



Helena Civic Center Board

PO Box 272, Helena MT 59624

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
CIVIC CENTER BOARD
July 9, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT: Joann Christnacht, Steve Crider, Brad Culver, Skip Hatveldt, Bridget Holland, Riley Johnson, Judy Kline, Bonnie Lorang, Kathleen Pace, Rick Schlenker, Glenda Seipp

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Tim Andridge, Kacey Pilon, Craig Wilkerson

MEMBERS UNEXCUSED: Mike DaSilva, Trevor Parrish

OTHERS PRESENT: City Staff: Troy Sampson, Kristi Ponozzo, Bridget Johnston
Guests: Gery Carpenter

CALL TO ORDER: Board President, Judy Kline called the meeting to order at 4:01 PM.

MEETING MINUTES: Riley Johnson moved to approve the minutes; Skip Hatveldt seconded the motion; the minutes were approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Brad Culver reported that there were no checks written and no change to the funds. The board account was closed and monies were transferred to the City in a special board account.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Judy Kline reported that several board members attended the City administrative meeting on June 19. Bonnie Lorang, Mike DaSilva, Riley Johnson, Judy Kline and Gery Carpenter all spoke in regards to the letter that the board gave to the Commission prior to the meeting. Judy stated there was no reaction from the Commission during or after the meeting. She stated that she has drafted a letter to the editor of the newspaper and asked for consensus from the board on her sending it. The consensus was to send the letter with the omission of two member names per their request. Guest Gery Carpenter stated that at the end of the administrative meeting, he asked the Commission if the move of the Civic Center to the Parks Dept. was done through ordinance. Gery said that City Attorney Joiden stated that still needs to happen. Gery then asked when it would happen but stated he could not make out the answer and he feels that the Commission has no intention to act and therefore puts the City operating outside of the law. Kristi Ponozzo, the new City Parks and Rec Director, expressed her appreciation of the professionalism in which everyone presented themselves at the administrative meeting. Gery mentioned that in 1999, then City Manager Dennis Taylor tried to put the Civic Center under the Parks Dept., but he followed the law in place to do it, and through that process, ended up creating the Community Facilities Dept. instead.

COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE REPORT: NA

STAFF REPORTS

COMMUNITY FACILITIES: Troy Sampson reported summer projects have started up at the Civic Center including clean up and maintenance. The community facilities department has been working on the LED streetlights project; gathering public input and educating the public on the project. Troy also stated that the reconstruction of the north parking lot will take place this summer. Brad Culver mentioned he noticed there are a lot of weeds in the Civic Center lawns. Kristi Ponozzo

said the weed program has recently changed and that with the addition of staff transition and a bad weed year, weeds are abnormally bad this year.

CIVIC CENTER: Bridget Johnston gave a calendar of events for the first half of the upcoming season including July-December. She mentioned some concerts the Civic Center is co-promoting which include Post Modern Jukebox, Three Dog Night, Steep Canyon Rangers and Roy Orbison Buddy Holly Hologram show. She also noted that the Civic Center will be hosting a haunted house again this October and that November and December look normal with the exception that Grandstreet Theater is renting a week worth of space to present their Children's Christmas performance of Frozen Jr.

CHRISTMAS GIFT SHOW: Kathleen Pace said it is almost time to send the info for registration to the vendors. She stated she made some changes to the form to include the verbiage requested by the City Attorney's office and it is ready to go. Registration opens August 1.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: Gery Carpenter commented that the City Manager and Commission's first step is to move the Civic Center under the Parks Dept. and the second step will be to privatize the building. He said Ana Cortez already stated to the board that she would look at this option. Gery's opinion is that privatizing the building will not be successful, a corporation will not be able to maintain the facility and it will be given back to the City in a state of disrepair. There are only a few ways for a private business to operate it. An increase in fees will lead to fewer users. A decrease in costs will lead to lower service which will lead to fewer users. Someone could "name" the building but he doesn't think any large corporation would spend that kind of money in a town this size, there is not a large enough return on investment. Gery stated that the City pays more to operate the City pool for 10 weeks then it pays to operate the Civic Center for 12 months. He has been working in this building for 37 years and he wants to ensure that this building is around for his grandkids to use. The building is in the best condition it has been in since the City bought it in 1935. Bridget Holland asked who would even be able to operate the facility. Gery said he has heard the symphony is interested. Bridget Holland stated they do not have the financial stability to do that. Gery stated that anyone can make promises that they can do something but he doesn't believe they will be able to sustain those promises.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:48 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 13, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,
Bridget Johnston, Administrative Assistant III