



LCCDCC October 12, 2021 VIA ZOOM

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Call to Order and Introductions: Tonia Bossell, Chair

- **Tonia** called the meeting to order at **7:00 PM** via Zoom, welcomed all, and asked for introductions. In attendance (by Zoom identification): **Rep. Mary Ann Dunwell, Rep Moffie Funk, Sen. Jill and Joe Cohenour, Vice Chair Shawn Whyte, Mark and Carole Mackin, Trent Bolger, Troy McGee (for City Commission), David Nielsen (McGee treasurer), Mike Koponen.**

Speaker: Troy McGee (for Helena City Commission)

- **Mr. McGee** noted that the Helena municipal elections are non-partisan, and “I’m about as non-partisan as it gets”. A lifetime city resident, **Mr. McGee** served 43 years with the Helena Police Department as officer for 20 years, then Chief for 23 years. He also served as interim city manager.
- Now retired, **Troy** said he is running because he observed that some city residents feel the commission is not listening to the community. **Mr. McGee** feels the community needs to have confidence in elected officials. He wants to focus on basic city issues and make sure expectations of city employees are reasonable. **Mr. McGee** noted that, in his opinion, the current commission sometimes considers tangential issues more properly left to state government.
- **Troy** asked for questions from the group. **Shawn** asked about whether city trails should be open to E-bikes, and asked how he would alleviate the controversy over re-routing the ADA trail. **Troy** replied that he doesn’t have all the answers to these conflicts, but wants to try. First, he would listen to the public. His experience with conflict resolution as police chief would help him predict and diffuse “hot button” issues. He emphasized that commissioners need to be out in public and attend community meetings.
- **Trent** noted that he got involved in a previous city election over the very basic issue of “plow the damn roads”. **Troy** agreed that city snow plowing has improved. He stressed that this service improvement is costly, but worth it if that is the public’s choice. **Troy** did note, however, that the public needs to understand budget trade-offs.
- **Rep. Dunwell** asked about Republican-passed bills in the recent legislature that limited local government authority and control on multiple fronts of public safety and health. **Troy** noted that as legislative chair for the Montana Police Chiefs Association, he frequently disagrees with state legislative actions.
- **Mark** noted that the city has limited areas for expansion without annexation. **Troy** said the city made mistakes years ago by expanding water and sewer service to the county without annexation. City-county cooperation needs to improve. **Carole** asked if Helena could restore trolleys for public transportation. **Troy** noted that is up to public support.
- **Linda** noted that many of those criticizing the city commission live outside city limits. **Troy** emphasized that he has always served city residents, and wants all to get along.
- For more information on the campaign, see <https://www.mcgeeforhelena.com/> . (UPDATE: Mr. McGee received the 3rd highest vote total on November 2. **Eric Feaver** and **Melinda Reed** were elected to city commission).

Mark Mackin: Fundraising for the State Party and Central Committee

- **Mark** observed that fundraising emails from the Montana Democratic Party, and new Director Hogan, are frequent and repetitious. He remembers when the state party had dues to assure reliable support. Mark was also concerned about the influence of corporate lobbyists on national Democrats to the detriment of the popular will. David Nielsen said he is also interested in campaign finance and contribution fatigue.
- **Trent**, state party Treasurer, explained that McCain-Feingold campaign finance reform (2002) necessitated party funding re-organization away from dues. **Trent** noted that the state party is trying to encourage monthly donations rather than continuous emails. He also agreed that high dollar donors sometimes have outsized influence on legislators.
- **Shawn** asked how LCCDCC could develop and market a monthly donor program. **Linda** noted that LCCDCC emails include a donate button <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/lewis-and-clark-democratic-central-committee--mt--1>. However, that Act Blue page could be improved similar to Gallatin County Democrats <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/support-in-action?refcode=website>.
- **Mary Ann** questioned how to attract more participants, and noted that Flathead Dems (<https://www.flatheaddemocrats.com/>) are very active. **Tonia** concurred that attendance is low. She would like to set up a fundraising committee at the next meeting. **Mark** noted there already is a (dormant) committee. He also suggested there should be committee activity outside the monthly meeting, reported each month.

Candidate/ Elected Official Reports

- **Sen. Cohenour (SD 42)**, term limited, announced she will be running for Montana HD 84 representative in 2022. She also proudly announced newborn twin grandbabies.
- **Rep. Dunwell** (<https://www.maryanndunwell.com/>) previously reported that she is running for Montana Senate District 42. She urged the public to submit comments on proposed maps for Montana's two new Congressional Districts to the Districting Commission (<https://mtredistricting.gov/>) by October 17. (UPDATE: Republican-submitted Map 12 was selected for final consideration on November 9).

New/ Old Business: Group

- Helena's March for Reproductive Freedom occurred Saturday October 2 at noon at the Capitol. Inspirational speakers included **Rep. Dunwell**. LCCDCC volunteers **Shawn** and **Key** tabled at the event and 16 attendees signed up for our email list. Those who attended were impressed by the number of young women marchers. **Moffie** noted that former Republican Secretary of State Bob Brown had an excellent recent Op-ed on abortion (see https://helenair.com/opinion/columnists/abortion-at-a-crossroads/article_7476b114-db06-53cd-bf8f-45924b50cce8.html).
- There were no requests to fill vacant precinct representative seats at the meeting.

Minutes and Financial:

- Secretary **Linda Beischel** submitted September minutes to the chair, and shared them in Zoom chat for participants to access. Treasurer **Jacob Torgerson** was excused due to travel delayed by weather. The unchanged account balance is approximately \$1900.

The meeting was adjourned with the Chair's thanks at approximately 8:00 PM. **Next meeting Tuesday November 9, 2021 via Zoom at 7 PM.** Respectfully submitted, Linda S. Beischel, secretary