

Moose Can Gully (MCG) and South 39th Joint Neighborhood Council Leadership Team (LT) Meeting Minutes

July 21, 2021 at 6:00 PM

Wapikiya Park

MCG Neighborhood Council LT members present: Carol Garlington, Betsy Weber, Janet Van Dyke

MCG Absent: none

South 39th Neighborhood Council LT members present: Jeff Stevens-Chair, Paul Kilzer

South 39th Absent: David Touchette, Ruth Burke, Dave Bell

City Staff Present: None

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM by Jeff Stevens.

1. Roll Call (see attendance above)

2. May 12, 2021 meeting minutes

Carol moved to approve the minutes; seconded by Paul. Minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

3. Urban Deer Study Update Carol intended to relay our concerns about lack of progress to Community Forum. She reported that there have been two Community Forum meetings since then. The first, via Zoom on May 27 was poorly attended with little opportunity for Neighborhoods to report. For the June meeting, Carol was given an incorrect Zoom link and did not attend. Jeff commented that city meetings are still virtual, and it is difficult to have discussions via Zoom. It was decided that we would schedule a Zoom call with Kelly Elam and Colin Woodrow of the Office of Neighborhoods to discuss this issue and the function of Community Forum.

4. Plan for the Cold Springs Property Paul gave the following update:

Cold Springs Elementary School on Briggs Street has been vacant since November 2018, when the newly constructed Jeannette Rankin Elementary School opened. In September 2019, a 10-year lease agreement was approved by Missoula County Public Schools, allowing Missoula Early Learning Center, Corp. to use the southwest portion of the school and the gymnasium (~38,302 square feet; 75% of the school's usable space) and playground areas as a licensed childcare facility. The Missoula Early Learning Center (MELC) planned to invest \$800,000 to \$1 million in improvements, and a September 2020 opening was anticipated. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted those plans.

Currently, spaces within the Cold Springs School and gymnasium are being rented to a dance studio and a martial arts program. Discussions are underway for possible other uses as well.

In a 7/20/2021 conversation with Paul, Mark Roberts, one of the former co-owners of the Missoula Early Learning Center, acknowledged the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. During the shutdown, the Cold Springs School remodel loan was converted to funds to pay Missoula Early Learning Center staff. Other original co-owners of the Missoula Early Learning Center are no longer involved, and Mark Roberts is working by himself to develop the Cold Springs School building as a childcare facility. To fund this project, American Recovery Act funds are being applied for through the State of Montana. If funding is approved, the building will be remodeled with a goal of completion by late February 2022 and plans to organize a board of directors to oversee the facility. Rather than a single childcare facility, it is envisioned that the new facility will rent space to multiple individual childcare providers, including some previously employed by the Missoula Early Learning Center.

5. Chief Charlo request for playground funding Carol clarified that this topic is really a request for Neighborhood participation in playground design and construction for use by the school and neighborhoods. More information is needed. A presentation on this topic was recommended for the General Meeting.

6. Planning for General Meeting It was agreed that we have a joint outdoor General Meeting in September or early October. There are many logistical questions about safely meeting during the Covid pandemic. (continued)

(General Meeting planning continued)

It was agreed that we would seek guidance from Colin on planning a Neighborhood Council General Meeting. General Meeting tentative agenda items: Chief Charlo playground project, Cold Springs School property update, Hillview Crossing update, Elections.

7. Community Forum Report

See item #3, Urban Deer Study Update. In addition, Carol reported on these items presented at Community Forum: Ben Weiss of the Neighborhood Traffic Management program presented information about traffic flow. Studies show that driving improves with more visual objects on the roadsides. There are plans for "green ways" with speed limit 15 mph and no stops, and other speed zones. Tests are being done on calming circles made of paint, also speed bumps and "speed tables". Of note, there are only 2 ½ officers total working on traffic law enforcement.

Neighborhood Clean-Up Day had 9 Neighborhoods participating. Carol plans to write up the actions we took to make things flow better next time.

Neighborhood Grant project applications will be accepted January-March 2022.

There is a new template for Neighborhood by-laws intended to be used by all Neighborhoods, though some customization will be allowed.

There is a plan for mayoral candidate forums after the primaries.

8. Missoula Neighborhoods Report

No City staff were present, but it was noted that Kelly has only just returned from bereavement leave and is swamped.

9. Public comment on non-agenda items

Janet relayed a concern from a neighbor about fire danger related to dead trees along the ravine below Chief Charlo School. Jeff and Carol commented that the City is aware of this concern. These trees are on private property. The owner has been contacted and agreed to remove them, but this has not yet occurred.

Jeff commented that the Hillview Crossing project is now stopped, and the land is for sale.

10. Announcements (none)

Adjourn: Move to adjourn by Betsy, 2nd by Paul. Unanimous agreement. Meeting adjourned at 6:50 by Jeff.

Next meeting: Betsy will contact Colin & Kelly to set up a Zoom meeting with those of us able to attend. Topics: Deer Study concerns, Community Forum function, City guidance for safe meetings during the Covid-19 pandemic. Based on their guidance, planning for a General Meeting may be included in the next meeting or in a subsequent meeting.

Minutes submitted by Betsy Weber –Secretary