

MINUTES FOR THE ASHLAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Wednesday, August 24, 2016
Siskiyou Room, 51 Winburn Way

1. Call to Order

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

Commissioners Mark Weir, Marni Koopman, and Roxanne Beigel-Coryell were present. Councilor Rich Rosenthal was present. Staff member Adam Hanks was present. Commissioner Cara Cruickshank arrived late. Commissioners James McGinnis, Risa Buck, and Jaime Rosenthal were absent.

2. Announcements

The next commission meeting will be September 28, 2016.

3. Reports/ Presentations/ Updates

Recap of annual report to City Council – Sohl stated that at last week's Council meeting he gave the annual report to Council. It went well, but there were no questions from Council.

Council Update – Councilor Rosenthal stated that at the last meeting Council agreed to move forward on the ordinance requiring that the City of Ashland create 10% of its electricity locally by 2020 (aka the 10x20 ordinance). The first and second reading of that ordinance is expected to occur on September 6th. Group discussed what the next steps would be after the ordinance passes. Rosenthal also informed the group that at the recent Study Session there was an interesting presentation regarding the future of the electric utility. He reminded the group that on August 28th there is a volunteer appreciation event hosted by Ashland's elected officials and he hopes the commissioners can attend.

Commissioner Cruickshank arrived 6:07 p.m.

4. Consent Agenda

Weir/Koopman m/s to approve the minutes of July 27, 2016 as presented. Voice Vote: one Abstention, the rest Ayes, Motion Passes.

5. Continuation of Announcements

Group requested that a discussion of next year's Earth Bowl be added to the September agenda.

Beigel-Coryell stated that SOU starts on the 26th of September, and students begin moving in on the Thursday prior.

Group discussed the status of the appointment of the Ashland School District Representative to the commission. They agreed that it was appropriate for Chair Sohl to talk to Mayor Stromberg and request that Mayor Stromberg have a discussion with the new Ashland School District Administrator regarding appointment of a representative.

6. Public Forum

Louise Shawkat – Stated that last year she had talked to the previous Ashland School District

Administrator about the missing school representative and he showed no interest in appointing anyone. This week she e-mailed the new Administrator, who replied back that she supported finding a representative.

Huelz Gutchen – Stated that at the last Council Study Session Mark Holden stated he was not interested in adding solar to the Electric Department operations. Huelz stated that this makes him think there should be a full-time Electric Director, rather than the current combination of Electric/Information Technology Director, in order achieve the requirements of the upcoming 10x20 ordinance. He stated that he has talked with the 10x20 proposers and understands now that the ordinance is vague on details for a reason. Our current climate is so bad we need to do what the ordinance is proposing now. He would like to see a project where the City rents rooftops for solar panel installation. He thinks that this project would take two full-time employees to handle. He stated that we need to consider measuring all the carbon issues for buildings in order understand where our ‘biggest bang for the buck’ would come in project ideas. He also stated that he recently talked to Bonneville about where Ashland’s electricity is from and how the map of electricity changes based on who is President and what they want.

7. Reports/ Presentations/ Updates, Continued

City Conservation Programs and Operations – Hanks stated that the Conservation Division is currently in the process of updating forms and handouts for all reimbursement programs based on new BPA requirements. He stated that BPA also has a new solar taskforce, which is currently reviewing changes to their small-scale solar project requirements. As most projects done in the City fit into this category it is good to keep an eye on this process. Group discussed some of the rules/requirements from BPA on potential projects coming out of the CEAP process.

Downtown Redeemables/Recycling – Hanks stated this project is going well. The new signage has helped people to understand what can or can’t be placed in the baskets. Also helpful has been the Master Recycler who has been assisting with the project. He hopes to bring to the Council a request to expand the program sometime in the Winter. Expansion is additionally timely due to redeemable rates going from 5 cents to 10 cents in April of 2017 and an expansion of what is considered redeemable in 2018.

8. Old Business

Sneak Preview Column – Group made minor edits to the Living with Wildlife article written by Weir and then approved it. They agreed that the following would be upcoming topics:

October – Get to Know Your Commissioner

November – Limiting Holiday waste, written by J. Rosenthal

Group agreed they would determine December and January topics at the next meeting.

Climate & Energy Action Plan – Sohl stated that at the last committee meeting the group voted to request that the Council approve an ordinance prior to the Action Plan being finalized or approved. The current Eugene ordinance is likely to the template for the ordinance the group will propose. The committee is still struggling with how to use or incorporate consumption into the plan. Committee members were also assigned to work in specific focus areas in order to review/prioritize potential strategies and actions for the upcoming Open House on September 25.

9. New Business

None.

10. Wrap Up

Group requested that on the next agenda there be the SOU quarterly update, and the Earth Bowl discussion.

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Diana Shiplet
Executive Assistant