



DRAFT MINUTES FOR BEE CITY USA - ASHLAND MEETING

January 18, 2022

3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

I. **CALL TO ORDER, CHECK-INS, AND WELCOME**

Kate Jackson, Leslie Eldridge, Lorrie Kaplan, Nancy Appling, Kristina Lefever, Libby VanWyhe, Rachel Dials

II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes were not approved, as the committee dove right into goal setting. At the next meeting, we will have two sets of minutes to approve.

III. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no requests for public participation.

IV. **PLANNING FOR 2022**

This is an important meeting of the year, for this subcommittee. In this meeting we hope to establish our project goals and working groups for 2022.

The group discussed the fact that our commitment to being a Bee City USA requires the Mayor to make an annual statement. Libby suggested that this statement recommits Ashland as a Bee City USA. However, Libby misspoke. In fact, the Mayor's annual proclamation is related to National Pollinator Week. As part of our commitment to "Celebrate National Pollinator Week", Bee City USA Central asks that all Bee Cities issue a "Proclamation" recognizing and celebrating the importance of this work.

Dispositions and Preferences

What have committee members enjoyed doing during their time with Bee City USA? What are your preferences for engagement over the next year?

Nancy joined the committee because she enjoys working with and learning from Kristina. Tabling wasn't a real great fit for Nancy. She found most satisfaction consulting with people about their pollinator gardens. Between Kristina and herself, they are usually able to make great plant recommendations. Her focus is really on approving gardens. She likes getting outside and wants to help with the Garden Tour.

Lorrie also joined because of Kristina, and she enjoys volunteering and gardening at North Mountain Park. Has only been involved for one year. Lorrie is interested in big ideas and strategic changing. Less interested in gardening projects and more interested in strategically changing our community for the better. She understands if the time isn't right for strategic political change. Lorrie is a climate advocate, and her first priority is positioning this community for a changing climate. She enjoys doing independent research in her own time, and would be willing to work independently to conduct helpful research for the committee.

Kristina is proud of the work so far. Kristina enjoys talking to people one on one and sharing what she knows about pollinator plants. Enjoys talking with the community about plants, and going into people's gardens and working with HOAs. She has less time now than before. Until now, she has been doing record keeping and tracking of the gardens, but would like other people to help with the computer parts of that. Kristina realizes that we could be bringing in more training and education to the community. Also sees a need for more education about pollinators and climate resiliency for pollinators.

Leslie sees herself as being useful in being a connection between the Parks and Recreation Commission and the subcommittee. She enjoys actions like the Neonic resolution, that push and prod officials to enact policy and organizational change. She is on a number of working groups and advisory councils, and she enjoys networking and connecting people and groups. Leslie wants to get more interaction between Bee City Ashland, and Bee Campus SOU. She is on the Environmental Sustainability committee for SOU. Leslie wants to improve communication between the Bee City subcommittee and on-the-ground parks managers and Parks maintenance staff.

Leslie offered to get more information about how Bee Campus SOU is run and organized, including who is currently spearheading that effort.

Leslie explained her capacity over the next year. She is committed to working on getting the Neonic resolution pushed through. She is interested in getting an SOU student to be a member of the committee, and she could work on facilitating Capstones.

Kate's motivation in joining was to understand better the various groups that are acting in our community. She is interested in unifying the messaging for gardeners and landscapers who are getting different recommendations about habitat, fire adaptations, native, drought tolerant qualities. Even the City has multiple committees that all have different messages coming to Council. The Climate and Energy Action Plan requires the City and individual citizens to contribute. Because we adopt the title of a Bee City USA we have a commitment to education and landscaping methods and activities. The City, Parks and Rec and SOU are large entities that need to make changes, but they need consistent guidance. We need to strategize and time our approach.

Review Big-picture Goals, and Current Projects

Kate acknowledged that our current annual projects (like the pollinator garden tour) take a lot of effort. To take on additional project goals, we will need to find partnerships and synergies like with the fire resiliency efforts, the climate and conservation commission and student projects from SOU and Bee Campus.

Libby reiterated the historical focus on pollinator friendly landscapes and education. The approved pollinator garden program, the tour and the consulting with HOAs have all been in service of that. We need to find goals that is reasonable to achieve in the climate of the pandemic.

Can we grow the committee itself, or can we find volunteers who will support our working groups?

Rachel and Libby will investigate how to increase the number of citizen members that can be on the Bee City USA Ashland subcommittee.

We went over our list of active or potential projects, pre-populated into our collaborative brainstorming space, in Jamboard.

New Project Brainstorm

Subcommittee members added their project ideas to the shared brainstorming space. The resulting sticky-notes were re-organized into three main Goals categories: "Supporting and building pollinator

friendly landscapes”, “Educating about pollinators and their conservation”, and “Affecting systems, policies and organizational change”. Projects not selected for this year, were moved to the “Parking Lot” for future.



Key take-aways:

The committee decided NOT to undertake the Gardener Social or the Pollinator Garden Tour for 2022. Uncertainty around COVID-19, makes these unfeasible given the amount of prep work required. Instead, the subcommittee intends to take a long view and give ourselves plenty of time to plan a successful Garden Tour with a Firewise Focus in 2023.

- Kate will communicate with Charisse about this change and explain that we are still looking forward to collaboration, but that we are pushing the tour out until 2023.

Charisse is moving forward with the firewise and pollinator friendly plant database. As she takes steps to finalize the database in the coming months, Bee City USA committee members would like to provide consultation. This endeavor already has its own work group. The database seems to be a feasible project that will help get important educational information to the public. This is not a time-bound goal.

Leslie has ideas about bringing in SOU students to support our work through Capstone projects, and even to have a student sit on the sub-committee as a full member. SOU is restructuring their Capstone procedures to encourage more collaboration with community partners. There are annual cohorts of Juniors in the 210 class and 310 Capstone sequence who need to select a project. Fall quarter (now) students are looking for projects, by Winter quarter SOU students must finalize their capstone project. To make this work, the subcommittee will need to establish clear project objectives that a student could adopt for a Capstone.

□ Leslie will try to get information from the university about guidance and best practices around Capstones. We would like to understand what is expected from us as community partners.

It was suggested, and generally agreed upon, that Systems and Policy Change should be undertaken strategically, with special attention paid to timing. At the moment, recommendations we make upon the Parks and Recreation Department, will not be the focus given the budgetary and political climate. Nevertheless, strategic policy change should be kept in mind as important potential future directions. Where more research is needed, we position ourselves with preliminary research. Even if the organizational or political climate is not right to move some of these ideas forward *immediately*, these projects should be kept in mind as we wait for the moment when our contributions will be heeded.

□ Libby and Rachel will keep the subcommittee informed about “opportune moments” for broaching systemic change discussions: 1) When East Main Park planning is being undertaken. 2) When park maintenance guidelines are being discussed.

There are many options and ideas for educational programs and outreach opportunities. Some options include: a panel discussion about Firewise and pollinator landscaping or a program featuring the pollinator garden development at the Oak Knoll Club House. Ideally, these program ideas could be offered through North Mountain Park’s Community Program schedule. NMP can handle marketing and registration for any programs.

□ If any committee members would like to teach through NMP during the summer months, proposals are due by February 3. To plan ahead for fall programming, fall proposals will be due in late May.

HOA associations are valuable, but it may be difficult to continue seeking more HOAs to partner with on an ongoing basis. We may just want to continue to remain accessible to consult with Riverwalk and Mountain Meadows.

The neonic resolution is still a priority for the subcommittee members, and though this may be a long term goal, it could benefit from a working group to carry it forward.

The Approved Pollinator Garden program is likely to be retained as an ongoing goal. We will continue to seek garden applications. Over 2022, we can approve more pollinator gardens and continue to look at them with a Firewise lens. Any gardens that get approved in 2022 can be invited to undergo a Firewise assessment.

□ In your travels around town, keep your eyes open for properties that might qualify as a pollinator garden or a Firewise landscape. Tell Nancy the address, and we can reach out to the homeowner.

□ We may need to edit the Pollinator Garden nomination form, so that it addresses Firewise components. Add a question to the form about their willingness to undergo a Firewise assessment.

Organization and Prioritization

Before the end of the meeting, committee members circled the projects that we felt were high priority.

We still need to organize these ideas by “short term projects” vs. “long term projects” vs. “projects that are just waiting for the right moment”. Then we will need to vote on the adopted goals for 2022 and affirm working groups.

Libby has adapted the Jamboard so that each committee member has their own page, with their name on it. The page with your name, is yours to work with.

Committee members can go back to the Jamboard space, in their own time, and further organize and prioritize these ideas as they see fit.

V. OTHER ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

VI. UPCOMING MEETING DATES

Proposed: February 22, 3:00-4:30pm OR March 1, 3:00-4:30pm

Libby will seek confirmation from Leslie and Albert about whether these proposed times work for them.

ACTION ITEMS

Leslie offered to get more information about how Bee Campus SOU is run and organized, including who is currently spearheading that effort.

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