

Helena Citizens Council Regular Meeting
April 22, 2009 - 6:30 p.m.
City/County Building - Room 326

Members present: Kent Schlosser, Lynne Boone, David Scrimm, Larry Mitchell, Mike McGuire, Dan Bernhardt, Ellen Bell, Marshall Gingery, Harlan Rudolf, James Penner, M.C. Beeby, Bob Habeck, Janet Hess-Herbert and HCC Coordinator Julie Haehnel.

Members absent: Matt Cohn, DAve Dalthorp, Winston Greely, Rebecca Ridenour, George Hoff, Dave Fish, Adam Bell, Maleen Olson and Brian Olson.

Visitors: HPD Lt. Steve Hagen, Buck Bush, Carolyn Wolf, Joe Kiley, Stephen Papanek, Fran Penner-Ray, Jerry Hutch, Andrew Franks-Ongoy, Allilson Leake, David Duensing and Mark Gray.

HCC Meeting minutes - March 25, 2009

The minutes were approved as submitted.

“Bikes on the Walking Mall” (public comments are listed below)

Proponents:

Rick Bush - Bikers and pedestrians coexist in other cities. Signage is important, marking for bike path suggested.

Fran Penner-Ray - Trails & farmer's market coexistent without problem. Visitors to city ticketed \$60 and a 5-year old ticketed going to library. Including bikes can be done safely.

Steve Papanick - Laws now are pretty much unenforced; need to focus on real police needs- drugs, etc.

Andrew Franks-Ongoy - Montana code allows bikes on sidewalks, bike license is for theft.

John Gatchell - Thinks it is appropriate to have safe transportation through the walking mall.

Joe Kiley - Worked on walking mall for 25 years, owned business there, times warrants city looking into opening up mall to bikes. At one time bikes were allowed on the walking mall. Parking is at a minimum.

Opponents:

Jerry Hutch - Visually impaired folks are at risk, was okay for bikes on walking mall if bike has training wheels, cited several examples of poor judgment exercised by bike riders. Rules are posted clearly at both ends of walking mall. If bikes are allowed, skateboarders will be next to asking for permission.

David Duensing - Has witnessed almost accidents too often, to many irresponsible bikers, it is a walking mall, can push bike up the wall.

Informational Comments:

Dave Duensing - BID Board is not in consensus with adding bikes to walking mall.

Fran Penner-Ray -Problems with doors opening into mall could be solved.

HCC Member Comments:

HCC action is not likely to happen quickly. The issue involves engineering, education, and enforcement components making it a complex issue. HCC needs to get input from Police Department, Non-motorized Transportation Coordinator and others. Officer Hagan noted that Police Officers will enforce the law; bike licensing is primarily for theft recovery.

Chair Bernhardt asked for volunteers to supplement non-motorized transit committee members and study the issue further, including but not limited to, identifying stakeholders and gathering information for presentation to the HCC. Marshall Gingery & Kent Schlosser volunteered to serve.

Helena Police Department Report

HPD Lt. Steve Hagan reported there was a recent motorcycle fatality. The HPD is currently working on education and enforcement on motorcycles, graffiti problems downtown, increased patrols in parking garages, safety issues with the Vigilante Day Parade, patrolling for pre-Vigilante Day parties, gearing up for summer on the walking mall and noted the downtown area is using the school resource officers during summer break.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Harlan Rudolf - no report.

VISTA/HCC Coordinator's Report

The VISTA report is attached to the end of the minutes as part of the official record.

HCC District Reports

District 1 - CVS meeting on May 4, 2009 in the CR Anderson cafeteria at 6:30PM

District 2 - no report given

District 3 - no report given

District 4 - no report given

District 5 - no report given

District 6 - Secretary Jim Penner thanked M.C. Beeby for joining the HCC and introduced Carolyn Wolf-Dobb as a potential new representative from the district.

District 7 - no report given.

Committee/Board Updates

Community Gardens- The demand for gardens is exceeding supply with approximately 27 groups expressing interest.

Marketing Committee- The committee is currently working on a complete overhaul the HCC's website.

Undeveloped Parks Plan- Bob Habeck will meet with Parks & Recreation Director Amy Teegarden on April 27, 2009 to go over the plan.

Finance Committee - The Committee has been discussing the process for reviewing and submitting proposals for the city budget next year and the process for considering resolutions. They have also discussed the possibilities for funding a position after the 3rd year VISTA term is over with Administrative Services Director Tim Magee and the Committee has not ruled out submitting a new VISTA application with a new goal.

City Commission Meeting - Chair Bernhardt reported on the Monday, April 20, 2009 City Commission meeting. The HCC was complimented on making recommendations to the Commission. Mayor Smith directed City Manager Burton to give a copy of the complete budget book to the HCC.

Unfinished Business & General Order

Executive Board Report - The Board discussed the new VISTA hiring, upcoming elections, and future speakers including the growth policy with Community Development Director Sharon Haugen and wastewater issues.

Baseball game - Scheduled for July 13, 2009 to celebrate completion of Julie Haehnel's assignment and beginning of Bonnie O'Neill's assignment. Additional information will be forthcoming as the date nears.

New Business

Janet Hess-Herbert announced elections will be discussed at a May 13, 2009 meeting.

M.C. Beeby inquired about having the Caird property/low-income housing issue scheduled for future discussion. It was suggested as most appropriate for a District 6 meeting topic.

The Fairgrounds Board has invited the HCC to hold a meeting there and offered a tour of their facilities.

Upcoming Meetings:

- HCC Monthly Meeting - Wednesday, May 27, 2009 @ 7:00p.m. - City/County Bldg, Room 326
- HCC Monthly Meeting with City Manager Burton - Tuesday, May 19, 2009 @ 3:30p.m. - City/County Bldg, Room 326
- City Administrative Meetings:
 - May 13, 2009 - Jim Penner
- City Commission Meetings:
 - May 4, 2009 - Dan Bernhardt
 - May 18, 2009 - Marshall Gingery

Announcements:

Youth Connections will present Gen Works at Exploration Works at 5:00PM on April 23, 2009.

Tourism Business Improvement District is looking for board members from property owners within the district.

MC Beeby thanked Julie & Ellen for their help with getting a VISTA for the Mid-Towne/Sixth Ward Neighborhood Association.

Adjournment - There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:37PM. The next HCC meeting is May 27, 2009 at 7:00pm in Room 326 of the City/County Building.

VISTA Report April 2009 – Julie Haehnel

Since my last Supervisory meeting, Bob Habeck had a really good idea for me to outline my VISTA reports based on the Community Building Lifecycle which would then easily transfer into my Quarterly Reports that Ellen and I turn into the PRC for approval.

Assessment:

Friends of Beltview Park met this week and they are working on becoming a Non-Profit under WEEL to receive donations and grants for their continued development. I will be helping this process along, and if it works out nicely WEEL would be willing to help the other parks ready to continue development. Beltview right now will be the trial run. Our next step is to organize the neighbors once again for a community assessment on the Community Garden that will be developed there. That meeting will be held late May.

Public Relations:

I have been very busy planning Global Youth Service Day. I hope that you all have joined up with your kids! It's this Saturday....

Community Groups:

Midtowne Sixth Ward Neighborhood Association: I assisted them in writing a work plan for a VISTA to help with their neighborhood plan and disaster preparedness program. They have been approved for a 1 year VISTA through Campus Compact! Hopefully this will quicken their pace for a neighborhood plan and help organize the neighborhood towards those plans goals.

Strategic Planning

We have accepted our third term VISTA- Bonnie O'Neille. She had an interview with Dan, Harlan, Winston and I and she seemed to have plenty of college experience that related to this position including event planning and public relations. She is from New Jersey and has a bachelors degree in Environmental Science and Political Science from Furman University in SC.

In light of our new District 6 representative, I worked on updating our member binders including all of the documents that came out of our retreat, the minutes, and I will be working on our Outstanding/Issues and Concerns document. I would appreciate it if each District Chair could send me their document that they used at the last meeting to report issues.