



NEWS ADVISORY

Feb. 7, 2019

For immediate release

COLLABORATION CREATES WARMING SOLUTIONS

Missoula City Council, staff, UM and Mountain Line work to provide evening shelter during arctic weather

Missoula Mayor John Engen, Missoula City Council members, Mountain Line transit and the Associated Students of the University of Montana worked quickly Wednesday afternoon on a solution to the lack of emergency shelter during evening hours for citizens without other options during the current frigid weather.

Beginning Thursday evening, the Mountain Line transit center at Ryman and Pine streets will remain open until 10 p.m., by direction of general manager Corey Aldridge. City staff are working to enlist volunteers and the faith community to staff the facility during the evenings. The Missoula Police Department will provide police services at the transit center. Mountain Line also stepped up to provide bus transportation from the transit center to the Salvation Army on Russell Street when its nightly shelter program begins at 10 p.m. ASUM's UDASH bus will fill in by providing weekend transportation for those in need.

Mayor John Engen, who convened the partners, praised the collaborative brainstorming and generosity of all the partners in the solutions, including City Council members, Mountain Line, ASUM Transportation, the Missoula County commissioners, City Housing office staff and agency partners.

"Local government works hard to provide solutions for every citizen of Missoula," he said. "It's a mark of a compassionate community to look out for the least fortunate among us. This was

simply the right thing to do.”

The Poverello Center and the Salvation Army have been able to serve all individuals needing shelter. The gap in warming services has occurred during the evenings before the Salvation Army opens its nightly shelter after the agency’s regular programming concludes.

The services will continue through the cold snap, likely about two weeks, and will be in place seven days a week.

“Public and staff concerns made it clear that we have a gap to address,” said Missoula City Council President Bryan von Lossberg. “Council members, City administration and our partners in the community worked together to fill that gap.”

#

Ginny Merriam, Public Information/Communications Director, 552-6007 office; 546-7692 cell