



Rimrock Neighborhoods Task Force Membership Meeting Minutes January 15, 2025 ~ 7:00 PM Mayflower Church

Howard Evans, Chair, called the meeting to order, welcoming members, guests & public officials. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

Public officials present:

- Vice-Mayor Mike Boyett (city council ward 5)
- City Council Representative - Ward 4 - Scott Aspenleider
- Commissioner Mike Waters, Yellowstone County Commission

12 members were in attendance; a voting quorum was established

3 out of 4 board members were present. (Tom Yampradit unable to attend)

2 guest presenters were in attendance: Sgt Glen Gunther, BPD, and Casey Page, Riverstone Health.

PRESENTATIONS:

POLICE UPDATE: Howard Evans introduced our 1st presenter - our new BPD liaison, Sgt Glen Gunther.

Sgt Gunther described his police experience, including having served on the DUI Task Force.

He advised us that BPD would be moving soon from the current downtown location to the new City Hall (former federal court house - corner of 4th Ave N and N 27th Street).

Sgt Gunther provided updates and answered questions around police staffing, 2 recent coroner inquests (for officer-related shootings), gangs, swatting, cartels, drugs, and his own concerns for his officers.

Sgt Gunther stayed through the entire meeting, and participated during Casey Page's presentation on Riverstone Health, and how law enforcement interacts with Riverstone for child abuse cases. Sgt Gunther stayed after the meeting to speak individually with members.

PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE: Howard introduced our 2nd presenter - Casey Page, Riverstone Health

Casey walked us through a summary of the services which Riverstone provides to the community. Riverstone is unique in Montana, and much of the US, in that it serves both as the Public Health Department, and a Federally Qualified Health Center.

Many know Riverstone Health for their primary care medical clinics in Billings, Worden, Joliet and Bridger. Some of the other services they provide including many through the Healthy By Design team:

- Dental clinic, including emergency services
- Pharmacy - open to all, not just Riverstone patients
- Hospice
- Medical services for unhoused residents
- School-based clinics - currently serving Orchard Elementary, Medicine Crow Middle School, and Senior High School. More schools may be added.
- Integrated behavioral health
- Public Health testing, inspections and licensing
- Travel immunizations

- Family Health services including in some cases home visits
- WIC program
- Child Abuse victim care and interviews
- Farmer's Markets
- Communicable Disease education, prevention and care
- Cancer prevention screenings and follow-up
- Tobacco Quit Line services
- Suicide Prevention - including QPR training
- Gun Locks
- Safe Routes to School - Yellowstone County
- Rural School Services

Casey also shared that mobile clinic services are coming soon.

Due to technical issues, Casey was not able to share her presentation on screen, but we've loaded here to this link: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hrocwq2K0YrBAXnFTKwxtc-ZCq8WOHrv/view?usp=sharing> If you have trouble accessing it, let me know and I'll email it to you as an attachment.

Casey stayed through the entire meeting and participated in discussions, staying behind to answer questions. She provided brochures on Riverstone services. We will bring the extra brochures to the next meeting for those who were not able to attend.

OLD BUSINESS:

BOARD VACANCY: Howard Evans reiterated the need to fill the vacant board position of Secretary. He stressed the urgency as he is not planning to run again for Chair, and that would bring the number of board members down to 3. We are handling many issues, and current board members are stretched to keep up. There were no nominations offered, but we will continue to work on filling the position.

RIMROCK CORRIDOR SAFETY COMMITTEE: Leslie Cooke, Vice Chair, gave update on the activities of the Rimrock Corridor Safety Committee, and offered a brief overview of the committee's 7 areas of concern:

- Traffic Volume
- Traffic Speed
- Mis-use of Turning Lanes
- Lack of Safe Pedestrian Crossings
- Lack of School Crossing Guards
- Lack of Reduced Speed School Zones
- Governmental Planning

Leslie shared our recent connection with Safe Routes to School-Yellowstone County. This group does not work on the actual street improvements (which the City handles) but rather works more on the human side, partnering with schools, PTAs and families to find ways to get kids active in walking and biking safely to school. To that end they are planning a Walk to School one-day event sometime in February, and they are asking our help in providing a few volunteers for 1 day to be an escort for kids in the schools served by our task force area. Once details for this event are available, Leslie will follow-up to solidify who can volunteer.

RIMTOP UPDATE: Howard Evans reported that there had been some complaints recently about very loud weekend helicopter noise within the task force area. He took that complaint to the leadership at the LAASF, and it was explained that they are not doing any weekend flying at this time, so the loud helicopter noise was likely from the commercial or medical helicopter operators. NOTE: Howard forwards weekly construction updates to anyone who would like them. If you'd like to be included in Howard's updates, send an email to rimrocktaskforce@gmail.com and we'll add you to Howard's email list.

Howard shared that there would be a Highway 3 corridor study soon. Scott Aspenleider, City Council Ward 4, also serves on the Montana Department of Transportation board. Scott shared that the corridor study would not include pedestrian or speed studies. It would focus on configurations of lanes and intersections. These corridor studies always lead to future corridor design projects, likely within 7 years.

NEW BUSINESS:

Meeting scheduling.

- **Frequency of meetings.** In 2024 we switched from quarterly meetings to every other month, with the commitment that we would evaluate after one year. The discussion led to consensus that we would remain on the current every other month schedule.
- **Wednesday as days for meetings.** We discussed switching meetings from Wednesdays to possibly Tuesday (or another day of the week). Members present favored staying on Wednesday nights, but giving the board flexibility to change our meeting day in the future without a by-law change and membership vote. Howard will prepare and present a change to by-laws at the next membership meeting in March, that will give the board this authority to change the meeting night.

Meeting Topics and Attendance. Howard asked for member input on meeting presentation topics, and ways to increase in-person attendance. We discussed news outlets with stories about what we're working on, postcard invitations, and yard signs as possible ideas to increase attendance. The board will discuss these ideas at their next meeting. A good discussion was held and the following topics will be considered for upcoming meetings:

- Fire Department presentation, especially in light of California's urban fires
- Boys & Girls Club presentation
- National Guard presentation
- How to keep your home safe from crime
- Problems with VRBOs and/or Air BNBS in neighborhoods (it was noted that a troublesome VRBO in one of our neighborhoods will likely have their business license revoked due to neighborhood covenants)
- Geology of the Rimrocks

Everbridge: Howard asked who was familiar with Everbridge. A few were. This is a reporting tool that was helpful in advising residents in California regarding evacuation status. It is used in our county, and is known as Yellowstone County Informed. Here is the link for information and sign up for emergency alerts: <https://member.everbridge.net/305943405396532/login> We will include more info in the next newsletter.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:30 pm.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, March 19, 2025.

Respectfully submitted, Leslie Cooke, Vice Chair, Acting Secretary