



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

City of Billings & Yellowstone County
MEETING MINUTES



Tuesday, January 22, 2019 MEETING TIME: 11:30 am
1st Floor Conference Room, Miller Building
2825 3rd Avenue North, Billings, MT 59101

APPROVED BY A MOTION ON FEBRUARY 26 2019.

Call to order: Ed Gulick, BPAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:34 a.m.

Members present: Zach Hassler, County; Liana Susott, County; Jane Van Dyk, City; Kristi Drake, City; Rose Cook, City

Others present: Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner; Members of the Public: Morgan Miller

Introductions:

BPAC members introduced themselves and why they are interested in being on BPAC. Rose Cook is the new City appointee. She is a local realtor, lives in the Blue Creek area, and wants to know what plans are to make it a little more user friendly to bike and walk. She also likes to be able to give clients a background on plans for the area.

Public Comment Period:

- a. **Comments on items not on the agenda and request to add items to future agendas –** Morgan Miller from RiverStone Health introduced herself and said that Healthy By Design is having its annual meeting on January 23 at the Community Room at the Library at noon.
- b. **Comments on items on the non-public agenda items –** None.
- c. **Online Comments received about bicycle and pedestrian issues –** No online comments were received.

Motion. Approval of the meeting minutes of December 4, 2018: Kristi Drake, BPAC Vice-Chair, motioned to approve the minutes, Rose Cook, BPAC member, seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Discussion Update. By-law edits – The group reviewed proposed edits. There were no comments on page 2 edits. Kristi said that BPAC should have two additional members of BPAC as voting members appointed by Billings TrailNet and Healthy By Design to provide input on Capital Improvement Projects. Ed Gulick, BPAC Chair, said it created an interesting precedent to have non-elected bodies appoint people to a public advisory committee. Jane Van Dyk, BPAC member, suggested two at large Community Members where BPAC members would have input in getting Billings TrailNet members appointed. Kristi said that if an elected body says Billings TrailNet has a right to be at the table, then that is an elected official appointing them. Kristi said

that if the City is asking Billings TrailNet for money, then it is important that they are a voting member.

Liana Susott, BPAC member, said based on her experience on other boards, changing the by-laws can be a challenge, so the less specific they are the better to allow for flexibility.

Kristi said Billings TrailNet has been working hard on getting the Utility Bill funding and was founded by the City. BPAC openings are limited by geography so if she leaves BPAC it is possible she will not be able to find a replacement in the right jurisdiction.

Members were not ready to vote on the addition of two new members. It would be helpful to have a one-on-one meeting with City Administrator and to discuss the issue further. Kristi will make an appointment with the City Administrator to get perspective on pros-and-cons of the approach.

If there were funds to distribute later on, discussing having larger representation would be a separate issue.

Jane suggested adding period after police department in Article I, Section 4 to add clarity to the fact that potential representatives before the period can be voting members; those after are ex-official members.

Liana suggested updating Article III, Section 3 to clarify that a member of the transportation planning staff will be secretary.

Rose moved to amend as agreed upon in this meeting edits that Elyse, Jane, and Liana made to the by-laws. Kristi seconded. These are still draft by-laws. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion Update. Trail Funding Update – Utility Bill update. Kristi talked to Chris Kukulski, City Administrator, and he asked them to wait on the Utility bill as the City's lobbyists have recommended they not move forward with something that could be affected by statewide legislation enacted during this legislative session. In the meantime, Kristi will be getting as many answers as she can about logistics. For example, there was a question of apartment buildings. Some just receive one bill from the city for the whole complex and in some each apartment in the complex receives a bill.

Ed explained about history of CTEP (Community Transportation Enhancement Program) funds from the federal government, which were used to build trails, GO Bonds (General Obligation), which the City used for match, the formation of Billings TrailNet as a fundraising organization, and TA (Transportation Alternatives), another program from the federal government, which is currently used to fund trails. TA funds are more limited than CTEP funds were and are awarded on a competitive basis. As a result, there is no longer a reliable funding stream, and what there is, is much less. Entities have brought attention to the need to find a local source of funding. The City and Billings TrailNet presented Utility Bill idea to City Council on October 1.

Kristi said the Mayor suggests getting answers to the approximately 20 questions about how Utility Bill funding would work.

The Heights Task Force surveyed their own members. 61% said that would use a separated path along Highway 3.

Discussion Update. Downtown Traffic Study – Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner, shared the initial alternatives that came out of the Downtown Traffic Study with the group including 2-way to 1-way conversions on downtown streets and road diets.

BPAC members provided some feedback: north/south streets are slower, but it would be good to have bike lanes on a couple of them. 2nd and 3rd Aves. N. are important routes for east-west travel, and improving Montana Avenue is another interest and desirable destination for many people on bicycles.

Public Comment: Morgan Miller asked what elements would make up the road diet. Elyse shared that right now, the concept is very high level in identifying a possible road diet, but consultants have not identified specific elements of the road diet.

Discussion Update. Bike Parking Update and Grant – The City received a grant for downtown bike parking. Four organizations helped provide match money. Elyse has been getting quotes from vendors for the racks. The grant was not able to fund the racks on the BLM land. Racks will be distributed in the same way as before with businesses applying and paying \$50 for the racks. There is currently \$790 in the bike-parking fund. Jane asked if Harper and Madison was inside the downtown area, but Elyse said it is outside of the area identified for downtown parking. To get interest and demand for the racks, Elyse will coordinate with DBA to get on their meeting agenda and talk about the benefits of biking for businesses. Kristi and Elyse will work together on press release for the Gazette.

New Business:

Motion Recommendation. Election of Officers - Chair recommendations – Members suggested Ed as Chair, Kristi as Vice Chair. Jane nominated Kristi Drake for Vice Chair. Zach Hassler, BPAC member, motioned to elect Kristi as Vice Chair, Liana seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Jane moved to elect Ed as Chair, Rose seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion Update. CIP timeline. BPAC members requested to have someone from Public Works at the next meeting to discuss the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). They are interested in the timeframe for implementation of bicycle boulevards. BPAC members also wondered if their comments would enter the public record on CIP feedback if they were given during the BPAC meeting. They may put together letter of advice for follow-up on the CIP.

Other Business: None.

Future Agenda Items:

- Continued revision of by-laws.
- CIP, specifically issues relevant to BPAC.

Adjournment at 1:05 p.m.