

# Meeting Minutes - Swan River Bridge SC #2

◇ **Date:** 4/6/2016  
**Time:** 1:00 PM  
**Facilitator:** Wade Salyards / Kathy Harris  
**Minutes CC:** Attendees, Chris Hardan, Walter Kuhn, Steve Grabill, Russ Lay, Shane Stack, Wade Salyards

## Attending:

Name	Organization	Phone Number	E-Mail
James Freyholtz	MDT-Missoula District	406-751-2066	<a href="mailto:jfreholtz@mt.gov">jfreholtz@mt.gov</a>
Bob Vosen	MDT-Kalispell	406-751-2020	<a href="mailto:rvosen@mt.gov">rvosen@mt.gov</a>
Shane Stack	MDT-Missoula District	406-523-5830	<a href="mailto:sstack@mt.gov">sstack@mt.gov</a>
Vicki Crnich	MDT Planning	406-444-7653	<a href="mailto:vcrnich@mt.gov">vcrnich@mt.gov</a>
Wade Salyards	MDT-Project Manager	406-444-0451	<a href="mailto:wsalyards@mt.gov">wsalyards@mt.gov</a>
Pam Holmquist	Flathead Co Commissioner	406-758-5508	<a href="mailto:pholmquist@flathead.mt.gov">pholmquist@flathead.mt.gov</a>
Dave Prunty	Flathead Co Public Works	406-758-5790	<a href="mailto:dprunty@flathead.mt.gov">dprunty@flathead.mt.gov</a>
Jed Fisher	Flathead Co Parks & Rec	406-758-5805	<a href="mailto:jedfisher@flathead.mt.gov">jedfisher@flathead.mt.gov</a>
Walter Kuehn	Citizen Representative	406-837-4550	<a href="mailto:wkuehn@k-mmi.com">wkuehn@k-mmi.com</a>
Paul Mutascio	CFBB	406-261-1049	<a href="mailto:pmutascio@centurytel.net">pmutascio@centurytel.net</a>
Susan Hanson (Phone)	Citizen Representative	406-250-4685	<a href="mailto:btfrfly@montanasky.net">btfrfly@montanasky.net</a>
Kathy Harris	KLJ	406-441-5784	<a href="mailto:kathy.harris@kljeng.com">kathy.harris@kljeng.com</a>
Steve Grabill	KLJ	406-441-5783	<a href="mailto:steve.grabill@kljeng.com">steve.grabill@kljeng.com</a>
Russ Lay	KLJ	406-452-8600	<a href="mailto:russ.lay@kljeng.com">russ.lay@kljeng.com</a>

Note: *items in italics* reflect changes after the 4/6 meeting and prior to distribution of the minutes

## Agenda Topics

The second Steering Committee (SC) meeting was held on April 6, 2016 at 1:00 in the Kalispell Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) office.

1. Old Business:
  - a. Public Outreach and Notification. Kathy Harris reported that, with the County's assistance in supplying the mailing list, an initial letter was mailed to approximately 400 addresses within the Bigfork storm sewer RSID. Less than ten letters have been returned. MDT has also developed a website, with a public comment link.
  - b. Meeting minutes from SC #1 need to correct the spelling for Sliter Park and Bigfork in select locations.

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 REGIONAL EXPERTISE  
 TRUSTED ADVISOR



2. Text in three Attachments were reviewed/edited in detail. These changes will be used in the upcoming public meeting and in the future “needs” statement. See attachment for revisions to the 3 documents.
  - a. Attachment A: Confirm items a,b,c. omit item d.
  - b. Attachment B: Revised summary of what was heard at first steering committee meeting.
  - c. Attachment C: The 3 areas of need were confirmed and the objective (under each need) were discussed.
3. Steering Committee Comments:
  - a. Sue reemphasized the public meeting needs to reinforce the single lane bridge option
  - b. Paul emphasized the need to explain the bridge is structurally deficient and getting worse.
  - c. Pam noted that funding is currently available-but may not be in future.
4. Schedule Next/Future Meetings.
  - a. SC meetings:
    - Monday May 16<sup>th</sup> SC #3 meeting 1:00 - 4:00 PM.
    - Tuesday July 12<sup>th</sup> #4 SC meeting 1:00 - 4:00 PM
  - b. 1st public meeting
    - Tuesday April 12<sup>th</sup> for the first public meeting.
    - *Kathy should contact Heather Burnham at Chamber of Commerce for Bigfork schedule (for scheduling future public meetings)*

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## Next Meeting Information

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**Date:** 5/16/2016  
**Time:** 1:00 - 4:00 PM

**Facilitator:** Wade Salyards/Kathy Harris

## Attachment A

Issues Driving this Study (why we are here. Defines and Identified Issues driving this Study):

- a) This bridge is categorized as structurally deficient. AASHTO states that ....” bridges not capable of carrying a minimum gross live load weight of three tons must be closed”. Current load limit is three tons.
- b) Bridge load carrying ability will continue to decrease ~~with~~ no change (repair, rehabilitation or replacement). The bridge will fail or will need to be closed by the owner, the County.
- c) MDT has (limited) federal funding available to repair, ~~rehabilitate~~ replace bridges that are not on MDT’s system of roads. This bridge was identified as the highest (off-system) bridge need in the state.
- ~~d) The County Road and Bridge Department is responsible for 836 maintained miles of roads and 75 bridges (plus 25 additional bridges). Funding for major bridge repair/rehab would severely impact the other roads and bridges that Flathead County maintains.~~

## Attachment B

What we heard at Steering Committee #1 & subsequent conversations:

underline indicates the project need origin.

- AESTHETICS
  - Steel truss appearance is critical.
    - Is-The actual steel truss function is notality critical, but its appearance is?
    - The color of the paint may be important to some.
    - What isThe limit of rehabilitation to keep the historic nature/appearance will be studied further?
- # LANES:
  - 1 lane width is the project need. 2 lanes (1 for each direction) is typical bridge standard but 1-lane is acceptable
- WEIGHT LIMIT:
  - 3-ton is minimal allowable rating to keep the bridge open
  - Increased loading is not a need will be required for rehabilitation or replacement.  
Increased loading is a concern to community if it results in, but a convenience and could lead to higher speeds/larger vehicles which may be undesirable to some.
  - There is significant risk to the bridge if drivers do not adhere to loading limits, so it is safer (to traveling public) if this bridge meets modern standards.
  - Bridges are now designed for 75 years of operation. Any bridge treatment (repair/rehab/replace) will likely serve the community for the next century. Will this bridge meet future needs for the area?
- PEDESTRIAN:
  - Pedestrian walkway (or other) is needed and is equal to demand for vehicles.
    - Any federal funding will require the walkway meets ADA requirements.
    - Walkway should be separated from vehicles, although the barrier may not be designed to full deflection standards. could be shared with car lanes, but not generally encouraged.....
- SAFETY:
  - Single lane operations is not a major safety concern (based upon records and verbal comments)
  - Load rating is expected to decrease below allowable limits.... as corrosion continues (and walkway loading issues)
- MAINTENANCE
  - The current bridge places this bridge later in county priorities for Immediate snow plowing. The local community accepts this prioritization. (after event) is not a critical need (current condition dictates this bridge is late on the list for plowing)
  - Maintenance is a demand upon County resources/staff due to wooden deck, narrow width and above waterway.
    - Cleaning (under structure) is demand and results in corrosion.... future failure issue.

- Future maintenance (replacing steel parts and cleaning) will mean more effort than County typically provides.
- MODE: on the bridge
  - Vehicles-light vehicle typically [insert vehicle type and approximate weight]
  - Pedestrians
  - Bicyclists or freight/delivery operations are not a need, but rather a convenience
  - School usage is not a need
  - Under the bridge: no minimum set but unofficial preference to not lower the bottom of the bridge-to allow for non-motorized water craft (kayaks, paddle boards, etc.).
- TRIP PURPOSE:
  - Shopping
  - Not a commuter (get to work or home) route
  - Supports community/business by linking to parking
  - Emergency Response is not a need, but rather a convenience as responders do not use this route for responding (3/28/16 conversation)

OTHER:

- The wooden deck may not acceptable in a future bridge, due to permitting and clean water requirements. This will be considered in future reports.

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## Attachment C

### Swan River Bridge Needs Statement

The need for Bigfork Swan River Bridge are based upon:

- Existing and projected conditions (under development by KLJ)
- Comment and input from the Steering Committee (input on 3/10/16 with review on 4/6/16)
- Comments from the public (at 4/12/16 meeting and through early input on the project) and.

The needs are meant to reflect Flathead County, MDT and community desires to provide safe vehicle passage and maintain the historic appearance of the 1912 truss bridge. Needs are described below, with objectives listed under each need. Needs are currently based upon input from the Steering Committee and will be modified after public input on April 12.

The bridge currently does not meet current design standards, but the owner (Flathead County) and the Steering Committee concur that, due to the unique nature of this bridge and the community of Bigfork- all design standards do not need to be met.

#### Need 1: Safe Crossing of Swan River.

- a) Provide structurally adequate bridge for typical traffic.

  - a. Desired highway loading HS-20
  - a-b. Feasibility of various options may consider lesser loading (if there is cost and reasonable justification).
  - b. Is there a desire to increase load carrying capacity? (if other items are met)

- b) Future maintenance needs to provide necessary maintenance to maintain load ratings. ~~perpetuate the load capacity (currently 3 T limit).~~
- c) Pedestrians need to be accommodated. Full accessibility (Americans with Disability Act or ADA requirements) will be needed for any federal funding. The pedestrian walkway should be widened to a comfortable width and should provide channelization or separation from vehicle area on the bridge.

#### Need 2: Maintain historic, truss appearance as it is a vital component of Bigfork identity/character.

- a) Maintain appearance of truss bridge.
- b) The appearance of the ~~W~~walkway ~~?? This~~ does not match the original bridge and is not considered critical to the ~~-is this~~ appearance. ~~-critical?~~

#### Need 3: Provide a minimum of one lane for ~~(light)~~ vehicles AND provide ~~equivalent-adequate~~ pedestrian area.

- a) Provide minimum of one-lane vehicle width.
- b) Provide walkway that is separated from vehicles?

Other Considerations:

- What is historic balance for rehabilitation versus replacement? This should be researched in future Is it visual only? SC comments reflect that the pins and support structure are not critical to the appearance, but the above-road truss structure is critical.
- Would increased loads or widths increase traffic into downtown Bigfork, with potential for more congestion and parking issues?
- County maintenance is normal for superstructure, but substructure is difficult and is the key component to avoid corrosion.
- Address utilities that are currently under the bridge (8" Northwestern Energy gas main) .
- The guardrail protecting the approach to the bridge is currently very tight any may not meet design standards. Future options should address the approach guardrail.