**Downtown Helena Inc**

Annual Membership Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 15, 2020 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Montana Club, 24 W 6th Ave, top floor conference room

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| Board Members Present: | Lee S., Rex. S., Riley T., Kevin S., Trevor P. |
| Presenters: | Eric G. – Membership Coordinator, Dave K. – Transportation Systems Director, Micky Z. – Executive Director, Nick H. – Events Coordinator, Nathan W. – LCPH, John F. – Library Director, Andrea O. – Tourism Alliance Executive Director |
| Staff: | Micky Z. - Executive Director, Eric G. – Membership Coordinator, Nick H. – Events Coordinator, Carmen S. – Executive Administrative Assistant |
| **Agenda** | **Discussion** | **Motion/Action** |
| Welcome & Introductions | Membership Coordinator, Eric Gomes, called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. and introductions were made. |  |
| City Commission Workshop | Commissioners, Emily Dean, Heather O’Loughlin, Sean Logan, and Andres Haladay each stood to introduce themselves and gave brief descriptions of their involvement with the Downtown Helena community.Parking presentation by Dave Knoepke began at 8:45 a.m.Dave noted that today’s presentation is a brief overview of parking revenues; a full agenda will be discussed at the Jan. 22 City Admin meeting. He shared photos of the new fuchsia 1-hour parking signs that were recently placed, and the new kiosks. Dave displayed a few graphs with a breakdown of monthly pay units (card vs. coin). South Park Ave. and 400 Block kiosks saw the highest revenue. Micky noted that a “Traffic Survey” had been sent out on a few occasions (due to tech issues) and had a low response rate. She suggested that a retake would provide an opportunity to gather more data regarding how businesses are affected by parking.At 9:00 a.m. the floor was open to parking questions.Sandy S. sees customers nervous about the time on the meters and asks what it would take to get the first half-hour of parking free. Commissioner O’Loughlin asks about how many businesses utilize Goldie Coins (6 owners raised their hands). Trevor P. brought up a question regarding the enforcement times for parking (Why begin at 8:00 a.m. as opposed to 9:00 a.m.?)Dave responds to these questions, explaining that they are discussions that can be brought to the City. He also mentions that he will be tracking data to see if any changes in parking are recorded since the hanging of the new fuchsia 1-hour free parking signs. A brief discussion regarding marketing of parking follows. Dave explains that he would like to see the information in various formats (paper copies of maps, digital/interactive copies where users can search or zoom in on areas) so that it is easily accessible to the public. He also mentions that he has been collaborating with other Montana communities, such as Bozeman, to gain insight on what practices are in place. At 9:21 Eric suggests we move on with the agenda. He opens the floor to panel time, allowing business owners/commissioners to discuss topics other than parking.Sandy S. would like to see open lines of communication regarding upcoming projects (street work, etc.) so businesses can plan accordingly. Dave K. suggests the use of “My Helena” App’s project page.Riley T. would like to see more signage/inviting entrances to Downtown to draw more people in. Eric gives a preview of urban development work to come on the downtownhelena.com site. By the end of the first quarter, brokers/realtors will be able to manage information regarding what new businesses would benefit vacant spaces downtown. Break at 9:35 a.m. | Action: Micky will reopen the “Traffic Survey” on Constant Contact for businesses to respond to.Action: Dave will provide Micky with that data once he has it available. |
| DHI Business | Reconvene at 9:45 a.m. Executive Director, Micky reviews edits to the bylaws. Riley T. is announced as the new Board President.There is still one board vacancy. Current Members include Riley Tubbs, Rex Seeley, Sean Morrison, Andy Onushco, Daniel Barry, and Deb Whitcomb. | Motion to approve the edits to the bylaws was made by Rex S. Seconded by David K. Motion passes.Motion to approve the members was made by Sandy S. Seconded by Rex.Motion passes. |
| 2020 Events Calendar | Events Coordinator, Nick H. takes the floor to discuss upcoming events. May 16 Roll & Stroll will be the kick-off to Downtown Helena events for the year. Nick suggests adding a bike tour of Downtown Helena, possibly lead by Mayor Wilmont Collins to this year’s Roll & Stroll. Nick also announces that businesses may contact him via email with their upcoming events, no later than 1 week prior to the distribution of each newsletter, if they would like the event included. Paula H. asks about 1st Friday. The topic will be revisited for sake of keeping to the scheduled agenda.  | Action: Nick will follow up with Paula regarding 1st Friday.  |
| Smoking Policy | Nathan W. with Lewis and Clark Public Health briefly discusses the Smoking Distance Resolution (link can be accessed on the Lewis and Clark DPHHS website). He explains that business owners are responsible for enforcing this policy. They may request free signage from the State to promote smoke-free spaces. Nathan mentions that he is currently looking into getting custom signage that can be consistent through Downtown. This would potentially include more informational materials and designated smoking areas.  |  |
| Library Update | John F. informed us of the changes happening as part of the $6 Million library renovation project. Phase 1 (Now – End of March) is bringing six new public restrooms and a new coffee kiosk. Library programs have been relocated. Children programs are at the Myrna Loy. Teen Programs have been at Cottonwood and North Valley locations. Phase 2 (April – End of June) may bring closures as staff move 1/3 of the collection to an off-site location. Phase 3 (July – Labor Day) will focus on the reorganization of the main center and teen space. All updates are bringing the building to code for earthquake safety.If businesses have events happening nearby, John recommends they contact the library for information regarding construction that may interfere.  |  |
| Tourism Alliance Update | At 10:15, Andrea O. took the floor to discuss Tourism Alliance happenings. She announced a partnership with *SOVRN Creative* for a new marketing campaign. She listed off several upcoming Consumer Trade Shows, and a visit by tour operators scouting the Helena area. Andrea indicates the Trail Rider Shuttle program is set to continue. The running season is tentatively set for May-September, however, is still being determined. Sandy S. inquires about the riding demographic; asking if it’s the same locals utilizing the service, or if visitors ride as well. Eric G. speaks from experience, saying he sees a mix of people (approximately 80% local, and 20% visitors). There are some suggestions of expanding the service to include a downtown hop-on/hop-off option. Andrea encourages those with suggestions to attend the monthly meetings, happening the 3rd Wednesday of each month.  |  |
| Gift Cards (a quick add-in, not listed on agenda) | Executive Director, Micky Z. quickly mentions that the Downtown Helena office discontinued Gift Card sales on December 20, 2019. She explains that with an outstanding balance of $90,000, the aim is to market redemption of cards issued in 2015 and on. Cards issued prior to 2015 will not be accepted, as they have a 5-year shelf life. Businesses may choose to honor them if they wish, however they will not be reimbursed by DHI. Amy B. offers to recycle unwanted old gift cards into guitar picks. | Action: if interested, drop off old gift cards to Amy B. |
| Trash Pickup | Executive Director, Micky Z. spoke on behalf of Solid Waste Staff regarding current trash situations. In response to concern over locked bins, Micky met with Public Works to gain more information. It was noted that some businesses pay for their trash service, while some do not. Discussions between BID and Public Works are ongoing to address questions and concerns as they are brought forth.  | Action: BID continues to investigate specific trash policies as concerns are brought forth. |
| Floor Open for Questions | Paula inquired about whether the trolley will run this summer.Micky Z. explains that it is not owned by DHI/BID; they operated as a middle-man, only providing booking/reservations. The contract to provide that service ended in 2019.Lee S. wonders if Downtown Helena would be interested in adding a Winter Carnival type event in February or March to stimulate business between the December and May events already in place. Business owners and Events Coordinator, Nick H. will consider what that may entail. Riley T. brings up the idea of creating a Downtown Helena Business Owner group on Facebook. This would provide an avenue for DHI/BID and Downtown business owners to communicate, without information always being displayed as public.  |  |
| News & Announcements | Executive Director, Micky Z. announces 2020 office hours have changed to 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. following the termination of gift card sales. She notes that Downtown Helena Inc’s greater focus is on getting out into the community to be accessible to business owners, rather than being tucked away in our office building. Hours of operation continue as normal, however public office hours have been shortened. Membership Coordinator, Eric G. announces that membership dues may be submitted through the Downtown Helena website now. He also notes the social media stats listed in the Annual Report and explains that Downtown Helena’s goal is to reach more males through recreation content and a #gatewaytoadventure campaign. He encourages people to send images they would like to share to Executive Administrative Assistant Carmen S. for future posts.  | Action: Those interested may send images to cschillinger@helenabid.com for social media.  |
| Next meeting | Wednesday, February 19, 2020. Chamber Building; 225 Cruse Ave. |  |
| Adjourn | Meeting concluded at 11:50 a.m. |  |
| Respectfully submitted: Carmen Schillinger |