

Mayor's Downtown Advisory Commission Minutes
April 5, 2016

Commission Members in Attendance: Ginny Merriam (City of Missoula), Eran Fowler Pehan (Poverello Center), Michael Moore (Reaching Home: Missoula's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness), Margaret Borg (Retired Attorney), Dan Cederberg (Downtown Attorney), Nicole Rowley (County Commissioner), Bryan von Lossberg (City Council), Elizabeth Marshall (Palace Apartments) and Sue Wilkins (Missoula Correctional Services)

Commission Members Absent: Andrea Marcoccio, Jon Wilkins (City Council), Keithi Worthington (Deputy City Attorney), Judge Kathleen Jenks (Municipal Court Judge), Susan Hay Patrick (United Way), Melinda Mason (Children's Mental Health Bureau), Rob Scheben (Police Department), Loreen Hamilton (Salvation Army), Travis Mateer (Homeless Outreach Volunteer), Tara Maus (Montgomery Distillery) and Dave Chrismon (Downtown Ambassador)

Others in Attendance: Sindie Kennedy (Grants), Jade Beatty and Heidi Bakula (Mayor's Office)

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of February 2, 2016 and March 1, 2016 will be reviewed at a later date.

1. Public Comment

Jade Beatty stated that she lives in the Palace Apartments on Broadway facing the alley next to the parking garage. There are many bars in the area and she constantly hears screaming and fighting late at night. She has also witnessed kids drinking alcohol in the parking garage. She stated that she hoped the city would not increase residential density downtown because of the noise. She also stated that she was moving because of the noise issues.

Elizabeth Marshall of the Palace Apartments said that she sits on a citizen committee for urban planning and they did discuss housing density downtown. Public housing on top of bars is not a good housing plan, plus there is now a fifth bar moving into the area. There is a higher level of drinking because Missoula is a university town. She continues to have concerns about over-service of alcohol and knows this is a topic of discussion in MDAC because it continues to be a problem.

Elizabeth said that the noise is a mixture of people coming out of bars, homeless people and garbage being taken out late at night.

Bryan von Lossberg wants MDAC to have further discussions on this matter in the future.

2. Review of Commission Structure – This item was not discussed.

3. Discussion and Reporting on Work Groups

Additional sworn police officer dedicated to downtown

Dan Cederberg met with Chief Brady and Mayor Engen. Dan asked if Chief Brady could come up with a number in order to hire an additional downtown, sworn, police officer. Non-sworn officers may also be considered, plus school resource officers (SROs) may have the flexibility to help out as well. Dan did not discuss this with Chief Brady and the mayor yet since he has been working solely on hiring an additional sworn officer.

Sue Wilkins also mentioned reserve deputies at Missoula County, but Cola Rowley prefaced that by noting reserve officers are required to work with a county deputy in order to have a city presence.

Crisis/drop-in/warming center/detox center with staff

Michael Moore has been discussing options with Catholic Charities and the barriers for them to work in Missoula are not insurmountable. Michael will be traveling to meet with them again. They are primarily interested in housing at this point. Eran Fowler-Pehan said that a representative from St. Pats will be traveling with them to Spokane. Eran attempted to contact a representative at Community Hospital, but they have not returned her phone calls. She will keep working on them. Eran is interested in how Spokane deals with the foot traffic downtown.

Economic impact of indigence – Nothing new to report.

Dog licensing – Nothing new to report.

Advocacy and Education Committee / Parking Meter Repurposing

Susan Hay Patrick is currently trying to recruit new members from the university and the native center.

Alcohol retail sales reduction

Margaret Borg met with Judge Jenks to try and come up with a process of how the alcohol retail sales violations would be handled in court. Bryan von Lossberg also noted that he was working on a meeting about over service of alcohol. Chief Brady is interested in pursuing it. Dan Cederberg added that ticketing for over service will not go over well since it has not been addressed for a very long time. The police department will need to be careful about how they approach over service locally. Eran Fowler-Pehan suggested some education about expectations before ticketing.

10-Year Plan / Challenges to detox programs – short-term information-gathering – Nothing new to report.

4. Comments from Board Members

Bryan von Lossberg asked the commission members about what MDAC could do to help the chronically intoxicated right now.

- Those being released from prison or detox facilities will need immediate housing to transition into in order for them to stay sober. Access to housing is a major issue.
- A local commitment from hospitals and mental health centers is needed in order to detox and provide support.

Bryan would like to identify 10 chronically intoxicated people and see what it takes to help them now.

Respectfully Submitted,
Heidi J. Bakula
Executive Assistant

Date of Next Meeting, Jack Reidy Conference Room, May 3, 2016