

Mayor's Downtown Advisory Commission Minutes
January 9, 2018

Commission Members in Attendance: Melinda Mason (Children's Mental Health Bureau), Bryan von Lossberg (City Council), Nicole Rowley (County Commissioner), Dave Chrismon (Downtown Ambassador), Dan Cederberg (Downtown Attorney), Ryan Boyd (Salvation Army), Eran Fowler Pehan (Housing & Community Development), Lt. Jake Rosling (Police Department), Theresa Williams (Reaching Home Coordinator) and Margaret Borg (Retired Attorney)

Commission Members Absent: Michael Moore (Downtown Business Owner), Keithi Worthington (City Attorney), Kathleen Jenks (Municipal Court Judge), Tom Snyder (Downtown Business Owner), Amy Allison Thompson (Poverello Center), Sue Wilkins (Missoula Correctional Services), Ginny Merriam (Mayor's Office) and Elizabeth Marshall (Palace Apartments)

Others in Attendance: Heidi Bakula (Mayor's Office)

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of November 7, 2017 were approved as submitted.

1. Public Comment - None

2. Introductions

Bryan von Lossberg started with introductions and each person at the table introduced themselves.

3. Downtown Update

- Bryan von Lossberg went to Little McCormick Park with downtown officer Ethan Smith due to some constituent concerns of abandoned vehicles and camping in vehicles. One van looked like it was being lived in. The van owner was cited but the van just moves to different places in the area. After three citations the vehicle can be towed. Constituents feel unsafe when people park and camp in their vehicles in the neighborhood. The range of property owners in the area makes it even more complex and challenging.
- Bryan and Ethan also went to Union Gospel Mission and spoke to a person there and they are connected to the coordinated single entry system. Union Gospel Mission is a warming center seven days a week and they are full every night. From their standpoint they believe a wet housing center would be beneficial.
- Bryan asked the commission if Ethan Smith should join them because he thinks Ethan would be helpful. Bryan will follow-up with the mayor on the appointment.
- Dave Chrismon said that many people downtown are asking where certain homeless individuals are these days. He wondered if a connection could be made to connect the success of the program with individuals that have been helped.
- Eran Pehan explained that it could be tricky because of confidentiality issues. Many do not want to be the poster child for a program. The Coordinated Entry System is also tied to HIPAA which has confidentiality requirements.
- Theresa Williams said that the Homeless Management Information System should provide information about the successes individuals are having. She also said that on January 23rd from 4:00 to 6:00 pm there will be a formal Reaching Home Update in council chambers with a panel discussion. Several providers such as Open Aid Alliance, YWCA and Union Gospel Mission will be involved.

- Dan Cederberg stated that he had been speaking with Linda McCarthy of Missoula Downtown about the number of businesses opening and closing. There had been a low number of closings. Small retailers also had a record year.

4. Missoula Supportive Housing Action Plan

Eran Pehan stated that Housing and Community Development had applied for a supportive housing grant through the Montana Healthcare Foundation and they were awarded the grant. They want to have a consultant do an in depth study looking at the chronically homeless and the services that they use such as the emergency room.

5. New Business

6. Working Group Updates

Bryan von Lossberg said that since he is now city council president that he would be stepping back as co-chair on this commission. He realizes that it's difficult to make progress in this group and he wondered what the commission's frank feelings were about the commission and the tasks the group has taken on. Recently Bryan spoke to the mayor about funding to reinvigorate the real change program. He also believed that the metrics plan had merit and wants to keep it active. The important question to be answered is still how does the commission communicate successes?

- Cola Rowley felt that MDAC was helpful but if it is a progress based group that it could be very frustrating.
 - Eran Pehan said that MDAC had good momentum but the programs are weighty.
 - Margaret Borg felt like she hadn't done much for the group since the Portland Lue and they hit a wall with alcohol retail sales reduction. The commission still needs a Native American presence to get the ball rolling on alcohol retail sales reduction.
 - Dan Cederberg thought that the commission had not accomplished much in 2017. Maybe it was time to commit to one or two tasks that they can get done. The subcommittees were not working like they should, but maybe the solution would be to reinvigorate those subcommittees.
 - Eran suggested that maybe the commission needed to look at membership to determine who is and is not coming to the monthly meetings. Some of the subcommittee chairs were not actively attending meetings. Eran will go over the roster and check to see who wants to continue on the commission and who does not.
 - Bryan said that he had met with University of Montana President Seth Bodnar and he had a list of goals that he wants to work on with the city council.
- Crisis/drop-in/warming center – Nothing new to report.
 - Alcohol retail sales reduction – Nothing new to report.
 - Education and public advocacy – Nothing new to report.
 - Evaluation of the commission's progress – Nothing new to report.

7. Discussion of additional members in key areas – Nothing new to report.

Respectfully Submitted,
Heidi Bakula, Executive Assistant