

ASHLAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Agenda

August 24, 2016 – 6:00 PM

Community Development Building, Siskiyou Room
51 Winburn Way

1. Call to Order

2. Consent Agenda

2.1. Minutes July 27, 2016 Commission meeting

3. Announcements (10 min)

3.1. Next Regular Meeting: September 28, 2016

3.2. Upcoming Sub-committee meetings

3.3. Other Announcements from Commissioners

4. Public Forum (10 min to be evenly divided by public wishing to speak)

5. Reports / Presentations/Updates (15 min)

5.1. Open Burning Ordinances and Regulations – Fire Marshal Hickman (15 min)

5.2. Recap of Commission Annual Report to Council (5 min)

5.3. Council Update- Councilor Rosenthal (5 min)

5.4. City Conservation Programs and Operations – Hanks (5 min)

5.5. Update on Downtown Redeemables/Recycling – Hanks (5 min)

6. Old Business (30 min)

6.1 Commission Monthly Column in Sneak Preview (10 min)

a. September – Living with Wildlife – Weir

d. October - Meet your Commissioners - ??

e. November - ??

6.2 Climate & Energy Action Plan – Project Update (10 min)

7. New Business

7.1

8. Wrap Up (5 min)

8.1 Items to be added to next agenda

8.2 Adjournment

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

1. Call to Order

Chair Bryan Sohl called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Siskiyou Room.

Commissioners Mark Weir, Marni Koopman, Cara Cruickshank, Jamie Rosenthal, and James McGinnis were present. Councilor Rich Rosenthal was present. Staff member Adam Hanks was present. Commissioner Roxane Beigel-Coryell was absent.

2. Consent Agenda

Weir/Cruickshank m/s to approve the minutes of May 25, 2016, as presented. Voice Vote: All Ayes. Motion Passes.

3. Announcements

The next commission meeting will be August 24, 2016.

J. Rosenthal informed the group that Recology is working with both the Talent Harvest Festival and the Bear Creek Salmon Festival, both of which will occur on October 1, 2016.

4. Public Forum

Jeff Sharpe: Donated two copies of the book, “The Great Transition,” to the commission. He handed out to the commissioners an information sheet regarding the 10% locally-produced electricity by 2020 ballot initiative. He read aloud some of the details of the initiative. He requested that the Commission encourage the Council to skip sending the initiative to the ballot and instead agree to adopt the ordinance.

Group discussed the typical ballot initiative process and why they are hesitant to request Council not send the initiative to the ballot, particularly in light of the current Climate and Energy Action Plan (CEAP) process, which will likely have actions similar to the proposed initiative.

5. Reports/ Presentations/ Updates

City Council Update – Councilor Rosenthal stated that at the August 16th Council meeting there will be a discussion of the 2016 water supply strategy. This item has to do with the order in which staff selects TAP vs. TID water to supplement the City’s water supply. He also informed the group that currently scheduled for the September 19th study session, is a discussion of the in-process Electric Cost of Service study. This study may be interesting in light of the CEAP process and how those two processes need to work together to determine rate structures.

City Conservation Programs and Operations – Hanks gave an update regarding new BPA information on how to implement energy efficiency programs. About 70% of the funding we use for our efficiency programs comes from BPA, which we supplement with City funds (particularly to reach frequently under-served multi-family units). BPA’s new programs include a reduction in residential programs but an increase in commercial programs. Additionally, there have been changes in the NW Energy Star programs implemented recently regarding new construction and the Conservation Division has updated its new construction program, called

Smartbuild, to address these changes. Lastly, Avista is now a part of Energy Trust which may confuse Ashland residents, as City of Ashland electric customers aren't able to use Energy Trust programs (though City programs are equal or better) but now gas customers can for natural gas efficiency/conservation projects.

Group asked questions regarding the recent alteration to the Verde Village development agreement and how that may have changed their energy efficiency requirements. Hanks gave an overview of the requirements in the agreement. Staff is pleased with the high level of efficiency requirements in the approved agreement.

7. Old Business

Sneak Preview Column – The group discussed upcoming month topics:

September – Living With Wildlife, written by Cruickshank

October – Get to Know Your Commissioner, Hanks will send all commissioners a list of 5 questions to be answered and will use that for the article.

November – Limiting Holiday waste, written by J. Rosenthal

December – CEAP update.

Climate & Energy Action Plan – Sohl stated that the presentation at the July 19th City Council meeting went well. He was glad that most of the committee were present for the presentation and got the impression that Council received the information well. He gave an overview of the seven recommendations for the plan that were presented. Group discussed how they came to using sector-based emissions reduction, rather than sector-based and consumption-based.

Group discussed the continued desire of many to have an ordinance approved by Council prior to the completion of the action plan. Group also discussed the possible desire to have representatives from Eugene attend an upcoming CEAP meeting to discuss their ordinance.

Councilor Rosenthal departed the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

7. New Business

Discussion of Commission Charter – Cruickshank stated that she was curious if the group had recently reviewed the charter and if they still felt that it is both appropriate and reflective of what the commission is actively working on. She raised concerns that nowhere in the charter does it state anything about climate change. McGinnis agreed that the charter was old and it probably should state in some way climate change. He ultimately hopes that all commissions and committees have climate change reflected in their charters. Weir stated that there was a previous effort by the commission to update the charter but the Council at that time was not receptive to the change. He feels that the current charter ultimately reflects everything the commission could want to do, as climate change is a part of all the topics named in the charter.

Group determined that it should do a goal setting session soon to establish updated goals and projects. They recognize that lots of the actions coming from the CEAP process will likely require the Commission to have a new charter, goals and projects list once the action plan is approved. Group decided to hold off on any further discussion until early next year to tie in with the CEAP process.

Commission Annual Report to Council – Hanks agreed to put together a list of all the Commission’s accomplishments from the past year. Sohl and Cruickshank will determine which of those to highlight at the meeting and will present it together at the August 16th Council meeting.

8. Wrap Up

Meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Diana Shiplet
Executive Assistant

Outdoor Burning Requirements

Outdoor burning is limited in the city of Ashland and **always requires a permit**. With a permit, there are two times per year that burning is allowed:

- Spring - March 1 until fire season begins
- Fall - For two weeks after fire season ends

Before requesting a permit for outdoor burning, please read the following:

Outdoor burning throughout the city of Ashland will be limited to materials resulting from Wildfire Fuel Reduction efforts and Noxious Weed abatement.

How do I know if I can burn?

You must meet **both** of the following conditions (A and B) to be considered for a burn permit:

A. Material must be Wildfire Fuels or Noxious Weeds

Wildfire Fuels Reduction is the cutting or thinning of native woody vegetation that is sufficiently flammable during the summer months. The vegetation must constitute a threat to property or structures to be considered as wildfire fuels. In order to burn wildfire fuels, your property must be in the City's [Wildfire Hazard Zone](#).

It is a good idea to consult with us before you cut wildfire fuels to determine what to cut and how you will dispose of the debris once it's cut. See our Firewise Program or call the Fire Adapted Communities Coordinator at (541) 552-2231 for a field consultation.

Noxious Weeds are those weeds listed on the Oregon State Department of Agriculture's A,B, or T lists. Common weeds from these lists found in Ashland are (but not limited to):

- Himalayan blackberry
- Star thistle
- Scotch Broom
- Dalmation toadflax
- English Ivy
- Spanish broom
- Spotted knapweed
- Puncture vine
- Japanese knotweed

A complete list of noxious weeds can be found at:http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/PLANT/WEEDS/docs/weed_policy.pdf

Noxious weeds can be burned anywhere in the city once a permit is issued. WEEDS MUST BE PILED. NO WEED BURNERS (TORCHES) ARE ALLOWED.

B. Burning is the only option for disposal of biomass material

The biomass to be disposed of has to be in a place where chipping or hauling of the material is not feasible, or (as in the case of some noxious weeds) chipping or transport of the material would spread noxious weed seeds beyond the area of current infestation – i.e, blackberries cut along a creek side or Scotch broom with seed pods still attached. In situations where removal by chipping or hauling is feasible, burning will be seen as a last option.

Alternatives to Burning

There are many alternatives to burning debris in Ashland. Here are some suggestions:

- Recology Ashland Sanitary Service offers yard debris recycling pick up.<http://recologyashlandsanitaryservice.com/>
- Biomass One in White City has a sort yard where debris can be dropped off.http://www.biomassone.com/wood_waste_yard.php
- Rent or Hire a chipper through local businesses
- Compost the debris. Check with local extension office at 776-7371 if you are unfamiliar with composting.

How Do I Get a Burn Permit?

If you meet the conditions stated above, you need to schedule a burn permit inspection with Ashland Fire and Rescue by calling 482-2770 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Burn permits are only valid on days when air quality allows burning and during the two times of year permitted in the city of Ashland – March 1 until fire season begins and for two weeks in the fall after fire season ends.

Once a permit is obtained, refer to the burning regulations PDF file below, and as directed by the inspecting fire crew. Follow the instructions on your permit to activate your permit each day that you burn.

Residents living in the Wildland-Urban Interface need to be especially attentive to reducing wildfire fuels on their property Learn more about Wildfire Safety for Ashland Residents.

When does fire season begin and end?

Fire season is the time of year when outdoor fuels are prone to fire. Fire season is weather dependent, but typically begins in June and ends in October.

Why is burning so restricted in the city of Ashland?

In 2007, the Ashland City Council amended sections of the Ashland Municipal Code that regulate outdoor burning within the City of Ashland. The Council was responding to tightening air quality standards in the Rogue Valley and concerns raised by citizens with respiratory problems who are impacted by smoke from open burning.

ASHLAND FIRE & RESCUE
OPEN BURNING PROGRAM REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES
Wildfire Fuels Reduction

1. The Ashland Municipal Code, Chapter 10.30, Sections .010 through .080, provide procedures and regulations under which open burning may be conducted. The pursuit of alternatives to open burning is strongly encouraged. Chipping, composting or transport of material to a transfer station or biomass utilization facility is encouraged. The following guidelines are provided to assist with the regulation of Open Burning in the City:
2. The open burning season within the City of Ashland is March 1st through the beginning of fire season (usually June), and two weeks after fire season ends in the fall. The issuance of burning permits may be suspended when atmospheric conditions, such as high winds, do not support safe burning practices.
3. All open burning will be conducted during daylight hours only during periods when the Jackson County Open Burning Advisory air quality index is 401 or above. For a recording of the ventilation index, call 776-7007. To obtain burn permit information, call the Fire Station during business hours, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at 482-2770. It is understood that due to the characteristics of the material being burned that glowing embers may continue throughout the night time hours. Permittee will be responsible to ensure that fires do not “creep.”
4. To open burn, a permit must be obtained from the fire department. Burn sites will be inspected by fire department personnel prior to the commencement of burning. Burn permits must be activated each day prior to conducting a burn by calling the fire department at 482-2770.
5. Adequate fire safety measures must be taken to insure that burning is performed safely:
 - A. All burning must be attended and supervised by an adult.
 - B. Piles should be constructed away from roots, stumps, and leave trees.
 - C. A non-combustible perimeter of 10' shall be maintained from the burning area when possible.
 - D. Pile size will be determined by location. Piles shall not exceed 4 feet in height or 5 feet in diameter. Additional material should be fed slowly to reduce smoke.
 - E. Drip torches may be used to fire piles. Plastic used to cover piles should be removed prior to ignition.
 - F. If water is accessible, it shall be on site for extinguishing piles and preventing fire spread.
 - G. Each person working the fires shall have at least one hand tool – shovel, rake, Macleod, Pulaski – to help with fire control.
 - H. Permittee is responsible for checking burned piles to ensure that the pile is completely extinguished.
6. The burning of any material which emits dense smoke or noxious odors, including but not limited to, petroleum products, rubber, plastic, styrofoam, household garbage, is prohibited. Burning in barrels is prohibited. Please be a good neighbor.
7. Acceptable materials for burning are restricted to native "woody debris" only. This means that no other materials will be allowed under the permit process, i.e., construction debris, etc.
8. All efforts shall be extended to insure materials are dry and readily ignitable to facilitate low smoke densities.
9. Permits will not be issued for piles which can reasonably be disposed of by another means. For example, one or two piles within 50 feet from a road could be carried to the road to be chipped or hauled away. Determination will need to be made on whether a wildfire hazard exists. For example, one pile in the middle of an empty lot 100 feet from structures or roads does not create a wildfire hazard.
10. Failure to abide by these open burning guidelines may result in permit revocation and may be considered an infraction punishable as prescribed in Section 1.08.020 of the Ashland Municipal Code.

ASHLAND FIRE & RESCUE
OPEN BURNING PROGRAM REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES
Noxious Weed Abatement - Blackberries

The Ashland Municipal Code, Chapter 10.30, Sections .010 through .080, provide procedures and regulations under which open burning may be conducted. The following guidelines are provided to assist with the regulation of Open Burning in the City:

1. The open burning season within the City of Ashland is March 1st through the beginning of fire season (usually June), and two weeks after fire season ends in the fall. The issuance of burning permits may be suspended when atmospheric conditions, such as high winds, do not support safe burning practices.
2. All open burning will be conducted during daylight hours only during periods when the Jackson County Open Burning Advisory air quality index is 401 or above. For a recording of the ventilation index, call 776-7007. To obtain burn permit information, call the Fire Station during business hours, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at 482-2770. Fire shall be out and cold to the touch by dark.
3. To open burn, a permit must be obtained from the fire department. Burn sites will be inspected by fire department personnel prior to the commencement of burning. Burn permits must be activated each day prior to conducting a burn by calling the fire department at 482-2770.
4. Adequate fire safety measures must be taken to insure that burning is performed safely:
 - A. All burning must be attended and supervised by an adult.
 - B. Piles should be constructed away from roots, stumps, and leave trees.
 - C. A non-combustible perimeter of 10' shall be maintained from the burning area.
 - D. Pile size will be determined by location. Piles shall not exceed 4 feet in height or 5 feet in diameter. Additional material should be fed slowly to reduce smoke.
 - E. Drip torches may be used to fire piles. Plastic used to cover piles should be removed prior to ignition.
 - F. If water is accessible, it shall be on site for extinguishing piles and preventing fire spread.
 - G. Each person working the fire shall have at least one hand tool – shovel, rake, Macleod, Pulaski – to help with fire control.
 - H. Permittee is responsible for checking burned piles to ensure that the piles are completely extinguished.
5. The burning of any material which emits dense smoke or noxious odors, including but not limited to, petroleum products, rubber, plastic, styrofoam, household garbage, is prohibited. Burning in barrels is prohibited. Please be a good neighbor.
6. Acceptable materials for burning are restricted to **blackberries**. This means that no other materials will be allowed under the permit process, i.e., construction debris, yard trimmings, wood, etc.
7. All efforts shall be extended to insure materials are dry and readily ignitable to facilitate low smoke densities.
8. The pursuit of alternatives to open burning is strongly encouraged. Chipping, composting or transport of material to a transfer station or biomass utilization facility is encouraged.
9. Failure to abide by these open burning guidelines may result in permit revocation and may be considered an infraction punishable as prescribed in Section 1.08.020 of the Ashland Municipal Code.

Living in Ashland, we are lucky to interact with wildlife on a regular basis. The simple act of looking out your window might put you face to face with a Downy woodpecker, a black-tailed deer or a sneaky racoon. For those willing to escape the confines of town, Ashland's trails and streams can excite with sightings of cutthroat trout, Northern Pygmy Owls and the occasional run in with a black bear. In every case, it is important to remember that we are encroaching on the habitat of a different species and cognition dictates care. Below are some ways you can help preserve that which makes Ashland wild.

Deer are one example of wildlife which can make Ashland exciting for some and frustrating for others. Whether you support it or not, it is illegal to feed deer in Ashland. One form of feed we may over look are the plants we adorn our gardens with, many of which are absolutely irresistible to our antlered ruminant friends. Luckily, Oregon State University has some amazing wildlife garden resources which can be accessed by conducting a simple google search. These scientifically supported outlines provide suggestions far superior to common gardening sites, giving good advice on creating habitats which are inviting yet less susceptible to deer malevolence. Although planning a wildlife garden can require additional upfront effort, you will enjoy having plants which share an evolved ecology, tend to last more than a season and tolerate lower water use.

Another major wilderness consideration is the yearly battle many in Ashland have with mice and rats. Because these domestic pests are annoying, many reach for poison as a solution without first considering the intricate food web which exist in our wildlands-urban interface. The common anticoagulants used in modern rat poisons, namely diphacinone, bromadione and warfarin, make rats more susceptible to predation by wildlife. Birds of prey, especially owls, are vulnerable to these anticoagulant rodenticides (ARs). In a 2012 study by ecotoxicologist John Elliott "virtually 100%" of dead owls had ARs in their system. Further, a Journal of American Water Resources Association study in 2014 attributed elevated levels in warfarin in wheat fields to accumulation from biosolids (treated sewage sludge) application. The easiest way to ensure that these compounds do not bioaccumulate is to simply dispense with their use in the first place. While perhaps a bit more repulsive to dispense with, localized traps provide a superior anti-rodent approach and can be monitored for effectiveness and safety.

Finally, our location as a headwater to the Rogue River necessitates an enormous responsibility to maintaining pristine water quality. As you walk around Ashland, you are sure to see that storm drains are marked with small fish, a gentle reminder that a complex and delicate river ecosystem is only a short, untreated, distance away. In a 2009 study, the City of Federal way in WA found that petroleum hydrocarbons, heavy metals and surfactants all were being added to local streams in high concentrations as a result of residential car washing. These pollutants all damage micro invertebrate populations which provide the basal food source for chinook, coho and steelhead. By washing your car at a facility, which are required to treat their effluent, you provide an additional check to prevent pollutants from entering our streams.

By taking these simple steps (and others you come up with on your own), we can enjoy and conserve the wildlife, adding one important demission to that which make Ashland such a fantastic place to live.