



**Action Minutes FOR A MEETING OF THE
ASHLAND FOREST LANDS COMMISSION**

Tuesday, April 10th, 2012

5:30PM to 7:30PM

**Siskiyou Room, Community Development Building
51 Winburn Way**

I. CALL TO ORDER: 5:30 PM

John Williams, Gary, Stephanie Seffinger, Jim Berge, Frank Betlejewski, Jeffrey McFarland, Jason Minica, Dave Kanner, John Karns, Alicia Fitzgerald, Dan Maymar, Joy Trevey-Lowell

II. INTRODUCTIONS

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 13th minutes

(1) Frank's name is spelled inaccurately (and is also inaccurate on website).

Motion to approve made by Gary and second by Stephanie.

IV. PUBLIC FORUM

V. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

a) Parks Update

- i) Jeff McFarland talked about AWTA's trail work, in which 71 volunteers attended the first trail day, and 60 attended the second. The City is helping coordinate the signs and the Chief discussed how he would ultimately like the signs on BTI, Jabberwocky, etc., to all be in concert, and discussed difficulty in getting volunteer help with installation since they are heavy and there is no easy road access. Stephanie talked about how the parks may be interested in coordinating this effort, since they are doing maintenance (replace, repair, etc) on their own signs at the moment. Jeff would like to work towards more uniformity as they replace signs. He mentioned the Chief's emergency extraction idea, with numerical graduations (every ¼ mile, etc.) of how far out on the trail to help those that get hurt on trail, and how a SOLC conservation easement there requires these don't take away from aesthetic value of the trail experience. The Chief discussed that cellphones are good for helping find people on trails, but firefighters may only get located to certain taxlot and would that these markers would be good to isolate to ¼ mile to get to the patient quicker. With the creation of Mike Utoff trail, Jeff has to wait for trail maintenance until after fuels reduction. Jeff discussed the separation of multi-use and hiker only is to increase safety and experience for all trail users, while taking into consideration erosion and issues with cutting into granitic soils. For Bandersnatch, AWTA are thinking 2 more sessions is needed. The Chief

suggested that the commission recognize AWTA at some point for all their work. Jeff mentioned AWTA's cleanup efforts as well, removing trash from City trails, and the City is going to reimburse them the \$70 dump fee.

- b) Jeff wants the Commission to know that the Park's Dept. is almost done with 2-year ARRA grant for fuels reduction and thinning that allowed them to treat over 40 acres in Siskiyou Mtn Park. Some of it was cut and burned and other areas were piled and will be burned next Fall or Spring. He discussed that even though the area was stunted from previous logging efforts, they are at a point now where they will be able to take some new stand data, basal area, stem counts, etc., and maybe do some legacy tree thinning and radial thinning in Siskiyou Mtn Park for first time in 20 years. They do not have funding for the upper part of property, though Chris Chambers has been able to help with some funding through Fire Department (for cutting, falling). Jeff discussed that LRP have marked 10-15 acres of legacy tree thinning in lower Siskiyou park and Parks will try to take out wood and chip as much as they can and donate some to Jackson County wood program (fire wood). He talked about there being a lot of piles up there to burn, but they have not been allowed to burn yet this spring due to smoke restrictions.
- c) Jeff had discussed with Chris Chambers consideration for helicopter to come over during AFR activity. Jeff discussed what might work is to thin trees on highest part of property if they aren't too far from landing, but they have to consider size of ship, amount available, among other things. Most property is below heliport, and area isn't great for horse logging and they can't make new roads due to conservation easement there. Therefore, they have many restrictions and it causes them not to be able to do much up there besides burning. Jeff would still like help from professionals to make sure they aren't passing over anything that they could be doing.
- d) Frank discussed ARRA funding running out in 2013, but there is some funding for western bark beetle initiative through FS. Chris and Marty are putting in for it, so there may be opportunity for Jeff to add these acres in for additional funding source. Jeff discussed some die off happening, and Frank suggested he contact Ellen Goheen. Jim Berge offered to look at a map of the area and help with the logging systems. Jeff discussed the lack of big timber, leaving small-medium sized timber without a large overstory canopy and are trying not to lose the whole stand at first, and now the potential legacy trees up there. They were able to do 2/3rds of fuel break area last year, and there is about 15 acres ready to burn that Jeff hopes to get rid of this Spring, with the right wind.
- e) John Williams asked what his sense of how the load of people camping illegally has been this winter compared to years previous. Jeff thinks it has been pretty average, though due to some of thinning there hasn't been as much in certain areas due to the fuel reduction and open areas. The Parks has started a new pruning program to stagger brush around parking areas and parks and increase safety for women and other people closer to town and in well used areas.

VI. BUSINESS

A. Trails/Recreation Update

B. City Lands Prescribed Burn Update

- a. Chief discussed picking dates with Grayback and announcing those dates within the week.

- C. AFR Project Update
 - a. Frank discussed that Block 6 was under snow recently, but was getting looked at. Marty and Chris were absent for further updates.
- D. Ashland Water Advisory Committee Update
 - a. John Williams gave update. He talked about the community forum last month, presenting 2 water related things: water treatment and sewage treatment. They hope the sewage treatment is a “slam dunk”, since they are mandated by state and they chose the least expensive way to do it and will be formally proposed to City Council next Tuesday, April 17th. The same night, John will be proposing the new capital plan for water treatment (\$30.1 million), which is result of 2 years of planning by committee for best way to address the City’s water needs for the next 50 years or so. There was a presentation and community forum with 2-3 hours of questions done via cards. Hopefully there will be no surprises and will sail through City Council, though it is possible that they could pull the whole thing apart and do pieces of it. John clarified that project would only create a 14% increase in water rates over the next 10 years, though the paper said it would double water rates. John called the newspaper to correct it and it was mentioned in an article later.
- E. Earth Day Booth April 21st
 - a. Alicia discussed that the Earth Day booth will combine AFR and the Commission, and asked for people to volunteer. Gary Pool and John Williams offered to volunteer, and Jim mentioned that Albert might want to volunteer. Alicia will send out email to group regarding volunteering and what group members might want to bring. Stephanie suggested that there be information about Bandersnatch at the event, though John thought the AWTA might have their own booth that day.
- F. Addition:
 - a. Joy (from AWTA) arrived at 6:15pm, and mentioned that there are some limbs along the trail that need to be taken out for equestrians. She offered to hire and pay someone to do this, but due to liability issues with volunteers the Chief and Jeff said this wasn’t possible. She said she would put blue flagging on these, and Jeff and the Chief said that someone will take them down.
 - i. Joy discussed how Chris had mentioned concern about non-native weed seed, and she discussed tires being a large contributor. She said there might be some signage or information to the public about washing tires (car, bike, etc.). Jeff agreed that it is important and is something we might want people to be aware of. John W. thought it might be good to bring it up to groups organizing bike races (ex. Spring Thaw). Jeff agreed and thought it might be good to put that in to those people ahead of time. Joy discussed her concern as an equestrian that horses might get blamed for weed coming in, but their gut doesn’t pass it along (like deer and cows and moose) and is shown that tires might be the main culprit. Frank stated that the best prevention is, “Don’t move dirt.” Jeff

discussed that weed seed can stay viable in the soil for many years, so any efforts not to worsen the situation is good.

G. Watershed Outreach Plan Review

- a. John discussed the overview of the plan, talking about how Chris Iverson spearheaded effort, and he recently moved. John Williams suggested taking it up next month when Chris and Dan are present. The key thing that came out of it was the cartoon watershed map. Gary wanted to make sure there was enough for Earth Day.
- b. Chief discussed how in some degree we will be discussing watershed management in community outreach related to burning that will be taking place. Stephanie brought up the importance of having pictures to show before and after.

H. Ashland Forest Plan Revision

- a. Jeff discussed that they have been following the original goals of the forest plan. Frank thought objectives should be more of a parks commission working with the forest commission in collaboration. Frank discussed the forest plan as being forward thinking when first developed 20 years ago, but now we may need to go back now and reevaluate the objectives and goals. Jeff discussed how a lot of initial goals have been accomplished, and it would be good to look at the goals for the next 20 years. Frank asked Stephanie if it would be good for someone from Forest Commission to come to Parks Commission meeting and she agreed for a study session meeting it might be good to bring up different issues such as addressing pest management. Frank will meet with Marty and Dan to discuss a forest plan revision. The Chief advised that Marty may not be available for this task due to his work with the City developing a helicopter contract for the AFR project that meets FS requirements.
 - i. Dan arrived at 6:30.

I. Update Commission 3-Year Goals

- a. John W asked Alicia to remind Chris to send an update to the commission with the latest version of the 3 year goals.

VII. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

- a) The Chief updated group on helicopter contract development for AFR. The city has contracted with consultant and worked with city attorney to try and get developed. There is a big push with contract being developed, which will be with the City and the AFR partnership. The Chief discussed additional complication of it being a “stewardship” contract and trying to satisfy FS requirements. The latest interpretation is that the work has to be done by the September 2013 deadline, though the invoices can possibly go further. Realistically, Lomakatsi is the only partner that has had experience with this type of work in a stewardship agreement environment. Jim discussed how it is more complicated with all partners being involved, rather than it being done by just the FS in-house. The Chief discussed if we are successful with this and spend the money wisely, it may serve as a model for other places in the country where there are similar issues.

VIII. REVIEW AND SET COMMISSION CALENDAR / NEXT MEETING

- A. Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting: May 8th, 2012

Dan makes motion to adjourn, Gary seconds.

IX. ADJOURN: 6:38 PM

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Public Works Office at 488-5587 (TTY phone number 1 800 735 2900). Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title I).