

MINUTES FOR THE ASHLAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Wednesday, November 18, 2015
Siskiyou Room, 51 Winburn Way

1. Call to Order

Roxane Beigel-Coryell called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Siskiyou Room.

Commissioners Risa Buck, Shel Silverberg, Bryan Sohl, James McGinnis, and Cara Cruickshank were present. Councilor Rich Rosenthal and staff member Adam Hanks were present. Commissioner Marni Koopman arrived late.

2. Consent Agenda

None.

3. Announcements

The next commission meeting will be on December 16, 2015, which is one week earlier than the usual meeting date. The Earth Bowl subcommittee will meet on November 19th at 3:00 p.m. in the Siskiyou Room.

The Association of Recyclers' winter forum will be held on December 10th in Portland. Buck will be in attendance.

Group expressed their appreciation for the Climate Kick-off event held on Sunday, November 11th. They agreed it was a good balance of information, artistic entertainment and community learning. They thanked the planning group for its hard work.

4. Public Forum

Jeff Sharpe – Gave kudos for Sunday's event. He thought the atmosphere was great. He also thought the lead speaker's talk was on the mark. He would like to be able to show the commission some renewable information at the next meeting.

Albert Pepe – Was inspired by the kick-off event on Sunday. He is generally not a fan of large meetings but was impressed with Sunday's event. He was disappointed that the event and the commission are not dealing with food security. He wondered why we are not doing more to grow food locally. He would like an emphasis on that as it is important to the community.

Marni Koopman arrived 6:09 p.m.

Huelz: Stated there are four different parts of energy – Generation, Efficiency, Conservation and Ecology. Generation creation via things like solar panels. Efficiency is the best use of created energy. Conservation is people's behavior. Ecology is making or using energy with the least amount of toxins or damage to nature. Generally we pay large amounts of attention to carbons but need to pay more attention to nature. He described the efficiency of the human body energy and how that can relate to being efficient in other sources.

5. Reports/ Presentations/ Updates

Bag ban update – Hanks stated that the survey was sent to retailers and SOU will be compiling the results. He should have information ready for the next meeting. He will be speaking with grocers directly to get their information. Additionally, there will be an Open City Hall topic on the City's website for community input. All of this information will be available to the Commission as well as the Council for their one-year review.

Downtown Recycling – the ad hoc group met to go over logistics. If staff is available, the baskets should be in-place by December 31st. Staff will be testing one location next week to make sure they look good, as the cans in the downtown core are different than the cans in the Park. There will be eight locations in the trial run.

Council Update – Councilor Rosenthal stated that at the November 30th study session Council will be discussing marijuana sales and production, with the first reading of an ordinance related to that scheduled for December 1st. As there have been concerns with outdoor growing odors but indoor growing requires lots of energy, Council has a difficult job ahead to find a good regulatory balance. On December 14th, Council will be discussing street utility fees and transportation funding. On January 5th there should be a recommendation from the AFN governance ad hoc committee.

City Conservation and Operations – Hanks stated that the City is in partnership with the company Enhabit to do a pilot program for energy performance reviews of homes. Enhabit is trying to develop a state-wide model so homes in different areas can be scored more consistently state-wide. There are still a few slots available, sign up can be done on the City's website.

Hanks has been spending lots of time working with the Greenhouse Gas Inventory contractor. The most challenging numbers to locate are regarding is transportation. He is working with ODOT to get this information.

6. Old Business

Sneak Preview Column – group agreed to approve the January article at the next meeting. They will give feedback directly to Weir. They discussed doing a Living With Wildlife column in September and Cruickshank agreed to be the author.

Composting Classes – the ad hoc committee will schedule a meeting soon to plan for next year's classes.

Climate & Energy Action Plan – the next meeting will be on December 2nd at 2:00 p.m. It will be a recap of the Kick-off event and a discussion of RFP scoring. The group is currently in a slight lull until the contractor starts. Rosenthal asked Koopman if she had any ideas as to how/when Geos Institute will provide the required deliverables from the kick-off event. Koopman stated that it will probably be a month before everything is input and processed. Group agreed this was a fair timeframe, since the contractor won't be starting until February.

Ashland Climate Challenge – Koopman reviewed the week's events. She stated that the hearth event was a highlight for her. There were roughly 300 in attendance at Sunday's Kick-off event and approximately 125 stayed for the world-café/roundtable discussion. The organizers tried for

zero-waste and they came close thanks to the durables donated. The only downside was there were fewer young people involved than they had hoped for.

Solar Park Resolution Proposal – Hanks stated that at the last meeting a subcommittee was formed and a plan was made for a site visit. Unfortunately, having a subcommittee has created some legal issues regarding who can go on the property. It may be best to end the subcommittee, hold the tour as individuals, and have those individuals report back to the commission for further discussion.

McGinnis stated he was under the impression Council wanted no movement on this project until the studies that are already in-process are completed. He is concerned about going against Council wishes. Sohl stated he believes it is important to be educated on these types of large environmental projects, even if the group doesn't move forward with approving the resolution. Rosenthal gave an overview of what the Council decision was, in that Council never discussed the merits of the solar project, but did discuss what has already been planned for the property and the studies which are in-progress.

Cruikshank stated that she dislikes the idea of disbanding the subcommittee as this is an important topic. Group discussed why it may be legal important to end the subcommittee at least for the duration of the tour.

Buck/Sohl m/s that the Solar Park Project subcommittee be disbanded. Discussion: group discussed whether the subcommittee could be reformed after the tour if the group determines it is necessary. Hanks agreed this was possible. **Voice Vote: All Ayes. Motion Passes.**

7. New Business

Water Quality/Storm Drain Care – Buck stated that it has been a few years since the subcommittee on this topic was in place and did the storm drain markings. She is interested in revisiting this topic and possibly updating the door hanger given to residents. She is also interested to learn how contractors are educated regarding drains and creeks. She wondered if the group had any interest, time, and/or energy to work on these issues.

Cruikshank stated she thought this was a great idea and that she is also interested in this topic.

Group had a discussion regarding whether there was a need for additional information regarding storm drains. Hanks agreed to see if staff can make a presentation regarding current practices and how the Water Master Plan fits into these concerns at a future meeting.

Historic Commission Design Standards – Sohl stated that he had a friend approach him with concerns regarding lack of ability to do conservation focused construction/remodeling in an historic district. Sohl expressed his concerns regarding those requirements. Hanks gave an overview of the requirements from the Land Use Code and described the process for exemptions from those standards through the Planning Commission.

Sohl suggested that the Commission consider requesting those code sections be amended to include more conservation-related practices. Koopman stated this would require lots of research regarding latest and most effective products. Group determined this would be good to be a part

of the Climate and Energy Action Plan process and that they should include other commission members in that process to hear all sides, particularly where group ideologies may differ (historic preservation vs. new technologies, etc.)

8. Wrap Up

Group requested that the following items be on the next agenda:

- Presentation by staff regarding storm drains (if staff is available)
- Bag Ban update and discussion on possibly requesting Council up the charge to \$.25/bag

Meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Diana Shiplet
Executive Assistant