

**Mayor's Downtown Advisory Commission
Minutes – January 4, 2011**

Commission Members in Attendance: Rod Austin (Downtown BID), Margaret Borg (Attorney), Barbara Berens (County Auditor), Brenda Desmond (District Court), Eran Fowler (Poverello Center – in Ellie Hill's absence), Melinda Mason (WMMHC), Ginny Merriam (City of Missoula), Kim Murray (Missoula Downtown Association), Susan Hay Patrick (United Way), Rob Scheben (Police Department), Peggy Seel (OPG), Dave Strohmaier (City Council), Julie Weaver (Missoula Downtown Association), Jason Wiener (City Council), Keenan Whitt (homeWORD), Keithi Worthington (City Attorney)

Commission Members Absent: Leslie Halligan (County Attorney), Ellie Hill (Poverello Center), Julie Hilley (Owner MKLaren), Laurie Johnson (Downtown BID), David Pierce (Salvation Army), Nick Roberts (Food Bank), Leanne Vreeland (Ht. Patrick Hospital)

Others in Attendance: Lori Davidson (Missoula Housing Authority)

Intro and Welcome: Ginny Merriam called the meeting to order and introductions were made.

Public Comment: None

Review of Minutes: No minutes were approved

Update from Crime and Prevention Committee – Rob Scheben

The City is applying for a grant through the Board of Crime Control. The Board of Crime Control has decided not to do the 20 percent match because the grant is meant to be used for domestic violence.

The subcommittee met with Municipal Court in August and it was determined that jail time does not work. Most of them can't pay their fines, so fining them is not an option. The community service program is what will work best, but there has to be funding for it. Margaret Borg is looking into other funding options. If the commission has any ideas, please let someone on the subcommittee know. It was asked how much money would be needed to get the program running and that depends on how the program is crafted. They would start small and see how the program works.

Update from Human Services Committee

Paul Carlson Visit: Paul Carlson is sick and postponed his visit to Missoula. He will be here in February and the schedule will be the same. He will be at the February 1 meeting. He is also meeting with the BID, MDA, housing providers, County Commissioners, United Way and touring the Poverello Center. Mr. Carlson helps communities deal with issues around housing that Missoula is dealing with. The commission was asked to reread the materials that were sent for the meeting with Mr. Carlson.

Homeless Needs Assessment

The preliminary assessment has been prepared. Of 240 people, ages 17 – 86, the median income is \$450.48 per month. Housing assistance and permanent housing is needed as 205 people are living outside or in temporary housing. The assessment shows 89 percent of those surveyed are interested in permanent housing. The three top needs are housing affordability, bus passes and employment. More emergency shelters for families with children are needed. The challenges and assumptions are that most homeless people are transients, but there are a lot of families. More than half the homeless people in Missoula are from the Missoula area.

Maxine Jacobson will be presenting her report to the County Commissioners on February 1 and to the City Council on February 2. There needs to be a public meeting held in mid-February. This meeting will include human service organizations, business owners and citizens.

A small committee will discuss the public process and coordinate the efforts with Maxine Jacobson. The commission was asked for ideas for this meeting. The following was discussed.

- There has to be public. Send out invitations as well as open it to the public. Public buy-in will be necessary.
- Original presentation should be a working group.
- Meeting needs to be facilitated. The Mayor was highly suggested to be the facilitator.
- Needs to be enlightening, not controversial.
- More than one meeting may be necessary. Possibly one day and one night meeting with the same information.
- This could be too much information for one meeting. Presenting the data is an important start. Present what has worked in other places and then a second meeting to discuss the information. People will not be ready to discuss the information that is just presented to them. Give framework for what will happen at a second meeting.
- Relate myths and facts. Have a fact sheet to hand out. Misinformation spreads fast. Finding out what is misinformation and addressing those issues is important.
- Have stations around the room where people can find out more information and then make comments. Specialists need to be picked so they can answer questions.
- Have an overview and then break into smaller discussion groups.
- Discuss what has been done in other places, but be sure to have comparable cities such as Billings and Portland, Maine. Billings has a shelter designed to sleep up to 200 homeless individuals.
- There needs to be clear indications of what the problems are. Make it educational. Provide resources and the homework could be to look at what other cities have done. Give them information on what has been successful in other areas.
- Have former homeless folks share their experience. It adds real faces to the stories.
- The information should not be unveiled at the public meeting. People should have it ahead of time so they come prepared and have an understanding.
 - It should be posted on the City's web site; a press release should be done that provides the 'leak'.
 - Don't give all the data, just a 'teaser' so it builds excitement and people come to find out more information.
 - Maybe just the executive summary should be given out.

The following questions arose.

- Who will attend? This needs to be promoted and groups that should be invited need to be discussed. Public outreach is important.

Miscellaneous Business and Discussion

Eran Fowler is filling in for Ellie Hill while Ellie is in Helena with the Legislature. Ellis is still involved in the relocation of the facility, but Eran is the day-to-day director.

Kim Murray has sent her resignation to Mayor Engen. The Mayor will appoint a replacement. She feels she is being led to do something different and has resigned from the seven committees she currently serves on. She has been a fabulous member and it is a big loss for MDAC.

Respectfully submitted,

Melani Coyle

Melani Coyle
Administrative Secretary