

MINUTES FOR THE CONSERVATION AND CLIMATE OUTREACH COMMISSION

Wednesday, March 24, 2021; Held Electronically

1. Call to Order (item starts at approximately 00:07 on the video)

Chair Becc Walker called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m. Commissioners Risa Buck, Larry Cooper, Marni Koopman, James McGinnis, Jamie Rosenthal, and Bryan Sohl were present. Staff members Brigette Bottinelli and Stu Green were also present. Council liaison Tonya Graham arrived shortly after the meeting started.

2. Consent Agenda

2.1. February 24, 2021 Meeting Minutes (00:21)

Walker clarified that the last meeting was called to order at 3 p.m., but the minutes listed the meeting starting at 3:30 p.m. Buck/Sohl moved/seconded to approve the minutes with that slight editing. Further discussion: none. All ayes, motion passed unanimously.

3. Announcements

3.1. Next Regular Meeting: April 28, 2021

3.2. Other Announcements from Commissioners (1:35)

Buck reminded everyone of the Responsible Consumption Zoom meeting on April 29.

Tonya Graham arrived at 3:06 p.m.

Sohl asked if a date was set for the Ashland Hardware electric landscaping demo day. Buck answered that a specific date is not set, but will be held on a Saturday in Spring. Buck will email Commissioners who volunteered to help with any updates.

Rosenthal announced the following events:

- May 2 Annual Green Debris Drop Off Day at Valley View Transfer Station
- May 8 Free Annual Household Hazardous Waste Event at Rogue Disposal in White City
- April 22 Rogue Valley Earth Day

The event will be held virtually and include an Ecoquest Challenge scavenger hunt with experience based prizes to win including some Rogue To Go tokens.

3.3. Reports from Members of Other Commissions

Walker read the minutes and watched the last Climate Policy Commission (CPC) meeting. She encouraged other Commissioners to read the minutes and watch the meetings of other Commissions as well.

4. Public Forum

None

5. Reports/Presentations

5.2. Staff Update (8:10)

This item was moved before the Council Update. Green presented an update on the following items:

- The Climate and Energy Action Plan (CEAP) Annual Report will be presented to the City Council on May 4 and will include an update on progress indicators.
- CPC has been working on long-term planning for the Electric Utility.

- Four new public chargers have been installed at the Grove and will be active in a few weeks.
- The State Legislature is considering a Reach Code Bill.
- Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) held an electrification needs analysis to help form development of transportation electrification in rural areas.
- The City incentives are doing well and more will be planned if staff time and funding is available.

Bottinelli announced the two upcoming virtual events: Water Conservation on April 22 and Responsible Consumption on April 29. Bottinelli will send out information on both events for Commissioners to post to their designated outreach channels. There has also been an update to the transportation electrification programs webpage and a link will be sent out to the Commission for feedback. Green thanked Bottinelli for all her work on the website and other projects as she has completed half of her internship time. Green plans to apply for another Resource Assistant for Rural Environments (RARE) intern to start when Bottinelli leaves.

Sohl asked if there were any plans for installing electric vehicle (EV) chargers on the south end of town. Green stated there were no plans, but the business charger incentive program is still available. If any Commissioners have connections at those and other businesses, they can be referred to the new transportation electrification webpage. Buck proposed an idea for entities like the Chamber of Commerce to sponsor an EV charger at private parking lots. Green mentioned that he has been working with the Y on a pilot program for another party to install a charger at their facility to help host ride and drive events in the future. Koopman reminded the Commission of Electric Vehicles Ashland and could also help with any outreach. Buck and McGinnis also volunteered to help with outreach.

5.1 Council Update (17:32)

Graham gave an update on the Council Work Plan Sessions held in March. Two items Council will focus on in the new fiscal year include community wide strategic planning and solar/microgrid resilience for essential service facilities. Cooper asked if the solar installation on East Main Street would be refurbished in the future. Green stated that the system is maintained by Bonneville Environmental Foundation and will likely be replaced with the roof.

Walker asked how the strategic planning will involve all sectors of the community and how the Council can utilize the Commissions more effectively to support the City. Graham stated that there will be a limited budget for the strategic planning, but she and Councilor Hyatt volunteered to explore different options. Graham welcomed any ideas or connections to help with the strategic plan. Sohl asked if there were any other plans being updated in the next decade that need CEAP incorporation. Green responded that CPC has a tracking list on their agenda for reference.

6. Old Business

6.1. Commission Monthly Column in Sneak Preview (28:17)

Commissioners recommended the following changes to the article:

- State that impacts of climate change "are already having tangible effects" instead of "will have". McGinnis
- Reframe "to build resiliency we need to adapt to changes" to "take bold steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and minimize further changes and build resilience to adapt to climate change". McGinnis

Walker asked clarification on what resilience means in this context since resilience is often used to describe mitigation and adaptation in Ashland. McGinnis stated that if resilience included both that would be fine to leave as is.

- Identify overarching goal of an eight percent reduction each year through 2050 to give the community an idea of what is needed. McGinnis

Walker asked if McGinnis could send his version of the first sentence of the beginning of the second paragraph to her and Bottinelli for inclusion.

- Communicate the how and what of the article in a more positive tone to keep readers engaged and not overwhelmed. Buck

Walker agreed to move the first sentence of the second paragraph to the beginning of the article to emphasize why something needs to be done then how.

- Add in that climate change is daunting, but tools and knowledge are available for communities to make changes. Koopman

Walker disagreed since budget constraints and behaviors are not being changed. Walker asked Koopman to send a few sentences with this language for consideration.

Buck/Koopman moved/seconded to approve Bridgette and Becs article for the Sneak Preview with the changes that we have suggested. Further discussion: none. All ayes; motion passed unanimously.

The Commission added the following article ideas to the list:

- Rethink Your Consumption by Walker and Buck for publication in June.
- Another Adapt Your Home Campaign article by Cooper and Koopman for publication in July.

Walker asked other Commissioners to think of other Adapt Your Home articles to add to the list for the next meeting.

6.2. Update on Different Channels for Articles and Future Outreach (48:44)

Bottinelli recapped the different channels and assignments earlier in the meeting.

6.3. CEAP Project Update

- Responsible Consumption and Single Use (49:30)

Buck stated that the group is creating a table of responsible consumption acts. This table will be placed on the City website and presented at the responsible consumption virtual meeting next month. Rosenthal is also working on creating outreach ads about single use items and their alternatives.

- Climate Resilience (51:11)

Koopman described the letter attached in the meeting packet. The purpose is to remind the City Council of the creation of CEAP and its importance. Koopman asked if the Commission wanted to approve the letter to send to Council.

The following changes were suggested:

- Change "the goal is not to be arbitrary, it must be achieved worldwide" in the third paragraph to clarify that even with emissions reduction from the pandemic more needs to be done. McGinnis
- Add "we and" to before "the world is falling short of goal". McGinnis

- Add in Southern Oregon Climate Action Now (SOCAN) to the list of local groups not just SOCAN's Ashland branch. Sohl
- Incorporate the group list into the letter to show how different parts of the economy and society are working together on climate change. Walker
- Add in an executive summary at the beginning. Cooper
- Add in the two most important parts climate change impacting econ and social and cultural shift is needed. McGinnis

Walker mentioned that CPC might be interested in collaborating on this letter as their Chair also expressed interest in engaging Council. Walker also added that other groups and organizations working on climate action could be asked to collaborate on this letter. Most of the Commission agreed that adding other organizations to be a part of this letter would be collaborative, but did not want to go through the longer process to get those groups to approve the letter.

Koopman stated that the letter was written with a historical background by those who participated in developing CEAP. If a joint letter would be done, the letter would probably need to go in a different direction. Graham stated that the letter would be useful to have this there for background and is concise enough for easier read. She also emphasized that the sooner the letter goes out to Council the better as Council review the letter before the budget process starts.

Sohl/McGinnis moved/seconded that the letter be accepted with anticipated minor changes and the amended letter sent to Beccs for review and within a week submitted to City Council. Further discussion: none. All ayes; motion passed unanimously. Buck wanted to continue to build on the collaboration for maybe a future letter or other outreach.

- Water Use and Conservation (1:17:35)

Cooper stated that the Commission needs to keep an eye on the budget process and to weigh in on the Water Conservation study and upgrades to the Wastewater Treatment Plant as both will require lots of energy and have effects on Ashland's future.

7. New Business

7.1. Project Requests List (1:18:42)

Walker presented the list of projects that the Conservation and Climate Outreach Commission (CCOC) is working on and has been asked to work on. Walker asked everyone to review the list and let her know before the next meeting if any edits need to be made or descriptions need to be added. This will be a continued item on the agenda to check in on the projects and priorities.

7.2. Coordinated Campaign (1:22:16)

Graham wanted to see a coordinated campaign between CCOC, the Wildfire Safety Commission, and possibly other Commissions for the next year similar to the Wildfire Safety Campaign and the Adapt Your Home Campaign held this year. This new campaign would include 10 months of themes and programs as determined and implemented by different City Commissions with two months off each year for planning the following year's campaign. Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers could also be involved to help with outreach during the campaigns.

Buck asked what commitment would be needed from CCOC to help create the campaigns. Graham stated that CCOC would have a large commitment as the Commission is tasked with outreach, but further exploration can be done between CCOC and the Wildfire Safety

Commission to determine the level of commitment needed. McGinnis agreed with the campaign, but mentioned that a direction from Council on this would be helpful to direct the Commission's work on the campaign.

Larry Cooper left at 4:46 p.m.

Buck/Koopman moved/seconded that we the CCOC explore with Council liaison the coordinated campaign. Further discussion: none. Ayes: Buck, Koopman, McGinnis, Rosenthal, Sohl, and Walker. Nays: none. Motion passed unanimously. This item will stay on the agenda for next month.

7.3. CPC Interaction (1:44:30)

Sohl wanted to formalize how to interact with CPC and staff to help implement CEAP. Walker encouraged the Commissioners to read the CPC and other Commissions minutes, agendas, and watch the meetings as a first step. Walker suggested keeping this as a reoccurring agenda item to check back in on. Sohl agreed to review the CPC meeting and volunteered to report back unless a member from CPC plans to attend the next meeting.

7.4. Chair and Vice Chair Nominations

Walker moved this item to the next meeting due to lack of time.

8. Wrap Up

8.1. Items to be added to future agendas

Chair Walker adjourned the meeting at 4:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Taylor