

March 5, 2025 | 6PM | UC215

University District Leadership Team: Tim, Amy, Rue, Jennipha

Neighborhood Rep: Melissa | UM: Emily | Guests: Devin Carpenter and Vicki Watson

1. Introductions and Roll Call
2. Approval of Minutes for January and February will be done at a future meeting as Melissa has been away from the office (due to health) and just uploaded the last two meeting notes to the website – thus we can move to vote on approving them at the April meeting.
3. Presentations:
  - a. Devin Carpenter
    - i. Devin Carpenter, M.Ed. – Director of New Student Success (professionally) and one of the co-directors of Missoula Pride (personally).
    - ii. Came to present a new initiative that he is spearheading for campus called “The Big Event”.
      1. First started by [Texas A&M University](#) in 1982, The Big Event has since grown into one of the largest single-day student-led service efforts in the U.S., with over 100 colleges participating annually. Now, we are thrilled to bring this tradition to Missoula and are planning to host our first Big Event the weekend of May 2nd, 2026. This one would be the first Big Event in a NW school. While other schools have begun this tradition on their campuses we would be one of the first – if not the first in our region.
      2. The Big Event is a day dedicated to giving back to the local community, where students, faculty, and staff come together to volunteer in a variety of service projects. The initiative fosters a spirit of service and unity, helping bridge the connection between the university and the surrounding community. Projects traditionally last a few hours and are performed by teams of 4-6 students, focusing on tasks such as yard work, painting, light repairs, environmental cleanup, and more.
      3. For students, The Big Event offers a hands-on opportunity to contribute to the community that supports them throughout their college years. It helps them build leadership skills, form meaningful connections with peers and community members, and gain a deeper sense of civic responsibility.

For local organizations, businesses, and residents, The Big Event provides valuable assistance in completing projects that might otherwise be difficult to accomplish. Whether it’s a nonprofit in need of help with spring cleaning or a neighborhood group looking for support with a beautification project, The Big Event mobilizes student volunteers to address community needs, all while fostering a sense of togetherness and mutual respect.
      4. Hosting The Big Event is closely aligned with the University of Montana’s goals to enhance student retention and better support first-year

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students. Our annual welcome week program, The Big Sky Experience, is based on service and engagement with the local community. By launching The Big Event, we aim to create a meaningful “bookend” to each student’s first year— emphasizing our commitment to service, community involvement, and student success.

After a day of service, we plan to host a public celebration, including a music festival and other festivities for students and community members to enjoy. This celebration will not only recognize the hard work put into the day’s projects but also mark an important milestone in our students’ academic and personal journeys.

Leading the charge in bringing The Big Event to UM are the UM Advocates, a more than 50- year-old volunteer student ambassador organization whose mission is to represent and serve the community. Their motto, Servi Deinde Celebra— “Serve, Then Celebrate”—perfectly captures the spirit of The Big Event, and they are deeply committed to fostering this new tradition. In addition to the UM Advocates, we are seeking collaborations with a variety of other UM student organizations to join them in service projects, assist with various logistics, and to spearhead the celebratory pieces of the day

5. We are seeking support from local organizations, businesses, and residents to provide service projects for our students. Projects can range in size and scope but typically last for 2-3 hours and involve teams of 4-6 students. Whether it's working on a community garden, assisting with event preparation, or tackling small maintenance projects, our students are eager to lend a helping hand.

If you are interested in partnering with us to provide a service opportunity for The Big Event, we would love to collaborate with you. Your involvement not only benefits the students but also strengthens the bond between the University of Montana and the Missoula community. Together, we can make a lasting impact.

Please let me know if you would like more information or are ready to discuss potential projects. Thank you for considering this exciting opportunity to engage with our students and enhance our community through service.

5. A tentative outline of what the day would look like could be something like:
  - a. 10am Pep Rally (President, Monte and snacks)

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- b. 10:30 – 11am Travel Time to Service Areas (all walkable – no busses)
      - c. 11am-1pm Service Projects
      - d. 1pm – 2:30pm Lunch (for students who have meal plans they would use their plans – and for everyone else free meal in the Lodge)
      - e. 3pm – Music Festival or Performance
    - iii. This project is being done in collaboration with campus partners such as Experiential Learning and Student Life. The goal is to have 1,000 UM volunteers and 250 mini-service projects.
    - iv. Devin's contact information is: [devin.carpenter@mso.umn.edu](mailto:devin.carpenter@mso.umn.edu) or via phone he can be reached at 406-243-2332.
    - v. He will be hosting a scaled down version of this plan this year while he prepares for the full-sized version next year.
    - vi. Things this group could help champion:
      - 1. Getting the word out
      - 2. If people ask questions – confirm what we know to be true
      - 3. To begin thinking about neighbors or projects that might fit this mission well.
      - 4. Start to identify where we (as a neighborhood) might have tools and supplies to help with this lift.
  - b. Jennipha/Rue
    - i. Map Your Neighborhood continued dialogue
    - ii. The role of University District Neighborhood Leadership Team would be to present/host the initial meeting and provide folks the resources from
    - iii. Leadership Team took time to [watch](#) the Map Your Neighborhood Video for Facilitators.
    - iv. Jennipha is going to try this with her block to see what happens (Helena – Arthur). This would be a great attempt at a micro block to see what works and what might not work.
    - v. Subcommittee – to talk about what are the next steps needed to present a workshop for neighbors who would like to learn more to join in. Rue and Jennipha will work on an agenda to be presented at the next meeting (April) along with any budget requests (for food or supplies) to host this proposed session.
4. Items to be Discussed
- a. General Meeting
    - i. Time/Location
      - 1. Bonner Park is nice as folks can stumble upon it – could be nice and is what we found for last May's open meeting.
        - a. Melissa reminded us that we get one free rental of the covered area as a Neighborhood Leadership Team – per year.
    - ii. Signs (city has five UDLT sandwich board signs)

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1. One of the biggest hindrances for the fall General Meeting was the lack of signage.
  - a. Emily connected with Paw Print and learned that they are unable to do campaign signs at this time – they can do one with a foam core but it would not hold up in weather.
  - b. Emily followed up by reaching out to Garage Tee's to see what they would charge and it would be about \$300 for 10 signs.
  - c. In the meeting it was discussed that perhaps using an online sign company would get the price down further.
    - i. Emily would send the logo that Jennipha worked on to Amy
    - ii. Amy and Jennipha would begin to see what they could find with online companies.
    - iii. Once a company is identified and it falls within the \$200 budget – Melissa has a credit card on which she can pay for these signs.
- iii. How did you get folks to come to the meeting?
  1. Question asked to Amy as she recently moved from one Missoula Neighborhood to another. She indicated that food – namely the food truck was a big hit!
    - a. Jennipha indicated that she struggles with food feeling like a waste of budget
    - b. Others felt that door hangers and mailers were also not as effective.
    - c. Jennipha asked about a social media ad – to which Melissa reminded us while it is hard for the two employees of Missoula Neighborhoods to offer this (and maintain it) for all of the neighborhoods.
    - d. Tim asked if there would be some logic to moving the General Meeting to September. Many folks might be looking for updates as they begin looking at the Fall more than when they are preparing to go on holiday/vacation.
- iv. Topics
  1. Rou spoke to Kalina after the Community Forum and perhaps there is some wisdom of giving a brief nod at Mapping Your Neighborhood at the General Meeting so that people are interested in attending another meeting that is focused only on that. This way we can present and hear about topics that are important to the neighborhood and offer Map Your Neighborhood.
  2. Suggestion not to jam too much into the General Meeting. Reminding ourselves that we can host two General Meetings per year empowering for discussion and
- b. Next Meeting

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- i. Jodi Pilgrim ([jpilgrim@ci.missoula.mt.us](mailto:jpilgrim@ci.missoula.mt.us)) – Parking Services Manager for the City of Missoula will be coming from the City of Missoula Parking Commission to talk to the team about parking and answer questions.
  - ii. Bill Donovan ([william.donovan@mso.umt.edu](mailto:william.donovan@mso.umt.edu)) – University of Montana's Director of Parking to join us as well, along with the UM Transportation Media Coordinator, Chloe Brown ([chloe.brown@mso.umt.edu](mailto:chloe.brown@mso.umt.edu)).
  - iii. Discuss using the budget as it will remaining (\$2,380) for this fiscal year. As it will replenish in July with next fiscal years budget.
    1. Request from Rou to ensure that the remaining budget is presented at all future meetings.
    2. This will also include the pitch from Jennipha and Rou on Map Your Neighborhoods.
    3. Things to consider are all of the other proposals this group has made for the last year on how to spend the budget including:
5. Community Forum Report
- a. Rou attended and had a great report back to the group.
    - i. Very important Neighborhoods Grant vote will be happening on March 27th
    - ii. Riverfront Triangle Urban Renewal District had an open house to discuss future plans and goals at Stockman Bank with the Mayor). If you missed it, there will be more listening or feedback sessions forthcoming or you can send thoughts to Michael Hicks (Project Manager – [hicksm@ci.missoula.mt.us](mailto:hicksm@ci.missoula.mt.us)).
    - iii. Haley Erickson spoke from Parks and Recreational Operations about the PROST Plan (Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Plan) which has received over 4,500 community member feedback from.
      1. They have done a ton to engage with the Missoula Community
      2. They have created feedback loops from not only the population at large but also from affinity groups such as: young, older, families, LGBTQI, minority groups and more.
      3. They control an urban forest of over 3,500 trees annually
      4. They have upcoming community forums through March. Then they will go into a public review period in April and Mid-May will be a City Council vote.
      5. Surprising find is that compared to a lot of other urban areas Missoulians get more services for the tax dollars allocated than other municipalities. This doesn't just equate to more accessibility but also more parks vs. just green/open spaces.
    - iv. Suggestion to thinking about University District Neighborhood Council Leadership Team make Smart Goals. This is something Rou heard about at the Neighborhood Forum via Neighborhood Action Plans. The Leadership Team would discuss and approve some smart goals that would lead the work and action of the group for a determined period of time. This helps groups focus, identify the issue and create solutions in sustainable, reachable and attainable ways.

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- b. Next Community Forum will be on March 27<sup>th</sup> at 6PM at City Council Chambers.  
Jennipha will be able to attend unless she notifies us and we can find a replacement for this month.
6. Missoula Neighborhoods Report
  - a. Melissa has been out – do medical illness and doesn't have an update for us this month.
7. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items
  - a. Ellie Goldman-Hill's bill proposed to change 5<sup>th</sup> street from a highway to a street – did not make it out of committee. While there were fifteen speakers who join in for the hearing it got tabled in committee. Suggestions were made to install a flashing speed sign but discussion around who would be responsible for paying and maintaining it came up without solution.
    - i. Rou plans to follow up with Russ and Lexis (the neighbors) who hosted the last informal neighborhood discussion about the speeding on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> street.
  - b. Jacob's Island Dog Park – is in our neighborhood. With the recent deaths of both dogs and humans is there something that this Leadership Team can do to install signs (with the Neighborhood Council's logo on it) to promote more awareness?
    - i. Understand a temporary sign has been erected
    - ii. Understand conversations are being had to make the sign permanent.
    - iii. Melissa will connect with her connections at Parks and Recreation to provide more insights to what they are discussing and planning.
    - iv. Tim reminded us the logistics of getting a sign installed can be at the crux of the issue. Many times, installing the sign and sign pole can be the big cost.
  - c. Vicki Watson asked about the request that came in last year from Eric with the Clark Fork Natural Prairie.
    - i. Melissa was able to confirm that the Clark Fork Natural Prairie not only apply (with support from UDLT) but received a Neighborhood Grant to continue their work.
  - d. Tim asked if we had heard anything back from Bob from FreeCycle. We have not but also know that he knows the right channels to continue moving this conversation forward and will keep us in the loop as needed.
  - e. Vicki Watson – reminded folks about the Stand Up for Science rally that would be taking place on the UC Oval on Friday, March 7<sup>th</sup> beginning at noon.
8. Announcements
9. Adjournment
  - a. 7:26PM Tim motioned and Jennipha seconded the motion to adjourn