

Mayor's Downtown Advisory Commission Minutes
April 4, 2017

Commission Members in Attendance: Ginny Merriam (Mayor's Office), Eran Fowler Pehan (Housing & Community Development), Melinda Mason (Children's Mental Health Bureau), Theresa Williams (Reaching Home Coordinator), Jon Wilkins (City Council), Michael Moore, Margaret Borg (Retired Attorney), Dan Cederberg (Downtown Attorney), Bryan von Lossberg (City Council), and Nicole Rowley (County Commissioner)

Commission Members Absent: Kathleen Jenks (Municipal Court Judge), Keithi Worthington (City Attorney), Sue Wilkins (Missoula Correctional Services), Lt. Jake Rosling (Police Department), Amy Allison Thompson (Poverello Center), Laurie Johnson (Downtown Ambassador), Loreen Hamilton (Salvation Army) and Elizabeth Marshall (Palace Apartments)

Others in Attendance: Heidi Bakula (Mayor's Office) and Richard Stepper (Police Department)

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of February 7, 2017 and the minutes of March 7, 2017 are approved as submitted

1. Public Comment – None

2. Downtown Update

- The new downtown officers that came on during the last budget cycle were discussed and Sheila Moore took over Andy Roy's position as the new downtown officer.
- Bryan von Lossberg said that Sabrina Murphy of 415 Higgins (Higgins Plaza) reached out to him because Higgins Plaza is being remodeled. This is a hotspot for transients and she is installing security cameras in the building. She also is interested in installing landscaping that may deter transients. Bryan said he would refer other contacts to her and Sheila Moore is also currently working with her.
- Ethan Smith is taking over Rob Scheben's position on May 1st.
- Jon Wilkins expressed interest in having more police officers on bikes on the trails and in parks. Officer Stepper said that he hopes the two new officers that just came on board will fill in until the School Resource Officers (SRO) are done with school.
- Dan Cederberg said the mood downtown is upbeat, the complaint now is that downtown businesses cannot find employees. Businesses are offering \$15 an hour for unskilled labor and they still cannot attract employees.
- Officer Stepper said that plain clothes officers were working with regular officers downtown. He would like to see limitations on alcohol by stopping people in cars or stopping transients that are drinking and enforce the state code. Private individuals should be held accountable for buying alcohol for someone that is intoxicated.
- Cola Rowley is working on a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grant and the city and county are partnering on the grant. Also, landscaping around the courthouse is being worked on and unfortunately the concrete bench will not be removed due to budget constraints.
- Theresa Williams discussed the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) academy that was coming to Missoula in the next week. Forty-one people signed up and that is the largest group in the state so far.

3. Progressive National Approaches

- Outreach to Work Program Video

Eran Pehan introduced the short video about an outreach to work program in Albuquerque. This was a program sponsored by Mayor Richard Barry and the public works department has hired a social worker to work with transients before they leave for the day after working.

4. New Business

5. Working Group Updates

- a. Crisis/drop-in/warming center

Making a trip to Catholic Charities in Spokane in May.

- b. Alcohol retail sales reduction – nothing new to report.

- c. Education and public advocacy – nothing new to report.

- d. Evaluation of the commission's progress

Dan Cederberg discussed Lindsey Potter, a University student, who is working on a lit review regarding quality of life measuring tools used in other cities. She will produce approximately fifteen articles on what others have done. She is doing the project as an independent study project from Jim Burfeind. Once Dan has more information he will bring it back to the commission.

The Headwaters Help Foundation is up and running in the DA Davidson building. They have close to \$100 million dollars and a percentage of that has to be used for programs in Western Montana that assist people in getting individual help with medical issues including addiction and mental health problems. By the year's end they will be ready to start accepting proposals for administering funds.

6. Discussion of additional members in key areas

Bryan von Lossberg indicated that he spoke to Councilwoman Ruth Swaney and she is interested in being appointed to the commission or advising in some other way.

7. Comments from Board Members

Laurie Johnson is retiring as a downtown ambassador after 10 years. Dave Chrismon will be taking Laurie's place.

Respectfully Submitted
Heidi Bakula
Executive Assistant