



LCCDCC August 10, 2021 VIA ZOOM (and in person)

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Call to Order and Introductions: Tonia Bossell, Chair

- **Tonia** called the meeting to order at **7:03 PM** via Zoom and in person at Montana Democratic Party headquarters. Tonia welcomed all, and asked for introductions. In attendance (by Zoom identification or sign in sheet): **Rep. Mary Ann Dunwell, Mark and Carole Mackin, Trent Bolger, Jan Clinard, Rep. Moffie Funk, Sen. Jill Cohenour and Joe Cohenour, Jacob Torgerson, Shani Henry, Eric Feaver, Kyle Joiner**

Speaker: Eric Feaver (for Helena City Commission)

- **Eric** (<https://www.facebook.com/feaverforhelena>) described his 47 years (so far) in Helena community service. He believes he has the experience and skills to add value to the work of the City Commission. Now retired, Eric feels he has time to pitch in.
- He was a public school teacher, later president of the MEA, MEA-MFT and finally the MFPE. He served on, and was chair of, the Helena Citizen's Council "years ago".
- Eric is concerned about availability of affordable housing, which is necessary to grow the economy. He noted that the City Commission needs to make sure housing trust funds are used wisely.
- Another issue is parks and public lands. Helena trails encompass city, BLM, and Forest service. There is a need to be prudent with Helena's water sources. Lack of sidewalks in some city neighborhoods is also a concern.
- He wants to improve city communication with the public (prompt upload of city meeting recordings, better resident notification about utility work, better promotion of city services, transparent process of public communication). Eric noted that if people are dissatisfied with the process, they will be dissatisfied with the product.
- He especially wants closer financial oversight to assure no funds are "left on table". With his labor background, he knows how to deal with conflict and diverse personalities.
- In response to questions from **Rep. Dunwell, Jan Clinard**, and others, he displayed in depth knowledge of current issues and controversies (city parks, Civic Center management, lack of sidewalks and paving on west side city-annexed property, etc).
- See https://helenair.com/news/local/former-union-leader-eric-feaver-announces-run-for-helena-city-commission/article_11660b51-622e-5373-b885-30944c6e033f.html
- Eric was approved for VAN access at a previous meeting.

Speaker: Rep. Mary Ann Dunwell

- **Mary Ann** reported on her trip to Washington DC last week, along with fellow Montana legislators **Rep. Mary Caferro** and **Rep. Tom France**. More than eighty state legislators from around the country rallied in support of Texas Democratic legislators in a "For the People Act" week of action. This Act (SB 1) would establish a nationwide minimum standard for voting rights.
- **Mary Ann** noted that like in Texas, the Republican-dominated Montana legislature curtailed voting rights this session. Texas Dems left the state for DC to deprive the Legislature of a quorum to gut voting rights, and to lobby in person for passage of SB 1

with support of Dem Senators including Warnock, Booker, and Klobuchar (*"Voter suppression is the Delta variant of democracy. The only vaccination is S 1"*).

- Montana legislators met with staff for Sen Daines, but **Sen. Tester** took time from the Senate floor to meet in person for a half hour. Tester described his priorities as passage of the bipartisan infrastructure bill, the reconciliation infrastructure package, and S1. He believes all other issues are secondary to voting access.
- **Kyle** asked whether a "pep rally" could overcome the filibuster against SB 1. Mary Ann emphasized the importance of contacting Jon Tester to thank him, and to urge continued support of President Biden's progressive agenda and filibuster reform.
- See <https://dailymontanain.com/2021/08/03/montana-house-dems-legislators-from-other-states-rally-in-d-c-to-urge-congress-to-act-on-voting-rights/>

Minutes and Financial:

- Secretary **Linda Beischel** submitted July minutes to the chair, who shared them in person and Zoom chat for participants to access. After attendees had time to read the minutes, they were accepted without objection.
- New Treasurer **Jacob Torgerson** reported a current balance of \$1898.31.

New/ Old Business: Group

- August 21 Farmer's Market table was discussed (cancelled, insufficient volunteers)
- Discussion of alternate meeting venues (quiet, low or no cost) postponed as long as Zoom and MDP headquarters are available.
- It was agreed that safe in-person fundraisers were not possible at the present time. Further discussion postponed.

The meeting was adjourned with the Chair's thanks at 8:00 PM. **Next meeting Tuesday September 14, 2021** at 7 PM. Respectfully submitted, Linda S. Beischel, secretary