

City of Missoula

Joint Moose Can Gully / South 39th St. Neighborhood Council Leadership Team

Meeting Minutes

Date: January 9, 2019 6:00 PM

Location: Jack Reidy Conference Room - 140 W. Pine Street

Present: Ariel Cornelius, Carol Garlington, Jennifer Stephens, Janet Van Dyke, Betsy Weber,

Paul Kilzer, Jeff Stevens,

Others present: Karen Gasvoda, Office of Neighborhoods; Montana James and Claire Foley, Office of Housing & Community Development

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The meeting was moderated by Janet Van Dyke.

1. Approval of August 30, 2018 and October 22, 2018 meeting minutes: The redrafted minutes of these Leadership Team meetings were approved as written.

2. Housing Policy Update – Montana James, City of Missoula Housing and Community Development, Grants Administrator III: Accompanied by her assistant, Claire Foley, Montana James gave a presentation on current efforts to develop a comprehensive housing policy in Missoula. She noted that, while Montana law does not require cities to have a housing policy, other cities in the US have comprehensive housing policies, and Mayor Engen and the City Council have enacted a plan to develop one and thereby address a wide range of housing barriers in Missoula. In this process, a Housing Policy and Steering Committee has been formed (Phase I), Technical Work Groups are writing policy recommendations (Phase II), and there will be community outreach and engagement before the policy recommendations are presented to the Missoula City Council (Phase III), probably in late February or early March 2019.

3. Neighborhood Priorities / Survey Questions – Jennifer Stephens: Following our 10/22/2018 Joint MCG/S39th Neighborhood Council Leadership team meeting, Carol has brought our concerns before the Community Forum. Our goal is to seek collaboration between Neighborhood Councils on Neighborhood Priorities that we share and the guidance and action of the City Council in addressing these concerns.

A [City-wide Neighborhood Priorities](#) document has been prepared, which illustrates shared Neighborhood Priorities. There was extended discussion of this document and our goals, leading Jennifer Stephens to make the following motion: *That we table the MCG/S 39<sup>th</sup> Neighborhood Priority survey for the present time, that we continue to work at the Community Forum seeking collaboration with other Neighborhood Councils in defining our Neighborhood Priorities, and that we obtain the guidance and action of the City Council in addressing these concerns.* The motion was seconded, and, with approval of those in attendance, the following amendment was added: *That we also pursue collaboration between Neighborhood Councils in developing a Neighborhood Priorities survey, available online and reaching the greatest number of interested Missoula citizens to better understand their views.* The amended motion was unanimously approved. In this discussion, it was also mentioned that people with specialized knowledge may help us to wisely address our Neighborhood Priorities (e.g. graduate students and others in wildlife biology; local weed experts...). And, it was recommended that we plan our next General Meeting with guests invited to discuss specific Neighborhood Priorities (e.g. weeds...), that we again invite those in attendance to vote on Neighborhood Priorities, and that we include, in the General Meeting invitation, a link to an online survey seeking input from those who are unable to attend the meeting.

4. Missoula Downtown Master Plan update – Karen Gasvoda: Karen reported on the 2018-2019 Downtown Missoula Master Plan Update, which will guide decisions over the next 10 years. It will focus on 1) Land Use, 2) Transportation, 3) Downtown Housing, 4) Parking, 5) Street Design Standards, and 6) Retail and Commercial Business Development. The next “listening” phase of the planning process is Jan. 14-18, 2019 (“Charrette Week”), and everyone is welcome to participate. See the [Downtown Missoula Partnership](#) web page.

5. Neighborhood trees – Janet Van Dyke: Among the recommendations in the [2015 Missoula Urban Forest Master Management Plan](#) was engagement of City forums and citizens. In 2016 City Forester Christopher Boza organized groups from Missoula Neighborhoods in a “Help Select Trees for Your Neighborhood” project. Janet reported on her involvement in this project, referred to a [Desirable Tree List](#) for the City of Missoula, showed summaries of the trees that she and others recommended for Moose Can Gully Neighborhood, and said that planting will begin in 2020.

6. Office of Neighborhoods Report – Karen Gasvoda: Karen gave an update on the 2019 Local Government Citizens Academy, an 8-week (January 15 to March 5) program organized by the Office of Neighborhoods and Community Forum. Interest is encouragingly high, with approximately 100 applicants for the 35 available spaces. Videos of these sessions will be available later on Missoula Community Access Television (MCAT).

7. Community Forum Report – Carol Garlington: In addition to follow-up discussion on Neighborhood Priorities (see Topic 3 above), Carol reported on Community Forum meetings since our 10/22/2018 meeting. Discussed topics included Garden City Solar, Open Space Bond and Stewardship, Design Excellence, Citizenship Academy, City-wide Concerns, Downtown Partnership, Mountain Line, and Community Forum Leadership changes

8. Public comment on non-agenda items:

- a. The question was asked “Following the public outcry against raising Missoula property taxes and the August 2018 decision to raise property taxes, what is being done to reduce spending in the City of Missoula?” At the 12/20/2018 Community Forum Meeting, two Large Grant funding requests (\$1,500 each) for artwork on traffic signal boxes (TSBs) were approved for TSBs that have been replaced. The [Art Revolution 2018 City of Missoula Public Art Guide](#) lists 50 traffic signal boxes (TSBs) that have been painted with art. In discussing this topic, the benefits of artwork in Missoula were acknowledged, and it was noted that the artwork on some of the TSBs is paid for by private businesses, but the costs of this artwork were questioned, particularly when replacement of TSBs (and loss of the artwork on them) leads to new Large Grant funding requests. What is the city doing to limit spending? Where does the City of Missoula draw a line when people, particularly those on fixed incomes, cannot afford to live in Missoula? It was noted that a local option sales tax is being considered as a way of reducing the burden of property taxes in Missoula.
- b. Copies of our Neighborhood Council Budgets were available for review, prompting questions, which Karen answered: The Office of Neighborhood Councils is provided \$20,000 annually, including \$18,000 for large grants for the neighborhoods. Funds that Neighborhood Councils do not spend during the fiscal year are re-allocated to the General Fund. The idea of applying Neighborhood Council funds to help fund a study on Neighborhood Priorities was raised.
- c. The question was asked “Why are leaves picked up in our neighborhood after Thanksgiving, when they are often frozen in gutters or scattered?” Karen replied that there is a map/schedule for pickup, and our neighborhoods (MCG; South 39th) are almost last for pickup.

d. On the topic of spending and sustainability, it was noted that the printed reports handed out at our meetings may be unnecessary if the digital documents (e.g. PowerPoint) and available projection systems are used. Doing so would save paper and printer ink and reduce costs.

9. Announcements: None were made beyond those reported above.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Paul B. Kilzer  
South 39<sup>th</sup> Street Neighborhood Leadership Team

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