

# University District Leadership Team Minutes

## February 9, 2021

1. **Roll Call** Darcy Caron called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM with Bryce Rowe, Jordan Lyons, Jennifer Copley, Dori Gilels, Anna Porter, Rick Caron, and Colin Woodrow in attendance.

2. **Approve Minutes** Minutes for the January 3, 2021, meetings were distributed by Darcy Caron before the meeting and were approved on a motion from Dori Gilels.

3. **Treasurer's Report** – Bryce Rowe reported that no new monies are available.

4. **ASUM Report** – Jordan Lyons reported for ASUM Neighborhood Ambassadors that the group continues some of their previous activities. On Tuesday the 23<sup>rd</sup> they will host a meeting called Let's Talk About Housing. The meeting will focus on affordable housing, and Jordan promised to mail a flyer to members.

5. **Discussion Items: Neighborhood General Meeting, on March 9, 2021** For much of an hour, members brainstormed ideas for the general meeting.

- Jordan Lyons reported that postcard invitations were nearly ready and would cost \$1050. Colin Woodrow says that the design is very good, thanks to Anna Potter. Jordan chose the Click-to-Mail service recommended by USPS. At Jennifer's suggestion, a word was added to the card, for clarity. Darcy asked for clarification about the QR code.

- Dori Gilels and Darcy Caron reviewed their proposed draft of the general meeting agenda which structured 75 minutes of the 90 minutes allotted for the general meeting. People must register for the meeting which will begin with a roll call of those registered. Residents without internet access can call in, and all attending online or by phone will be able to vote.

- Darcy will welcome attendees and introduce Colin and the rest of the leadership team. Each will state their name and address and very briefly describe their dream for the neighborhood. Rick will talk about some of his projects, and Jennifer will mention her concerns about Bonner Park and dog park cleanliness, safety, environmental issues.

- Those in attendance will break into small groups to discuss what they would like to change or improve in the University District. Colin says it may not be possible to place a member of the leadership team on each small group, as breakout rooms can be difficult to organize.

- So the general meeting can be run smoothly, Darcy said she wanted to practice running small groups. Members, consequently, decided to hold a short practice session on March 2 via ZOOM.

- Proposed Agenda Ideas

- (a) Dori agreed to explain the purpose of the breakout groups.
- (b) Jennifer asked that groups report out on changes they would like to see, so that such issues could go on the record for future reference.
- (c) Colin will describe the assessment of Neighborhood Councils and how they city intends to rework the Neighborhood Councils. He promises to stay within 20 minutes.
- (d) UM Ambassadors will share information about their events and news.
- (e) Jordan asked members to inform attendees about [umt.edu/neighborhood](http://umt.edu/neighborhood).
- (f) For two minutes, Jennifer will talk about benefits of serving on the leadership teams. Then those in attendance will elect additional members of the University District Council. However, there will not be city-wide recruitment and training of new members until July.
- (g) Darcy will introduce public comment following selection of new officers, and Colin will lead the discussion. Bryce volunteered to time for both the public comment and the discussions with the City Council members after public comment.
- (h) At Rick's suggestion, members agreed that questions to City Council members should be submitted to the ZOOM chat box.
- (i) City Council members Gwen and Heather have agreed to attend. Jordan volunteered to introduce City Council members in attendance.
- (j) At the end of the meeting, Dori will lead thank City Council members. Darcy will thank all participants for their attendance, reminding neighbors to look forward to in-person meetings.

6. **Community Forum Report** Bryce Rowe attended the meeting via ZOOM.

- Bryce learned that April 30 is a grant deadline, grants being awarded on June 9.
- 9. The Community Forum seeks members for their grant review board.
- Consultants hired by the city made seven recommendations in four general areas including structure, inclusion, representation, and diversity. They offered suggests about creating meeting structures that are engaging, approachable, and useful.
- Members discussed creating a digest for events and recruiting renters to leadership teams as a way of creating diversity. The City Council's major goal is to create more citizen involvement. An Advisory Committee will provide direction about how to assess what Missoula citizens really want and find ways to implement preferences and recommendations. Both Bryce and Jennifer will attend the next Community Forum meeting.
- Rick Caron expressed concern about the process of reassessment. He thought the survey questions, as framed, had a very negative tone. Rick says that he has grown personally during his service on the Neighborhood Council and objected to that negative tone.

- Colin responded that he was willing to call Rick to discuss Rick's concerns. The Neighborhood Council system, Colin argued, has not been reviewed in decades, and the report may offend some people. Nevertheless, Colin defended the assessment as important to improvement. Not all neighborhoods, says Colin, are being adequately served by his office or the current system. A national criticism of Neighborhood Councils is that members work to protect homeowners rather than engaging in long-term reform of current structures. The group hired to compile the city report is a nonprofit firm.
- Jordan says that some Neighborhood Councils have not been respectful of young, less experienced members. Dori brought up the need for Neighborhood Councils to adapt to recent growth and change in Missoula so they may better facilitate communications, becoming conduits for problem solving and improvement in city life.

7. **Office of Neighborhoods Report** Colin Woodrow reports that he is working on neighborhood profiles, using the Boise Almanac as a model. He is developing online community surveys to better assess neighborhood needs. He hopes to help organize community-energizing tools like Missoula in Motion gatherings, Neighborhood block parties, tree planting programs, and May neighborhood cleanups. Eventually Colin would like the city to have a block party vehicle that would bring ice, coolers, tents and tables to block parties, using the parties to create community connections. Dori thinks realtors may offer some funding and assistance in finding ways to integrate new residents. Jennifer urged the inclusion of an at-large member of the Native American community on Community Forum.

8. **Public comment on non-agenda items** No public was in attendance.

9. **Announcements** Dori Gilels, hoping to serve the community in a different capacity, announced that she is running for City Council

10. **Adjournment** The next meeting was scheduled for March 2, a planning meeting for the general meeting. Rick Caron moved to adjourn, Anna seconded, and meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Submitted by Jennifer Copely