

DRAFT Missoula City Council Committee of the Whole Minutes

**June 29, 2022
12:30 PM
ZOOM Webinar**

Members present: Stacie Anderson, Mirtha Becerra, Daniel Carlino, John P. Contos, Jordan Hess, Gwen Jones, Kristen Jordan, Mike Nugent, Jennifer Savage, Sandra Vasecka

Members absent: Amber Sherrill, Heidi West

1. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

1.2 Approval of the Minutes

Approved as submitted.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

3. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

3.1 Bear Hazard Assessment for the Missoula Area

Information only.

Presentation

Ginny Merriam introduced the Bear Smart Missoula Working Group, including previous work regarding bear feeding ordinances and understanding the bear buffer zone. Chris Servheen spoke on the issue of a bear hazard assessment, which is the first step in the Bear Smart process for the City of Missoula. Jamie Jonkel spoke on new grizzly reports in Potomac and up the Blackfoot and increased black bear activity in East Missoula and Hellgate Canyon.

Chris Servheen presented on the Bear Smart Missoula Working Group's findings in the bear Hazard Assessment (see video and attached presentation), and next steps for a Human-Bear Conflict Management Plan.

Questions from Council

Kristen Jordan asked what the city can do to help with this issue. Chris Servheen said that the group will be bringing recommendations directly to council and the county commissioners. It will be up to these groups as the governing bodies to decide how to implement and create awareness. Jamie Jonkel suggested getting the word out about the assessment at [Bear Smart Missoula - Missoula Bears](https://missoulabears.org) (missoulabears.org).

Kristen Jordan asked a follow up about the usefulness of increasing citations. Chris Servheen said that will be considered in the Conflict Management Plan. Jamie Jonkel mentioned that in the city limits Animal Control is stretched very thin. Chris Servheen does not require garbage pickup, as an example of current garbage management

policies; and the Conflict Management Plan will likely contain recommendations on bear-resistant garbage containers.

Daniel Carlino asked City Attorney Jim Nugent whether the power exists to mandate bear-resistant garbage containers. Jim Nugent said that this has come up a few times, that the power is not explicit but may be possible after research. Jamie Jonkel said that Chad Bauer may have some information on this. Gwen Jones said that it seems the most important issue is getting community buy in.

Jordan Hess said that he was under the impression that the city did require garbage service. Jamie Jonkel said that for those that don't have pick up they are supposed to control it, but some people just have a garage full of garbage.

Jordan Hess also asked Jim Nugent if this could be addressed under the health code. Jim Nugent said that the county has not gone so far as to make the requirements that would enable the authority. Would have to apply to both of the garbage companies that are competing with each other.

Radley Watkins commented that this is an official group sanctioned by the city and county, and that is different than those who casually use the term "bear smart" to mean bear friendly.

Mike Nugent spoke on the fact that the city regulates how garbage is regulated for commercial properties and believes this might be the same as requiring citizens to store garbage properly.

Kristen Jordan said that this is a critical issue and we may need look to science rather than wait for constituent buy-in, and she is ready to pass a resolution requiring bear-proof garbage storage.

Chris Servheen said the Republic Services has certified bear-proof bins. Jamie Jonkel said that Grizzly's current bin is not certified bear resistant.

4. ADJOURNMENT