

ASHLAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

June 24, 2015

Community Development Building, Siskiyou Room
51 Winburn Way

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Beigel-Coryell. Commissioners Buck, Hartman, Silverberg, McGinnis and Cruickshank were present. Commissioners Koopman and Weir arrived at 6:10. Commissioner Sohl was absent, as was Council Liaison Rosenthal. Councilor Marsh arrived at 6:30. Staff liaison Hanks was also present.

Consent Agenda / Reports

The meeting minutes of the May 27, 2015 Commission meeting were approved unanimously after motion/second of Buck/Hartman. Announcements began with an introduction of new Commissioner Cara Cruickshank, who provided some personal and professional background for the group. After individual introductions around the room, the Commission welcomed Commissioner Cruickshank to the Commission.

Beigel-Coryell announced the August regular meeting for the Commission is July 22 and the Climate and Energy sub-committee is planning to meet at their regularly scheduled first and third Wednesday (July 1st and 15th). Weir acknowledged the Mayor and Council for having the Earth Bowl winners recognized at a recent Council meeting. Koopman mentioned that the upcoming Climate Action kick off event is still being finalized but is likely either November 1st or 11th at the Old Armory.

Public Forum

Huelz Guetchen announced an educational class that he is working on creating on energy for July 6th at Pioneer Hall and provided the Commissioners with a handout.

Reports / Presentations/Updates

City Conservation & Operations – Hanks mentioned that the Energy Conservation Division is currently working with SOU staff on additional energy efficiency projects for the Rogue River Room and finalizing the documentation and measurement calculations for the SOU Dorms project to qualify the project for BPA incentive funds.

Council Update – Councilor Marsh, filling in for Councilor Rosenthal, updated the Commission on the status of the letter from the Mayor to the State legislature regarding House Bill 3470 and recognized the Commissions effort and involvement in making that happen. Marsh also noted that the Climate Action and Energy plan project funding was approved in the recently adopted biennial budget for BN2015-17.

Marsh provided a brief summary of the discussion and status regarding the solar farm proposal, stating that the Council decided to continue to reserve the property for its original purchased intent, which is for issues relating to the wastewater treatment plant, but that the proposal did

lead to a desire for further conversations regarding the role of a large scale solar generation facility within the City's electric utility. Marsh announced that the Council intends to have a study session in late summer or fall regarding the current operations and future operations and strategy for the Electric Utility. Hanks noted that the date has not yet been identified for that study session, but that he would inform the Commission when it is set.

Marsh also updated the Commission on the recent presentation requesting the City Council's support for the expansion of the Cascade Monument. The Commission was appreciative of the Council for supporting the expansion and asked about a timeline for ultimate approval. Marsh stated that it was likely still several years out to get through the various steps in the federal process.

SOU – Quarterly Update - Beigel-Coryell gave an update on the recent activities at SOU including several energy efficiency projects mentioned by Hanks earlier. An annual significant event is student move out week at the end of the school year. Efforts are made each year to divert miscellaneous non-standard trash items from the landfill trash stream (furniture, storage bins, mattresses, etc) noting that over 8,900 pounds of material was able to be diverted this year.

Beigel-Coryell noted that the campus farm on Walker Av was continuing to expand and volunteer opportunities were available. Also noted was the food grown at the farm are available to students on campus each Thursday at a stand at the SU.

Old Business

Commission Monthly Column in Sneak Preview

1) **July** – SOU Sustainability/Conservation on campus

Beigel-Coryell handed out a draft letter from the Facilities Department regarding water conservation. She stated that it wasn't the type of article she originally intended and wanted the Commission's feedback on how best to proceed.

After discussion on the tone, the intended audience and its connection to the Commission, McGinnis motioned that the Conservation Corner space be provided in July to SOU for this letter, but it not be connected with the Commission. The motion passed unanimously.

It was then noted by several Commissioners that the goal is to be one to two months ahead of the submittal deadline for articles.

2) **August** – School District Conservation

Hartman noted that he is working on it and will have a draft to email to the Commission well prior to the next Commission meeting.

3) **September** – Leaf Removal/Storm drains – Buck/Hanks – Noted as on track for next meeting

4) **October** – Climate/Energy Plan – Koopman – Noted as on track for July or August meeting

5) **November** – Energy Efficiency/Weatherization – Hanks – Noted as on track for August or September meeting

Climate/Energy Presentation/Council – Re-cap & Next Steps

Koopman summarized the recent presentation to Council regarding the Climate Action and Energy plan and noted that she felt there was a breakdown of communication between the Commission and the Council regarding the intended content of the presentation which caused some confusion with all involved. Koopman suggested the Commission schedule individual Councilor meetings to convey the messages on the Commission's plans for the project.

McGinnis gave a quick summary of the sub-committee work noting that in the recent past the committee worked on research and development for the STAR framework for sustainability but that didn't carry forward and wants to know what the Commission can do to be effective on this topic.

Councilor Marsh responded that it may be useful for a pre-meeting with the Mayor and a few key Councilors so everyone is on the same page. Marsh suggested that the Commission ensure that the August deadline for the appointment of the ad-hoc committee members happens so the project can formally get going. As to funding, Marsh noted that the allocation of the \$120,000 has yet to occur and that will come as the project unfolds.

Weir noted that he felt the ad-hoc committee shouldn't be too all inclusive and mentioned the recent water master plan as an example that he felt didn't work as well as it could have and prefers the committee to be primarily technical experts in the fields being addressed.

Silverberg noted a desire for business leaders who may be impacted by the result and implementation of the plan as well as to address potential job impacts.

The Commission noted their appreciation for Councilor Marsh's push on the topic and relayed their desire to assist in pushing the project forward.

Carbon Pricing – Council Request Recap

The Commission again noted appreciation to Marsh for the Mayor and Council's action on this topic.

New Business

Leaf Blowers /Air Quality

Hanks noted that this item is from a citizen request from a recent conversation and provided the citizen email in the meeting packet.

Weir noted that he felt this would be a good topic for the Commission and would be willing to lead some sort of discussion for research and recommendations on how to address the issue. Buck noted that best practices need to somehow be included in whatever comes out of the discussion. The Commission asked Marsh's opinion and she reminded them to pick their battles. Buck again noted the potential for education vs a regulatory ordinance approach.

Weir made a motion to form a sub-committee, Silverberg second passed unanimously with Commissioners Weir, Buck and Silverberg being members of the sub-committee.

8. Wrap Up

Calendar/Budget Review

Following up on discussions from last month's meeting, Weir made a motion for the Commission to recommend allocation of \$1,000 toward the 2016 Earth Bowl event. McGinnis noted that there are several similar events that may require Commission recommendations on funding and was hesitant to lock in one without talking about all of them.

The Commission agreed to discuss the budget, the Bear Creek Salmon Festival and the concept of a water sub-committee at the next meeting.

Beigel-Coryell adjourned the meeting at 8:05.