery noted County Extension offices utilize the VISTA program in other states and suggested contacting the Lewis & Clark County Extension Office for more information.

Public Comments

Bill Roberts discussed the recent seminar by Roger Brooks regarding how to revitalize Downtown Helena. Lt. Tuck announced he could provide conceptual photos of fire truck advertising if anyone is interested.

City Meeting Assignments

Administrative Meeting February 7, 2007 – Lynne Boone

February 21, 2007 – Lynne Boone

Commission Meeting February 12, 2007 – George McCauley

February 26, 2007 – Amy Glasscock

Adjournment – There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm. The next HCC meeting is February 28, 2007 in City/County Building Room 326.