

Missoula City Council Committee of the Whole Appointments Subcommittee Minutes

March 25, 2021
6:00 pm
ZOOM Webinar

City Council Members Gwen Jones, Mirtha Becerra, Julie Merritt
present:

Missoula County Member Josh Slotnick
present:

1. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

1.1 Roll Call

1.2 Approval of the Minutes

Subcommittee approved minutes from 3/10/21.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

3. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

3.1 Appointments to the Affordable Housing Citizen Oversight Committee

6:00pm - 6:15pm- Tawnya Cazier

6:20pm - 6:35pm-Emily Shankle

6:40pm - 6:55pm-Stephan Cardella

7:00pm - 7:15pm-Katie Carlson

7:20pm - 7:35pm-Barbara Ludeman

7:40pm - 7:55pm- Representative Tom France

Tawnya Cazier-

Councilmember Jones welcomed Tawnya and the subcommittee members introduced themselves and began the interview.

1. Tell us about what inspired you to apply for this position.

Three of my friends told me I should apply so I took that as a sign to look into it. I've been interested in the housing disparities in Missoula since I moved here seven years ago. I used to work with people at the Poverello Center and saw how challenging it was to get into housing.

2. Can you expand on how some people in our community (Black, Indigenous, People of Color, those with lower income, young people, elderly people, etc.) are being disproportionately affected by the affordable housing crisis in Missoula?

People of color often don't have access to loans and can't build access to wealth in the same way. People also live on fixed incomes and it's harder to get ahead to build wealth or keep up with the cost of rent. 25% of Americans don't have bank accounts which is another barrier to housing.

3. Describe a time when you worked effectively with a person or group with a perspective that was different from your own. How did you find common ground?

I do this daily with friends or family and sometimes on the topic of race. I had a conversation with my sister, she feels that white people are discriminated against. It's important for me to remember that people want the same thing, to be understood, to find common ground, and it's about what we do to get there. Another example is when I worked in the Mental Health Center, if I was working with a problematic client, I might think the person should continue in treatment where another person felt they should stop services, we'd work through that by listening and understanding where the other person was coming from and what was the best interest of the client. I really want to believe that people are good. Batman and Joker are enemies because they want the same thing, they want Gotham City.

4. Missoulians face a wide range of affordable housing needs. What are your priorities for the Trust Fund? How do you plan to balance competing needs with limited resources?

I worked for vocational rehab, with a focus on helping people get jobs. We have to weigh the needs of a client as well as the financial constraints of the program. I see that being similar in this role. My priority is always affordable housing. Right now there's not enough affordable housing.

5. In 2019 the City of Missoula adopted the housing policy, A Place to Call Home which outlines our plans to address a wide range of housing needs for Missoulians. Please describe your familiarity with a Place to Call Home and how you expect it will inform your role on the committee.

I saw the A Place to Call Home as a guiding principles of what needs to be done. I like that it recognizes the challenges and successes. I wonder about whether with the influx of people moving to Montana whether the priorities have changed and whether the housing policy will change as a result.

Councilmember Jones thanked Tawnya for applying for the committee and explained the next steps of the process. Tawnya thanked the committee for their time and the opportunity.

Emily Shankle-

Councilmember Jones welcomed Emily and the subcommittee members introduced themselves and began the interview.

1. Tell us about what inspired you to apply for this position.

The short answer is my dad. We both grew up in the same small town in rural Montana. He grew up relying the support of people and community to get where did and my parents paid that forward by being landlords to people on our property but not charging rent, only charging people utilities. That's why I've always been interested in

poverty alleviation and got my master's in Public Affairs. So when I saw that the committee was being formed, I jumped in with both feet. And I live on the Westside where two medical buildings are being build and a high rise apartment building and my rent was raised this year in a pandemic. I want to be a part of solutions to ensure that I'm also not priced out of my own neighborhood.

2. Can you expand on how some people in our community (Black, Indigenous, People of Color, those with lower income, young people, elderly people, etc.) are being disproportionately affected by the affordable housing crisis in Missoula?

I'll share my own experience, I moved away to Anchorage for a better paying job because it was difficult to find similar opportunities in Missoula after undergrad and was eventually able to afford to move back to Missoula and was able to split rent and utilities with my partner rather than having to live with a number of roommates, I've been able to find opportunities in education and employment to make these experiences possible. I think about people who don't have the privilege that I've had and how much harder it makes getting ahead.

3. Describe a time when you worked effectively with a person or group with a perspective that was different from your own. How did you find common ground?

In my current role at the UM, I work with another team and we originally had challenges. By the function of our roles and in how we're set up there's inherent differences, our work has opposite schedules, their slow season is my busy season and vice versa, we use different software, etc. We have begun to find common ground and work well together by meeting regularly and staying focused that we want the same goals.

4. Missoulians face a wide range of affordable housing needs. What are your priorities for the Trust Fund? How do you plan to balance competing needs with limited resources?

A long term goal for me is preservation of affordable housing. I remember going to a Transitional Housing program and someone leaned their hand against a door and it went straight through. I was shocked at how poor the materials were. So quality materials and preserving affordable housing is important. That's something I'm focused on. In the short term, helping people staying in their housing is a priority. Whether it's through Rapid Rehousing or other programs. In terms of balancing priorities I would rely on data and matrices outlined in the housing policy.

5. In 2019 the City of Missoula adopted the housing policy, A Place to Call Home which outlines our plans to address a wide range of housing needs for Missoulians. Please describe your familiarity with a Place to Call Home and how you expect it will inform your role on the committee.

Truthfully I hadn't heard of the policy until yesterday while I was preparing for the interview. I think it's well laid out. To understand the data you understand the people it represents which is why I think it's so important the City is putting the committee together.

Councilmember Jones thanked Emily for applying for the committee and explained the next steps of the process. Emily thanked the committee for their time and the opportunity.

Stephan Cardella-

Councilmember Jones welcomed Stephan and the subcommittee members introduced themselves and began the interview.

1. Tell us about what inspired you to apply for this position.

In 2018 I was potentially homeless in Missoula County and had family assistance during this time. I had undergone a medical crisis and a spinal surgery. It was difficult to pay bills. I recognized how fortunate I was to have support for housing and I'd like to be a part of the solutions now.

2. Can you expand on how some people in our community (Black, Indigenous, People of Color, those with lower income, young people, elderly people, etc.) are being disproportionately affected by the affordable housing crisis in Missoula?

Right now, in our state, the tech boom is pricing people out of the market. Montana has a Mental Health issue and that is affecting how people access housing as well. I don't want to see the same crisis happening in Bozeman happen in Missoula with people standing on the street corner with signs "please let me buy your house".

3. Describe a time when you worked effectively with a person or group with a perspective that was different from your own. How did you find common ground?

In 2016 I volunteered for Ben Carson's presidential campaign. I am diametrically opposed to Ben Carson's views but that experience taught me a lot about listening to understand rather than trying to convince people of my point. While I was volunteering I had to actively remember to keep my viewpoints behind in my mind to focus on what I there to do.

4. Missoulians face a wide range of affordable housing needs. What are your priorities for the Trust Fund? How do you plan to balance competing needs with limited resources?

My goal would be to find sustainable solutions for Montanan's. I study economics at UM. I have some goals to see the Trust Fund work with the plans to end homelessness. I understand that affordable housing solutions are complex.

5. In 2019 the City of Missoula adopted the housing policy, A Place to Call Home which outlines our plans to address a wide range of housing needs for Missoulians. Please describe your familiarity with a Place to Call Home and how you expect it will inform your role on the committee.

Not super familiar with the housing policy but would learn if a part of the committee.

Councilmember Jones thanked Stephan for applying for the committee and explained the next steps of the process. Stephan thanked the committee for the opportunity.

Katie Carlson-

Councilmember Jones welcomed Katie and the subcommittee members introduced themselves and began the interview.

1. Tell us about what inspired you to apply for this position.

I'm interested in supporting people getting into permanent housing and having opportunities to build wealth and create financial stability. It feels like a good way to be involved.

2. Can you expand on how some people in our community (Black, Indigenous, People of Color, those with lower income, young people, elderly people, etc.) are being disproportionately affected by the affordable housing crisis in Missoula?

I think people have historically had less access to financial security. It makes me think of redlining and covenants and policies that kept people away from housing. Because of systemic racism, People of Color are being kept away from opportunities including generating wealth.

3. Describe a time when you worked effectively with a person or group with a perspective that was different from your own. How did you find common ground?

Being a realtor and an attorney, I feel like I negotiate a lot. I used to be a family attorney and work with people who were making custody plans and I found that people want to be heard and find the best interest of people involved.

4. Missoulians face a wide range of affordable housing needs. What are your priorities for the Trust Fund? How do you plan to balance competing needs with limited resources?

I'm interested in TEDs and infill. I know townhomes are generally easier to finance than condos because you own the land underneath. Community Land Trusts are gaining ground. The Hell Gate Village lottery system is interesting to me, where the developers are still making their money and people are able to buy at affordable prices. I'd like to see people get into housing without a really competitive buying process.

5. In 2019 the City of Missoula adopted the housing policy, A Place to Call Home which outlines our plans to address a wide range of housing needs for Missoulians. Please describe your familiarity with A Place to Call Home and how you expect it will inform your role on the committee.

I've been reading through it yesterday and today and I wasn't that familiar but it seems like a good framework for the committee.

Councilmember Jones thanked Katie for applying for the committee and explained the next steps of the process. Katie thanked the committee for the opportunity.

Barbara Ludeman-

Councilmember Jones welcomed Barbara and the subcommittee members introduced themselves and began the interview.

1. Tell us about what inspired you to apply for this position.

I saw the article on the internet and it reminded me of the experience we had last summer when the owner of our apartment sold the building and our rent was raised from

\$800 to \$1500. I've been working with people who have low incomes for me whole career and I had a similar experience with that. I thought this would be a good way to help out.

2. Can you expand on how some people in our community (Black, Indigenous, People of Color, those with lower income, young people, elderly people, etc.) are being disproportionately affected by the affordable housing crisis in Missoula?

Experienced this in housing search. I've faced discrimination in the housing search, landlords have asked me about my race and about my husbands age. One landlord questioned whether my husband would be able to do the stairs in an apartment because of his age. When I told him the stairs in our current place weren't a problem, he was skeptical and we were ultimately denied. I reported the property. I imagine other people face these issues in searching for housing too.

3. Describe a time when you worked effectively with a person or group with a perspective that was different from your own. How did you find common ground?

I've worked 1:1 with people throughout my career. I haven't always seen eye to eye with my clients but I've tried to understand where they're coming from and give more information that I have. My family asked me why I went back to work after retiring from the County Extension Office and it's because I like working with people.

4. Missoulians face a wide range of affordable housing needs. What are your priorities for the Trust Fund? How do you plan to balance competing needs with limited resources?

I've done a lot of grant work and brought in thousands of dollars for the community in my previous roles. I would be happy to support this work regardless of whether I'm selected. I just want to help people in whatever way I can.

5. In 2019 the City of Missoula adopted the housing policy, A Place to Call Home which outlines our plans to address a wide range of housing needs for Missoulians. Please describe your familiarity with a Place to Call Home and how you expect it will inform your role on the committee.

I've read it over and I'm quite impressed.

Councilmember Jones thanked Barb for applying for the committee and explained the next steps of the process. Barb thanked the committee for the opportunity.

Tom France-

Councilmember Jones welcomed Tom and the subcommittee members introduced themselves and began the interview.

1. Tell us about what inspired you to apply for this position.

Partly it's being a Missoulian and feels like a civic duty. I've gotten involved with Homeward and affordable housing development through their organization and I'd like to be more involved.

2. Can you expand on how some people in our community (Black, Indigenous, People of Color, those with lower income, young people, elderly people, etc.) are being disproportionately affected by the affordable housing crisis in Missoula?

It's more of a class analysis than a race analysis. I do know that Native Americans have disproportionately low incomes but I think that speaks to lack of economic opportunity. I believe strongly in the model that homeownership that should be available to everyone who wants to do it. I also think that affordable rental options should be available to everyone who wants that. I think it is very close to a human right to have housing that meets everyone's standards available.

3. Describe a time when you worked effectively with a person or group with a perspective that was different from your own. How did you find common ground?

In my career at National Wildlife, I started of as a litigator. I found that litigation is a great tool but not a way to solve things. It's a good way to stop things. Even before coming to the Legislature I've done a lot of work with people with perspectives that were different that were different than mine and work to find common ground. It's about listening to understand and working toward a solution that meets everyone's needs.

4. Missoulians face a wide range of affordable housing needs. What are your priorities for the Trust Fund? How do you plan to balance competing needs with limited resources?

That's why I want to be on the committee. I don't know enough now to give you a hard answer. I want to know more to learn about solutions, whether it's building more affordable housing or making loans for people. That's the work as I see it, as I read the job description.

5. In 2019 the City of Missoula adopted the housing policy, A Place to Call Home which outlines our plans to address a wide range of housing needs for Missoulians. Please describe your familiarity with a Place to Call Home and how you expect it will inform your role on the committee.

I reviewed it, I haven't read it in detail. I think in a lot of things Missoula does, it's an amazing document to have foresight and skill to put it together. I think it's wise to keep checking back on the metrics.

Councilmember Jones thanked Tom for applying for the committee and explained the next steps of the process. Tom thanked the committee for the opportunity.

4. ADJOURNMENT