

A Meeting of the  
MONTANA HERITAGE COMMISSION  
June 2, 2018  
Rehearsal Hall  
115 Idaho Street, Virginia City  
Helena, MT

MISSION

*The Montana Heritage Commission preserves and manages historic resources in Virginia City, Nevada City and Reeder's Alley and promotes the appreciation of history through quality visitor experiences.*

**Commissioners Present**

Marilyn Ross, Philip Maechling, Bill Howell, Andy Poole, Bruce Whittenberg, Timothy Lehman, Shera Konen, Sara Scott<sup>i</sup>, Stan Ozark

**Commissioners Absent**

Bill Beck, Pam Haxby-Cote, David Hoffman

**Staff Members Present**

Elijah Allen, Executive Director; Amy Barnes, Attorney; Bonnie Martello, Paralegal

**Interested Persons**

Bill Bennett, John Ellingson

**Call to Order**

The Montana Heritage Commission was called to order by Chair Ross at 9:06 am.

**Approval of March 2, 2018 Minutes**

**Commissioner Howell motioned to approve the minutes. Commissioner Maechling seconded. Motion carried.**

**Public Comment**

Bill Bennett detailed the forward progress in Virginia City and the hard work of Elijah and his team has not gone unnoticed.

John Ellingson thanked the Elijah and the Commission for their work in Virginia City.

**Director's Report**

Elijah reported sixty-three rooms have been renovated this fiscal year. The Heritage Commission added mountain bike rentals and the pioneer experience in which visitors can sign up to live the pioneer experience of 1863 for a weekend in Nevada City. Elijah stated the pioneer experience is booked for the season. Commissioner Howell suggested exploring the opportunity of local press covering the pioneer experience. Elijah also stated the Heritage Commission, Department of Commerce, and the Town of Virginia City are working together to apply to get a scenic by-way

designation that would run from West Yellowstone through Virginia City to Butte. Elijah reported several vacation rentals have been completed and are available for rent this season. Elijah thanked Commissioner Konen for her work on furnishing the renovated vacation rentals. Elijah discussed the following items that will need to be decided by the Commission: reconstruction of the information center (Day Light Village Gas Station) projected to be finished in September 2018 with functioning gas pumps with historic appearance, McFarland Center donation, and decision of the sale of land to Central City. Elijah discussed with commission the different gas, diesel, and electric options. Elijah stated during discussion with the town there was interest in electric car stations.

## **Financials**

Elijah reported as of this meeting MHC is under the approved budget with \$44,000 in operating costs and \$117,000 in the preservation account, Elijah stated the preservation account will be exhausted with construction projects concluding and the completion of the visitor's center. Elijah also reported Virginia City, Nevada City and Reeder's Alley are at rental capacity. Elijah finally reported donations are progressively coming in and relayed to the Commission that Chair Ross made a considerable donation on behalf of Commissioner Durham. **Commissioner Whittenberg motioned to approve the financial report as presented. Commissioner Howell seconded. Motion carried.**

The Commission recessed at 10:07 a.m. for an onsite assessment of the Day Light Village Gas Station, McFarland Center, and sale of land to Central City.

The Commission reconvened at 10:43 am.

## **New Business**

### **Boundary line adjustment and potential sale with Central City LLC.**

The Commission along with Amy Barnes discussed possible deed restrictions for the property. Commissioner Maechling continued to express his concerns of not having enough information to make a sound decision on the sale. Commissioner Maechling offered to work with Amy Barnes to form draft restrictions to be presented for discussion. Commissioner Maechling also asked if the requested region maps of the area and easements of the property have been received. Commissioner Howell asked Elijah how receptive Central City would be on negotiations of the property, Elijah stated that they are open to negotiations at this point but may have an issue with the amount of profit of the land depending on the extent of the restrictions and appraisal. Commissioner Poole expressed that he doesn't see a problem with presenting Central City with possible restrictions that include soil restrictions on the land. **Commissioner Maechling motioned to table the sale of the land to Central City until the next meeting so that the Commission along with Amy Barnes can continue work on language that is acceptable to both parties. Commissioner Hoffman seconded. Motion passed.**

### **McFarland Center**

Amy Barnes discussed the donation of the McFarland Center, stating that the Foundation wants to donate the building to the Heritage Commission as their intentions were when the building was constructed. Amy recommended referring the donation to the Land Board, the Land Board returned with letter to the Heritage Commission stating that the Land Board does not need to approve the donation because it was a building and not land, Amy explained that she felt it was suitable to send the donation to the Land Board per the Heritage Commission statute stating "proposed acquisition or sale of real property before a final decision to acquire or sell the property is made. The commission shall approve proposals for acquisition or sale of real property and recommend the approved proposal to the board of land commissioners" as the building is real property. Amy expressed with the actual letter in hand from the Land Board she feels that the Commission can move forward with

making a final determination of the Donation. **Commissioner Maechling motioned acceptance of the donation of the McFarland Center. Commissioner Howell seconded. Motion carried.**

## **New Business**

### **Day Light Village Gas Station**

Elijah discussed refurbishing the existing gas pumps and the installation of working gas pumps at the information center. Elijah stated the town will have a say cosmetically, but anything that the Commission would like to see he will take to the city for approval. Elijah concluded stating the projects initial cost is roughly \$150,000 for the unleaded option and roughly \$220,000 for unleaded and diesel option. Commissioner Whittenberg stated it be wise to get it all done in the beginning and feels it would cost more than \$70,000 to add diesel later. There was discussion about the need by MHC, Madison County and the community for diesel fuel. Commissioner Poole asked where the funds would come from in the building of the structure. Elijah stated the funds will come from the HB2 earmark funds next fiscal year. **Commissioner Howell motioned to move forward with the Day Light Village Gas Station including unleaded and diesel up to the amount of \$220,000 Commissioner Whittenberg seconded. Motion passed.**

### **Adjournment**

The business portions of the meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

The Commission moved to the Community Center for presentation of awards and memorials.

The next Commission meeting will be held on September 7, 2018 in Virginia City.

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<sup>i</sup> Sara Scott is the newly appointed proxy for the Director of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Martha Williams.