

NS/WS Neighborhood Council Leadership Team Meeting Minutes

March 15, 2023

6:00 PM

Burns Street Bistro

1. Introductions and Roll Call:

LT-- Gabe, Roe, Amy, Timmothy, Leah, Derek, Joyce Gibbs, Mikyla Veis
City -- Mayor Hess, Mirtha Becerra. Jennifer Savage, Kalina Pritchard
Community -- Josh Nichols- Northside, Brian C, Chet Phillips, several additional neighborhood residents joined but are not accounted for here (not present during introductions).

2. Minutes for February 15, 2023 were approved. Gabe motioned and Amy seconded the motion.

3. Items to be discussed:

a. Northside Pedestrian Bridge – Mayor Hess

<https://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/2949/Northside-Pedestrian-Bridge-Project>

Mayor Hess provided context on the state of the pedestrian bridge and plans to invest in the necessary repairs to preserve this community asset. The bridge project was initially believed to be a 1-million-dollar project, but we have since learned it would be a 2.5 to 3 million project. As a result, this has created some delay and required some creative budgeting to fix it. There is Federal Grant funds and parks and trails funds will be used. Bids will go out late April and hoping for a May contract to move forward. Hope to have bridge opened mid to late fall! The extensive repair includes the ramps and the towers which all need work, and the elevator towers will be used for structure. Gabe: gating has been an issue open to removing these soon or eventually. Maybe we can get cameras back online for surveillance. The planning process is David Selvedge “construction focus” and Donna Gaukler, P&R. A Federal grant is available for Parks and Roads budgets. The City Council will have to approve a budget amendment straddle fiscal year end; this process is routine.

Chet Phillips said they met with BNSF and Rail link about the pedestrian crossing and other projects. They said their engineering teams could help if requested. They contributed \$175,000 to initial project construction.

4. The underpass was discussed and the state of repairs and maintenance. It is complicated since it is a state owned. They have been unwilling to upgrade the lighting. It is legally and technically a tunnel and there is some nuance here as it is 100 years old. The state is reluctant to invest much with it as it is quite complex and possibly nearing the end of life. The State is unwilling to make this investment. The City has a cooperative agreement with the State for the City to do the maintenance. As a result, a couple sidewalk panels have been improved since the pedestrian bridge has been closed to help accommodate safe use of

the underpass.

There were comments from two neighborhood citizens who would like to see more regular maintenance to keep the underpass clean and remove the leaves, ice, etc.

5. City Council – Mirtha Becerra and Jennifer Savage gave a Scott Street walking audit report.

There was quite a bit of discussion about the walking tour and how it related to Scott Street, Lowell School, and the local neighborhood. This included City engineers, people in a wheelchair, city councilors, children, and residents.

There was discussion stating that Jeremy Keene (Public Works and Mobility Director with City of Missoula is working on the pedestrian crossing and curb (ADA compliant) that needs to be completed for a safe Scott Street crossing on the North side of the Scott Street Bridge. Cooley and Turner streets have been discussed as locations. Jeremy and the City would like to hear from NS neighbors about an ideal location. In related news, a new portable flashing speed limit sign will be installed on the Scott Street bridge for traffic crossing from North to South over the bridge with hopes of calming speeds as vehicles approach Phillips Street.

The crosswalk across Scott Street will hopefully be installed this summer 2023. Kalina suggested bringing Jeremy Keene to the next meeting to discuss this issue. A suggestion was made for utilizing the space under Scott Street bridge. Gabe is concerned about the garbage trucks and their route over Scott Street bridge.

Amy said Porter school has a flashing sign. Why don't we? MDT has to work with the school zone to make this happen. We talked about a city-wide school zone speed limit that can be posted and hopefully enforced.

Amy asked about the leaf pickup and when will it happen? The leaf pickup begins on April 3, and there will be more announcements.

When neighbors and citizens write to the NS/WS email list with questions, the expectation in the future will be for our neighborhood group to respond to citizen questions. If there are difficult questions that require more expertise or authority, refer questions to Kalina and/or the City of Missoula.

6. Review Neighborhood Profile(s)
The neighborhood community profiles (focus/format/content) are being reconsidered by the neighborhoods department and Marc Hendrickson from the City of Missoula. No further input required at this time by the NS/WS LT.
7. Neighborhood Grant update
The grant awards is finishing up and a presentation for awards will be made at the Community Forum in March and approved if there is a quorum, and the City

Council will approve them. There will be updates on awards at the next LT meeting.

8. Neighborhood spring clean-up event (dates)

The cleanup is scheduled for Saturday April 29, and more details is forthcoming from Kalina. The Parks and Recreation donates gloves and other stuff. The big dumpster comes from Republic Services. The group discussed dividing into Northside and Westside teams for the neighborhood cleanup efforts.

Coffee and donuts before event starts - utilize Yokes gift card
Mikyla, Northside planning team - Amy, Roe, Joyce and others
Amy, Westside planning team - will be determined
The date is set for Saturday April 29
Chet says we have extra sandwich boards to promote events

Amy will take the lead for the Westside
Mikyla will take the lead for the Northside

9. LT role positions, communications, membership, attendance (quorum).
Tabled until next meeting.

10. Neighborhood Budget:

Northside \$935.76

Westside \$1485.77

Note: Funds must be spent by June 30, 2023

The was discussion about how/when these funds will be used.

11. Community Forum Report: Timmothy Garrison

There was an update on the new City Council Ward boundaries.
Scott Street will become the dividing line between Ward's 1 & 2.
More information can be found on Engage Missoula maps, etc.

12. Missoula Neighborhoods Report– Kalina

The following was posted and shared March 13, to all neighborhoods (engage Missoula link/posting)

Parking

Share your ideas and perspectives below or come to one of our March Visioning Meetings!

Hip Strip: Wednesday, March 15, 6:00—7:30 p.m.

University Center Ballroom, University of Montana, 32 Campus Drive

Downtown: Thursday, March 16, 8:00—9:30 a.m.

Break Espresso, 432 N Higgins

Midtown: Thursday, March 16, 4:00—6:00 p.m.

Montana Rail Link Park, 2110 S Johnson Street

13. Public comment on non-agenda items

There was discussion among the group about Opportunity Zones. The subject was brought up by a neighborhood resident directed towards Mayor Hess and City Councilors seeking clarification for why and how opportunity zones have been created and generally used as a tool for developers to build without having to pay local, state, or federal taxes. There is concern that these types of developments need to be stopped since they do not serve or invest in the city and the community. Several attendees agreed there should be more education and discussion about this topic in the future and how it affects our neighborhoods.

14. Announcements

15. Next meeting: Wednesday April 19, 2023
Burns Street Bistro – 6:00 to 7:15

16. Proposed Budget items for next meeting

1. Debrief from previous meeting: Mayor / City Council / neighborhood topics, etc. (if necessary)
2. Crossing location and infrastructure for Scott Street (NS) Guest speaker (potential for Jeremy Keene &/or Aaron Wilson) topics include timeline, location, logistics, etc.
3. Budget priorities (neighborhood cleanup and potential for summer event)
4. Summer Gathering – see email from Amy O’Hoyt
5. Neighborhood Spring cleanup
6. Neighborhood Grant update
7. LT positions, attendance, quorum, process / policies discussion
8. Community Forum
9. Missoula Neighborhoods Report
10. Future guests to NS/WS meeting: