

MINUTES FOR THE ASHLAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Wednesday, December 17, 2014
Siskiyou Room, 51 Winburn Way

1. Call to Order

Chair Marni Koopman called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. in the Siskiyou Room.

Commissioners Bryan Sohl, Shel Silberberg, Jim McGinnis, Mark Weir, Risa Buck, and Roxanne Beigel-Coryell were present. Staff member Adam Hanks was present. Commissioners Jim Hartman and Thomas Beam, and Councilor Rich Rosenthal were absent.

2. Consent Agenda

Beigel-Coryell/McGinnis m/s to approve the minutes of November 19, 2014. Voice vote: All ayes. Motion passes.

3. Announcements

The next meeting will be held January 28, 2015. The Climate and Energy subcommittee will meet on January 7 and 21.

Buck recently spoke with Ms. Gould who has been working with School Superintendent, Jay Hummel, regarding the no idling signs. Hanks will continue to work with Mr. Hummel for the pilot project and creating the most appropriate signs. Group requested that after this pilot program starts we consider alternate locations, like Hunter Park, for no idling zones.

Beigel-Coryell informed the group there will be a part-time job opening in the Center for Sustainability. Check out sou.edu/jobs for more information.

4. Public Forum

Kendra with SOU Zero-Waste program. They had originally planned to hold an event on January 27th showing the film, Bag-It. Unfortunately, that is the night of the State of the City event. She is seeking advice from the commission as to whether or not they should re-schedule the film in hopes of gaining more viewers. Group agreed this was a good idea. Also gave her some suggestions on additional invitees.

Louise Shawkat. Would like the commission to create an event for the City Council to attend regarding climate and energy and it's impacts on both this community and the world.

5. Reports/ Presentations/ Updates

City Conservation & Operations - Hanks informed the group that they are working on an annual report from conservation and are getting data regarding the recent lawn replacement project. This will be the first annual report and might not yet include all the data they hope to ultimately have in a more complete report.

The Downtown Cigarette Butt program - has installed all the disposal containers for the first round. Businesses have been managing them. There was a request for an additional one to be managed by Oberon's but they are still in discussions regarding a good location. The complete signage still needs to be installed on the disposal containers.

Conservation Awards sub-committee: Silverberg updated the group. The subcommittee is making progress. Have decided on a college-bowl style competition called, "Earth Bowl." It is tentatively scheduled for Earth Week. Silverberg met with Chip Lindsey of ScienceWorks who gave great advice on how to run a competition like this. Group working to meet with the principal of the middle school soon to discuss the program. The next meeting of this sub-committee will be January 8, at 4:00 at Geos Institute.

6. Old Business

Sneak Preview Column – Group discussed the desire to promote the Earth Bowl competition in the February edition. This will be due to the Sneak Preview on January 21 (with it in the packet prior for review). This means all other columns will move out one month.

Carbon Fee/Dividend Discussion – Group had planned a large discussion of this topic in January, Koopman requested that each member state what they are hoping to get out of that discussion. Group discussed the importance of the Carbon Fee/Dividend issue but how their time is limited and that most would rather focus more on their current climate and energy work, as assigned by the Council. Would rather devote more time to a topic the Council can support. They all agreed, however, that this topic is very important and should not be dropped entirely.

Weir disagreed with the group and would rather have each member of the group become topic experts in carbon fee/dividend and that this should be the main issue of the commission. Wants the commission to lobby the Council and their state legislators.

Hanks reminded the group that any discussions with legislators have to be as individuals NOT as commissioners.

Group further discussed letting other groups who are already more knowledgeable take the lead on this topic and that this group should instead use their influence as private citizens amongst friends and family to push any effort, rather than use the commission's already limited time.

Group discussed the possibility of creating a subcommittee to create an educational brochure for the Council (and others). Group decided that they would hold off on creating any strategy or next steps until next meeting. Agreed that the next meeting the group would have a strategy discussion, but not a debate over the ideas or merit of differing plans. Weir agreed to create a brief overview of the topic and the recent legislative papers and a proposal for next steps the commission could undertake (but not get into the "nitty-gritty" of this topic).

7. New Business

Climate/Energy Sub-Committee Presentation – Koopman reviewed the draft community-wide action plan (attached to agenda for this meeting.) The plan goals are to have a collaborative effort within the community, a process which makes clear recommendations to the Council and develops strategies for local and regional work, and supports other efforts. She stated that the Eugene plan was helpful in creating a framework with clear steps and process. They are hoping that this plan will be flexible enough to change as new technology, education, or other projects start or are created. Requested that the group send any additional initial actions that we're already doing or will soon be doing to include in the appendices.

Group thanked the sub-committee for their work.

8. Wrap Up

Group requested that there be a goals discussion on the next agenda.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Diana Shiplet
Executive Secretary