

**MINUTES FOR THE ASHLAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION**  
**Wednesday, April 27, 2016**  
**Siskiyou Room, 51 Winburn Way**

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Roxane Beigel-Coryell called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. in the Siskiyou Room.

Commissioners Mark Weir, Risa Buck, Cara Cruickshank, and Bryan Sohl were present. Councilor Pam Marsh was present. Commissioner James McGinnis arrived late. Commissioners Marni Koopman, and Shel Silverberg were absent.

**2. Consent Agenda**

There was no quorum at the start of the meetings, so no approval of the minutes of March 23, 2016.

**3. Announcements**

The next commission meeting will be May 25, 2016.

There will be a Hazardous Waste Disposal Day May 6<sup>th</sup> for businesses and May 7<sup>th</sup> for residential at Rogue Disposal in White City.

This Saturday is the FireWise green waste clean-up day at Valley View Transfer Station.

Buck gave information regarding Armadillo Technical Institute in Phoenix and their on-line energy saving program called, Communities Take Action. She suggested it might be useful for the Climate and Energy Action Plan's upcoming events.

SOU had a successful Earth Week, kicked off by the Pollinator Project event. SOU is collecting feedback to make next year's events even more successful. If you have comments, please send them to Beigel-Coryell or [ecos@sou.edu](mailto:ecos@sou.edu). An electric vehicle was donated to SOU, additionally, SOU has a new charge-point electric vehicle charging station. It connects with cellular phones and is located north of the science buildings.

City of Ashland recently purchased (and now has in use) an electric vehicle for the Firewise Coordinator.

**4. Public Forum**

Huelz Gutchen – stated that climate change action is “getting goofy.” At the recent Paris Summit over 180 countries signed the agreement. Recently, Greenland had polar ice caps melt, totaling 600,000 tons of water, causing the earth to wobble and magnetic north to move. Things like this will only get worse. He stated that the Climate and Energy Action Plan meetings are going well and at the last meeting they had a good discussion. He gave information on how Earth's temperature has increased at a more rapid pace than previously predicted.

**5. Reports/ Presentations/ Updates**

*Downtown Recycling* – Buck stated there is new signage coming for the baskets and it should be up soon. So far the trial is going better than the previous clear-stream test from a few years ago.

There are currently five baskets in place and one more should be up soon.

*Bag Ban Update* – There is a memo in the packet with Hanks’ update. Group discussed a desire to hear from staff how it’s going – particularly in regard to enforcement.

*Commissioner James McGinnis arrived 6:18 p.m.*

In response to the group’s discussion regarding a desire for code enforcement action on the bag ban, Marsh gave information regarding the pressures retailers are facing and suggested it might be better in the long run to focus more on education and encouragement rather than enforcement. Group determined there is need to further discuss at a later meeting ways to reward positive behavior and good attitudes about the ban.

*City Council Update* – Councilor Marsh gave information regarding some of the upcoming agenda topics. Group expressed frustration and strong concerns that the Water Advisory Committee had been reformed for a review and update of the Water Master Plan without any conservation representation.

*Low Impact Living Series* – Buck stated there are six classes scheduled and they will all be held at N. Mountain Park. Handouts/flyers are being finalized for the classes.

Group agreed to skip ahead in the agenda to make sure election of a chair and vice chair was accomplished before close of meeting.

## **6. New Business**

*Nomination/Vote of Chair/Vice Chair* - Group discussed nomination options and who was willing to serve for the next year.

**McGinnis/ Weir m/s to approve Sohl as Chair and Cruickshank as Vice Chair. Voice Vote: all ayes. Motion Passes.**

## **7. Old Business**

*Sneak Preview Column* – group discussed the June submittal regarding water conservation and agreed that irrigation options, as suggested by McGinnis, should be added to the article.

**Buck/McGinnis m/s to approve the June submittal with changes as suggested. Voice Vote: all ayes. Motion Passes.**

*Climate & Energy Action Plan* – Sohl stated that the committee has three new members, Cindy Bernard, Sarah Lasoff and Isaac Bevers. Lasoff and Bevers are high school students, and are non-voting members of the committee but their input has been valuable. The last meeting was productive. The committee spent time reviewing goals from other plans and establishing baseline targets via roundtable discussion. Sohl stated he feels more aggressive targets are important due to Ashland’s lack of ability to grow substantially in population. The CEAP Committee also agreed to time goals to City budget cycles. He discussed the desire of some committee members to have goals and targets part of a legally-binding ordinance, including the possibility of having

one set of highly optimistic goals and one set of more achievable ordinance-required goals. He invited the group to attend the May 24<sup>th</sup> open house event at the Historic Armory (event begins at 5:30 p.m.).

*Rogue Valley Earth Day* – Group agreed there was a good turnout for the event and it was the correct decision to not have a Conservation Commission table. Buck stated that she hopes Koopman can give her thoughts on the event at the next commission meeting, as she was the most vocal supporter of the commission providing financial support.

### **7. New Business, cont'd**

*Open Burning in Ashland* – Buck stated she is bringing the topic up to share her thoughts on open burning in Ashland and requests that the group be updated on current regulations and procedures. She is particularly concerned that permits are given for burning in location which have easy access to green-bin (or similar) disposal. She would like to know how many permits are regularly given, what's the permit criteria, and is there a goal to reduce year-to-year overall burning amounts? Group agreed there is an air quality aspect to this issue but raised concerns about completely eliminating open burning in Ashland, as it can cause more carbon output to transport green waste than to burn it in some cases. Group agreed they would like to have an update from staff regarding permits and policy and have a discussion regarding balancing low-carbon options, and how to support viable alternates to open burning.

*Fourth of July* – Group discussed the possibility of suggesting that the Climate and Energy Action Plan committee use this as an opportunity to promote the committee's work. The Conservation Commission members, however, have no strong interest or time available to participate this year.

### **8. Wrap Up**

Items to be added to the next agenda:

- Group would like a discussion regarding membership – how to recruit for Silverberg's open position and should they suggest an ordinance change so that the school board representative is instead a representative of another large community entity.
- Group would also like to discuss the CEAP's potential use of carbon-offsets as part of the action plan (how can this group support/educate/assist the CEAP discussion).

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Diana Shiplet  
Executive Assistant