## Lewis and Clark Central Committee Meeting Minutes, 1/16/2024

### Secretary's report

<https://www.lccdemocrats.com/s/20231219CentralCommitteeMinutesdocx.pdf> Approved.

### Treasurers Report

Raised in last month (12/20/2023-01/16/2024): $207.84

* + $116 from ActBlue
  + $90 in checks
  + $1.84 in interest received from the bank
* Spent since last meeting:
  + $2.50 in banking fees
  + $8.36 in ActBlue fees
* Cash in bank: $5,315.72
* Since Ciara was out of town, a lot of checks from ActBlue weren’t deposited, hence the large jump in COH

### General announcements

\*Jeff Bucher, United Way:

* Shelter initiative thwarted by some businessmen that bought the building.
* Gods Love and Our Place have extended hours; other plans forthcoming
* Next Thursday, 4-7 pm United Way will be doing an annual count of unsheltered people in 4 different locations. Survey is conducted on the phone. Locations: Library; Walmart parking lot, Gods Love, Our Place. Another team will go out to places around time where people tend to stay. [jeff@unitedwaylca.org](mailto:jeff@unitedwaylca.org)
* St John property is under contract for a subgroup of older owners. We can raise funds as soon as there is movement. Idea is to provide transitional housing at the old St. Johns complex.

### Crossing the Divide events

Jakob solicited ideas for future Crossing the Divide events. Question about past events, recounted Crossing the Divide Events in 2023

### Event Discussion

We had a holiday meeting in December; thanks to food volunteers and Linda for the wreath/decorations

**Mansfield-Metcalf dinner**

**M&M brunch**, 9-11am at Creperie for people from all over the state who will be attending the event.

Will we want to sponsor seats at the M&M dinner?

**Feb 10: Bozeman, MDLCC Celebration of Democratic Heros;**

**Motion**: Shani: Donation of $500. John second. Will get 2 tickets. Individual tickets are $50. Approved.

**March 11: Deadline for filing for office**; including precinct reps.

Discussion of role of precinct reps: lowest elected official. Part of the county slate of elected officials.

**June 4: Primary election**

**June 7 & 8: State convention**

### Presentation on Helena City Government Structure

**By Ben Kuyper, chair, Helena Citizens Council & Pct 8 Representative**

Legislative Branch: 4 commissioners and the mayor. The mayor is not the executive of the city, they are the lead city commissioner.

Zoning, Parks, Airport boards are first line of policy review, make recommendations to commissioners.

Helena Citizens Council, 28 representatives, 7 districts. Make recommendations to commission regarding budget, and planning issues.

Commissioners hear from voters, task city manager to develop policies, staff creates policies to bring to the commission.

City manager is appointed by the commission and is accountable to the commission. City manager has sole authority to direct staff.

Commissioners need to go through the city process to get issues addressed.

Commissioners, mayor and HCC are only elected officials.

Mayor runs every 4 years, in odd years. 2 commissioners elected each election.

Question: What is the city going to do for local government review?

Committees are under the commission, people are appointed by the city to sit on the various committees/city boards. Position openings can be found on the city website (currently over 20 openings). There are HCC vacancies in District 5 and 6 (see city map). HCC candidates must live in the district they represent. These positions give you a better feel for how the city operates, are a good first step for running for city/county/state positions.

Issues facing unhoused citizens are currently pretty hot topics, e.g. the camp in the National Forest; women's shelter.

City commission meets other Monday at 6pm in city chambers to pass/deny city resolutions; opportunity to give public comments. On alternate Wednesdays at 4, the commission meets to discuss city operations. Good opportunity to meet commissioners.

Helena doesn't have a citywide sidewalk network. If you don't have a sidewalk, if you apply to upgrade your house, you need to put in a sidewalk. There is a city sponsored low-interest loan program to install/repair sidewalks. It's currently a hot issue on the commission agenda.

There is a local government review process where voters can vote to review how the city is structured. If it passes, there will be a commission to review the city govt structure and will make recommendations back to the voters.

Question: Can you talk about city law enforcement and fire departments?

City police funded by the city; currently down 2-4 FTE, most calls are reactive. Fire dept is funded through local govt, need a fire station north of the train tracks to circumvent trains. They are considering a mill levy to fund the new station. Both chiefs report to the city manager, and are hired by an appointed panel (commissioners, mayor, city staff).

Question: Is West Valley fire part of the city?

No.

Question: Is there a neighborhood watch organization in Helena?

Yes, on Facebook

### State Legislator reports

**Jill Cohenour:** “There is good news on SB442. The court found that Legislators WILL get a poll to override the Gov!” Running in HD83 Re: Campaign. Getting setup, fundraising, getting VAN access.

**Laura Smith:** Encourage to lookup interim committee news on the legislative website. HHS will be questioned re: numberof kids being kicked off Medicaid. Criminal justice oversite and audit committee meetings coming up. Audit committee is good example of bipartisan work to hold govt accountable. Re: Campaign. Getting setup, fundraising, getting VAN access. If you have any questions, reach out to me directly. Website is up.

**Melissa Romano:** via Laura Smith Early literacy intervention bill is being discussed. Looking at school funding for discussions during interim session. Melissaformontana site/actblue

**\*Kev Hamm:** Doing call time. Will be up in Great Falls to meet with Libertarian Central Committee up there. Have an event in Havre on Jan 20. Have downloaded 2200 peoples phone numbers. Need help to make phone calls. Will be doing this on Thursday, need 10 people to do 25 calls each. Pizza will be made available. Doing a lot of talking to people. Seem to be lots of cracks in the red wall of MAGA.

### New Business

**Motion**: $700 to replenish swag fund (stickers, flags) Second: John D.

Will be spent in stages.

**Motion**: $1000 for member acquisition. Mark seconds.

Discussion: How will this run? We will mail to 1000 folks from VAN, will cost around $500 to mail a postcard; then spend the equivalent in Facebook social media ads, using FB's marketing algorithms

Question: Laura said people are excited about the hats; can we advertise? Jakob: Can be part of the acquistion campaign; post on social media.

\*Shani: Raised the need to collect signatures to put Biden signature on the ballot.

### Motions Passed

1. Approve December Minutes
2. Donation of $500 to MDLCC.
3. $700 to replenish swag fund
4. $1000 for member acquisition.

### Attendees

Jeff Buscher, United Way of Lewis and Clark County

Tom Snell

Ciara Maxwell, Treasurer

Jakob Miles, Chair

Shani Henry, Vice Chair

John Driscoll, Pct 14

Bob Schmitt, Secy, Pct 22 (2)

Laura Smith, HD79; SD40 candidate

Leonard Bates, Pct 33

Thai Ngyen, State committeeperson, Pct 16

Melissa Romano, HD81

Joe Cohenour, Pct 11 (24)

Ben Kuyper, Pct 16

Mark Mackin, Pct 21

Kent Stevenson

Kev Hamm, Pct 20, US House of Representatives Candidate, MT-1

Carole Makin, Pct 21, Alternate State Committee Woman