

West End Neighborhood Task Force Minutes

		<i>Date / time</i> 2/15/2022 7:00 PM <i>Location</i> Connections Church & Virtual
Chair	Howard C Holz	Website https://ci.billings.mt.us/676/Wet-End-Task-Force
Vice Chair	Gordon Olson	Facebook Group <u>West End Neighborhood Task Force</u>
Secretary/Treasurer	Tina Volek	Email billingswetf@gmail.com

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair Howard Holz

AGENDA TOPICS

Minutes of 1/18/22: Tina Volek, Presenter.

The West End Neighborhood Task Force (WENTF) minutes previously had been distributed by e-mail. The minutes were accepted by consensus.

Police Report: Sgt. Ryan Kramer, Presenter.

Sgt. Kramer said that in January 2022, there had been 6,516 calls for service, 693 of them in the West End Neighborhood Task Force (WENTF) area. Of the WENTF calls, 164 had resulted in a police report. Calls for service included 12 for suspicious activity, 46 for disturbances, 9 for noise complaints, 11 for a sick or injured person, 10 for threatened or attempted suicide, 115 for suspicious activities, 12 for threats of harassment, 8 for vandalism, and 48 for welfare checks.

Council Member Mike Boyett asked if marijuana complaints would likely be higher as a result of recreational marijuana sales becoming legal Jan. 1, 2022? Sgt. Kramer said he would have to check with the crime analyst.

Traffic-related calls for service in the WENTF included 4 for abandoned vehicles, 14 for hit and runs, 22 for property damage without injury, 4 for accidents with injury, 5 for parking violations, 29 for general complaints, and 67 traffic stops. Sgt. Kramer said the increased traffic stops resulted from a new sergeant running the Street Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP).

Of 447 tickets and citations issued citywide in January, 42 were in the WENTF area. One was an ordinance violation for possession of a gun, 14 were municipal infractions and 25 were state code violations.

WENTF offenses in January included 2 assaults; 3 burglaries; 4 drug complaints, some through the Crime Stoppers anonymous program; 3 driving under the influence (DUI) arrests; 6 motor vehicle thefts; and 2 robberies. Most offenses were going down, including DUIs, drug arrests and robberies.

As of January, the supervisor of the plain clothes street crimes unit was targeting quality of life crimes. Sgt. Kramer left his business cards on the table in case someone had an issue to report.

Rocky Vista University (RVU), Montana College of Osteopathic Medicine, Vice President and Founding Dean Dr. David Park, Presenter.

Dr. Park said there are two types of doctors licensed to practice medicine: Medical Doctors and Doctors of Osteopathy. Osteopathy is based on three tenants: a human is a unit of mind, body and spirit; the body has the inherent ability to heal and regulate itself; and structure and function are reciprocally related.

Dr. Park said he is a family physician who also served in a Mesquite, Nevada, emergency room. He was born in South Korea and immigrated to the United States with his family when he was four years old. He is a graduate of the New York College of Medicine and the Mt. Sinai Family Practice Residency Program at Jamaica Hospital who has pursued academic medicine as a career. He lived in New York, then moved to the Touro Health Center in Reno, Nevada, for a decade. From there, he was recruited to Utah, where he spent more than five years as Vice Dean and Dean at the RVU College of Medicine, developing a program for 125 students, as well as staff. He and his family were brought to Billings in the summer of 2021 to do an even bigger and better job at the new Montana RVU.

There is a physician shortage in the United States, and Montana ranks 30th in the nation for the number of its physicians, Dr. Park said. The number of doctors relates directly to outcomes in the prevention of disease. The medical school will train doctors for rural practices, who will also enhance the City of Billings through their work. There will be medical advances in education, research and health. This is a private school, offering only masters' and doctoral degrees. They find their students serve with dedication. Medicine needs to change and focus on innovation. There is tremendous community support for the project, with Council Member Boyett serving on the hospital's community advisory committee. The goal is to function more like a community.

The values that the school emphasizes include Integrity, collegiality, compassion, diversity, excellence, service, and innovation. In 2008, only a short time after its founding, the Utah campus was the 8th best of 159 medical schools for producing the most graduates practicing in rural areas. They are academically focused, with one of the most complete programs of 58 in the country. In November of their second year, students go through a licensing exam and, again, RVU has among the top results in the county.

Billings will initiate its first class of 80 students in July of 2023. There has been some concern expressed that there will not be enough residency practices for third year students, but RVU has until 2023 to build a clinical rotation for a maximum of 160 students in a class. There should be adequate residencies in Montana and Colorado. There is a fierce loyalty among their graduates to the existing program.

The Billings campus at Shiloh and Monad sits on 12.8 acres purchased from SCL Health. The building will be 138,999 square feet with 414 parking places. The architect is mindful that the design needs to look like Montana. Students and visitors will be able to enjoy the views, with a big fireplace accessible on the inside and the outside of the facilities. There will be a July ribbon cutting. Until the new facility is complete, the staff will be moving into the First Interstate Tower.

Student applications will be reviewed beginning in four months. Students from all over the country are flying in to apply to medical school. They will need more housing. When it comes to health care, the people flowing into the campus will make Billings the epicenter for health care.

The number of students ultimately will rise from 120 to 320, with an average age of 27, living in Billings and pursuing their careers. Their commitment to service is part of their value. They will participate in health fairs, serving food banks and rescue missions, and responding to training events with hospitals and first responders. All of the students will have service projects with local organizations. In other RVU facilities, the students work with fifth graders to tell them how they can become doctors, or kids can come to the medical school for a young doctor program. Juniors and seniors now at RVU schools come in for a week of simulation, getting practice in what they will be doing. Students see how each other are doing, where people end up and where they are ending up all over the country, including Montana, often in rural practices. An alumni network attends medical conferences, and several past students are practicing in Montana.

Clinical services will be taught through a simulation clinic with 16 exam rooms and people who will be professional patients. The hospital is hiring nearly 20 doctors, who also will interact with patients. It was mentioned that the Colorado School of Mines has professional engineers teaching evening classes. Dr. Park said there will be adjunct faculty from the community at ROV in areas such as oriental medicine and nutrition. A large network of physicians is going to be involved and available.

Amendments to By-Laws: Howard Holz, Presenter.

Mr. Holz explained that the City Council was discussing moving its meetings from Mondays to Tuesdays to give Council Members more time to get answers to questions they might have about a large agenda packet delivered to them on the Fridays before each meeting. City officials and staff would find it difficult to attend WENTF meetings that currently meet on the third Tuesday of each month. There was not a sufficient quorum at tonight's meeting to approve the by-law changes. Mr. Holz proposed, and the members unanimously agreed, to send out the language that would allow the leadership to designate a night in the third week of each month to hold the meetings. The motion was unanimously approved.

Other issues:

Mr. Holz said there was a neighborhood meeting attended by 35 to 40 people about a new subdivision by the drain at 60th and Grand. The developers for the proposal are meeting with the Planning Department. There is one piece of land nearly surrounded by the parcel not included in the land sale that has an easement strip that gives access to it.

Another meeting is being held about property north of the cemetery on Grand near Colton. It is within main streets in the area.

Fencing has gone up for the new grocery store being constructed at Grand and 54th. Employees of a store at Grand near Rehberg Road reportedly are pleased the new store will be joining their grocery chain.

Billings Bright and Beautiful is holding an April 23 cleanup and looking for volunteers to participate.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

The next meeting will be at 7 p.m. March 15 as both a face-to-face meeting and a Zoom connection. More information about it will be distributed soon.