

MINUTES FOR THE CONSERVATION AND CLIMATE OUTREACH COMMISSION

Wednesday, July 22, 2020

Held Electronically via Zoom

1. Call to Order (item starts at 3:08 on video)

The meeting was called to order by Chair James McGinnis at 6:04 p.m. Commissioners Risa Buck, Marni Koopman, Jamie Rosenthal, Bryan Sohl, and Rebecca Walker along with staff liaison Stu Green were present. Council liaison Stef Seffinger arrived later in the meeting. Commissioners Larry Cooper and Steve Mitzel were absent.

2. Zoom and Meeting Protocol Review (3:16)

McGinnis reviewed the Electronic Meeting Protocols During Pendency of the COVID-19 Pandemic memo from the meeting packet.

3. Consent Agenda (9:58)

3.1. February 26, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Sohl/Walker moved/seconded to approve the February 26, 2020 meeting minutes as written. Further discussion: none. Buck abstained from voting since she did not attend the February meeting. Ayes: Koopman, McGinnis, Rosenthal, Sohl, and Walker. Nays: none.

4. Announcements

4.1. Decision: Chair and Vice Chair Nominations (12:45)

Rosenthal nominated Walker for Chair. Walker accepted the nomination. McGinnis nominated Sohl as Vice Chair and Buck and Rosenthal nominated Buck for Vice Chair. Sohl stated he would be willing to accept the position if no one else wanted the role. Buck said she would like to be the Vice Chair. Sohl/Koopman/Rosenthal moved/seconded Walker to serve as Chair and Buck to serve as Vice Chair for the upcoming year. Further discussion: none. All ayes.

4.2. Welcome Back/Check In (18:21)

All present Commissioners and staff gave personal updates. Commission related updates included: Sohl was hoping to work more with the Climate Policy Commission (CPC); Walker thanked everyone for placing her as Chair and discussed the opportunity to rebuild the economy and community in a sustainable way from COVID-19; and Rosenthal stated that her work with Recology that is focused on recycling outreach and challenges is now being provided virtually.

5. Public Forum (33:08)

No public input for submitted for this meeting. McGinnis mentioned an early submission from a member of the public describing the potential for a carless Manhattan.

6. Reports/Presentations (35:22)

6.1. Council Update

Seffinger arrived later in the meeting and gave a brief Council report then.

6.2. Staff

Green gave a staff update regarding the following:

- Rogue-to-Go program – The grant for the program was extended to the end of the year due to COVID-19. The reusable to go containers are still in use and Green is looking for more businesses to participate. Groups are being sought to take over the program on their own separate from the City.
- Rogue Bike Share Program – The program administrator, Zagster, went bankrupt in March leaving the program nonfunctioning. The City is looking for funding to get the program back

online; however, \$25,000 was lost during the bankruptcy. Proposals to continue and expand the bike share has been pushed out to 2021.

- Pioneer and Lithia Way Electric Vehicle (EV) Chargers – Currently, there are four EV chargers at the parking lot. The City will install six new chargers and replace the current four for a total of ten chargers in that location.
- City Electric Fleet – The City installed ten EV chargers at the service station to serve the City’s electric fleet.
- Website and Outreach – The climate website (ashland.or.us/climate) has been updated. There is a possibility that Green will have an AmeriCorps intern to help with outreach in the Fall.
- State Level Building Codes – Green has been working with other organizations to advocate for building code changes at the State level since local municipalities cannot create additional requirements over the State code.
- Clean Fuel Credits – Ashland is the recipient of the State’s Clean Fuel Credit program based on the number of EV registrations within the city. Green will be advocating for those credits to fund electrification projects. Buck was interested in the Commission writing a letter to the City Council advocating for the credits to fund conservation programs. Green stated that the Transportation Commission also written a memo in regards to the credits funding transportation projects offsetting fossil fuels and will send it to the Commission.
- Boost EV Incentive – The City has applied for the Bonneville Environmental Foundation (BEF) Boost EV Incentive. The incentive would increase the purchase and use of e-bikes in Ashland.

Seffinger arrived at 6:51 p.m.

(50:23) Seffinger gave an update about working on recycling and composting in her personal life. Seffinger also spoke to the Council facing difficult decisions due to transitions, politics, and the budget coming up next year. McGinnis asked about the City Manager/City Administrator issue. Seffinger stated that there is currently an Interim City Administrator and staff will develop a City Manager recruitment process and job description for the Council to review and critique.

7. Old Business (56:35)

7.1. Commission Monthly Column in Sneak Preview

- Discuss Future Articles or Change in Format
- Green stated that he wrote an article from the Conservation Department for the May Sneak Preview. Since the editor has not asked for additional articles from the Commission, Green asked if a different format for the articles should be taken. The Commission decided to move this item to the end of the agenda or the next meeting if they did not have time to discuss it at this meeting.

7.2. New Meeting Time and Date Discussion (58:30)

- Preferred dates/times from February meeting: 4th Wednesday or 4th Monday; 3 to 5 p.m., 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., or 6 to 8 p.m.

Walker asked about the previous doodle poll from February. Staff stated because of the time between now and the February meeting, the poll had expired. The Commission asked to have another poll given for availability to discuss at the next meeting.

8. New Business (1:03:00)

8.1. Decision: Commission and Sub-Committee Work Planning

1. What are/were you currently working on?

Walker was asked and took over the meeting at this point. She emphasized the current situation and opportunity to rebuild Ashland's economic system with sustainability. She also mentioned the Commission's role in the implementation and delivery of CEAP. Active sub-committees were asked to give an update:

- Water – Buck stated that they were previously working on rain water catchment systems and laundry to landscape workshops.
- Waste Prevention – Buck mentioned the Rogue to Go program and working on eliminating single-use materials.
- Air Quality – The members didn't have an update, but Buck stated her previous work in support of electrification for landscaping equipment.
- Marketing and Outreach – Walker mentioned that the subcommittee still had Marion Moore's presentation and Climate Actions card.

After the updates, Walker suggested looking at the current sub-committees and projects to see if any should be realigned with the current times.

2. What do you want to work on for the next year? (1:10:15)

The Commission discussed the following items to focus on for the next year:

- Having a joint subcommittee with CPC to meet on a regular basis.
- Focusing on “bring back better” as Ashland recovers economically from COVID-19 including incorporating sustainability and reducing greenhouse gases (GHG) in the recovery.
- Working with new tourist trends (younger, outdoor crowd) and creating a partially carless downtown.
- Utilizing CEAP as a base for projects and outreach to the community.
- Continuing to work on eliminating single use items.
- Embracing the slow down caused by COVID-19 allowing for a reduction in air pollution and a change in consumer behaviors.
- Using virtual outreach.
- Working with current groups in the community rather than separately for a sustainable recovery.
- Making the Commission essential.
- Connecting with different Commissions like Public Art for art installations about the environment and Forest Lands Commission for sustainability in our watershed.
- Keeping in line with City Council goals and budget priorities.

Walker suggested that the Commission start with reviewing CEAP and selecting three projects based on the plan to discuss at the next meeting. These projects should be focused on strategies and the current situation with COVID-19. She also emphasized selecting projects that could work in conjunction with current community happenings. Green mentioned that Commissioners should also review the Conservation and Climate Outreach Commission (CCOC) charter in relation to these projects.

3. What collaborations with CPC need to be addressed? Interest in joint meeting with CPC in August? (1:37:42)

Rosenthal suggested having an informal meeting with the CPC to get to know each other. Sohl mentioned having a subcommittee with CPC to meet regularly. Buck agreed to doing both. Green mentioned that the charter of each Commission meant for them to be separate however it is good for them to connect occasionally with CPC and other Commissions, like Transportation. Walker stated that CCOC could focus on outreach and implementation of CEAP and let CPC focus on developing policy. McGinnis suggested an educational process to get the community involved along with the City to encourage policy proposals from CPC to move forward on Council. Seffinger said that it would be beneficial to look into creating one climate commission between CCOC and CPC eliminating any need for more integration between the two. Consensus was to start with an informal meeting while the Chairs and Vice Chairs of each Commission meet separately to discuss the future of both Commissions.

9. Wrap Up (1:53:45)

9.1. Items to be added to future agendas

Walker asked if additional items not previously discussed should be added to a future agenda item. Sohl inquired about the vacancy and the process for others to apply. Green informed him to encourage others to apply and the Mayor would review the application. Walker stated the importance of getting members with different backgrounds to bring more diversity to the Commission. Buck stated that Marion Moore who had to resign from the Commission might want to reapply.

Walker adjourned the meeting at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Taylor