

**Pioneer Park Task Force Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday January 16, 2018**  
**McKinley School, 7 p.m.**

**Handouts:** Agenda, Minutes, Last Best News- November 21, 2017; December 5, 2017, Letter to Ward One Councilmen re: Intersection of North 31<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> St. N.

**Attendance:** Linda Moler, Perry Moler, Sue Fachini, Tom McGillvray, Riley Finnegan, Lue Ponich, Cody Kraske, Shauna Kerr, Dave Gorton, Mark Goldy, Brent Cromley, Tamara Roche, Brent Cromley

**Call to order and pledge**

Perry Moler opened the meeting at 7:04.

Mike Yakawich and Brent Cromley were not present due to a City Council meeting. (Brent did come later in the meeting).

Officer Riley Finnegan moved to approve the minutes, Linda seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Correspondence**

Donna Healy wrote a letter in support of the newsletter. Nicki Trahan sent an e-mail to the Task Force, Perry visited with her and she shared that a neighbor is concerned about the sign on the school. The sign is on constantly, even when students aren't in school. He is asking that the sign be turned off when school is not in session. The sign is on Mon-Fri, 7:30-6:30, but the McKinley School sign is on all the time.

The Task Force discussed this issue, Perry responded to the complaint with an email prior to the meeting, and read it to the group. No others at the meeting shared this concern of the sign, and in fact agreed that the school is important to our neighborhood, and the sign is not worth fighting about.

**Police Report:**

Detective Sergeant Riley Finnigan with Billings Police Department reported that the city is still trying to get the crime analyst position filled to get statistics together for the neighborhood. Yesterday was the start of a new year for the Billings Police Department and so the start of a Street Crimes Unit, which Riley is supervising. They will have unmarked cars and try to catch more low-level crimes that are affecting the community on a day-to-day basis. The current Drug Unit can't respond to all of the smaller things, as they are busy with heavier activity in the city. The Street Crime Unit used to be around in the 90's, and they are revitalizing it to see how that may help with some of the issues in town.

Riley will see if he can get the new park police officer to come to our next meeting so that we can meet him. As far as the Billings Clinic officers go, they have not posted positions for those jobs, but Riley is closely monitoring that to be in touch with them. In general, it is hard to get full staff for the police department, so they are constantly working to keep up with the city's demands.

As a neighborhood task force, we can provide our police department with any information about mysterious traffic or houses where there is a lot of traffic, fencing, or potential stolen items being stored. Most of the chop shops are in the county, or in Big Horn County, which is outside of the Billings Police jurisdiction. The reservation is so severely under-resourced that they have a hard time keeping up with the crimes and managing that issue with the BIA.

There were two cars stolen from the YMCA parking lot, and the BPD has a suspect identified.

**City Council Report**

See attached.

**Old Business**

The city will do a traffic study on the intersection of N. 31<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue North.

Ed Kemmick (*Last Best News*) covered the issue of the noise at Senior High from the new sound system. They are going to take the issue seriously and address the concerns of the neighborhood, and have done well so far.

**Task Force Priorities and Goals for the year**

-The Western Heritage Center has set the month of May for a celebration of the historic districts in Billings. You can go online to fill out a form to apply for a plaque if your house qualifies as historic. There is an opportunity to put banners on the light poles to designate the historic district, or something to make it look nice, which we will discuss further. We will send out more information on the dates, and maybe come up with a neighborhood event.

-Lead lines and water mains should continue to be a focus of our neighborhood. That funding item has been moved multiple times and now is projected to 2020, with other projects taking precedence over our neighborhood. There are still 1200 lead lines left in Billings on the North and South side and in the triangle and tree streets. They are still going unaddressed. The task force will have a separate meeting to address this issue.

-We will have a Neighborhood Block Party to provide an opportunity to meet our neighbors again.

-A marked crosswalk on 3<sup>rd</sup> and Avenue D from Pioneer Park. Cars are flying by, and kids are close to getting hit.

-A presentation from the city about code and zoning enforcement in the city as new trends like AirBnB play a bigger role in our community.

-Brent Cromley is also concerned about the snow cutting off access to pedestrians.

**Adjourned**

Dave moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:11, Shauna 2<sup>nd</sup>. Passed unanimously.

Submitted by,  
Maggie Zaback, Co-secretary