

**MINUTES FOR THE ASHLAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION**  
**Wednesday, August 26, 2015**  
**Siskiyou Room, 51 Winburn Way**

**1. Call to Order**

Roxane Beigel-Coryell called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. in the Siskiyou Room.

Commissioners Risa Buck, Jim Hartman, Shel Silverberg, Mark Weir, Bryan Sohl, and Cara Cruickshank were present. Staff member Adam Hanks was present. Commissioner James McGinnis and Councilor Rosenthal arrived late. Commissioner Mari Koopman was absent.

**2. Consent Agenda**

**Wier/Silverberg m/s to approve the minutes of June 24 and July 22 as presented. Voice Vote: All Ayes. Motion Passes.**

**3. Announcements**

The next commission meeting will be held on September 23, 2015. The climate and energy subcommittee are scheduled to meet on September 2, 2015. No meetings have been set regarding either leaf blowers or the sidewalk recycling program.

Beigel-Coryell stated that she will be unable to attend this month's Mayor's Brown Bag meeting with commission chairs and wondered if any commissioner were available to attend in her place. None were available.

October 3<sup>rd</sup> will be the Bear Creek Salmon Festival.

Hartman received the latest water use analysis from the school district and water use was dramatically down this last year.

The first planning meeting for Geos Institute/Rogue Climate kickoff event as part of the Climate & Energy Action Plan process will take place on August 27, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.

The Council-led volunteer appreciation event will take place this Sunday, August 30<sup>th</sup>, at the Oak Knoll Golf Course, starting at 3:00 p.m.

*Commissioner James McGinnis arrived at 6:11 p.m.*

The final Compost Class will take place on September 12. Weir will be teaching the vermicomposting portion of the class. **Buck/Weir m/s to approve the purchase of an \$150 gift certificate to the Grange Co-op for class instructor John Flaherty. Voice Vote: All Ayes. Motion Passes.**

This is Commissioner Hartman's last meeting. The group thanked him for his many years of work on the commission as well as the positive work he's accomplished at the High School. He recently gave Buck and Beigel-Coryell a tour of the High School and they were both impressed. Hartman stated that he enjoyed his time on the commission and liked knowing the "pulse" of the community.

Beigel-Coryell passed around thank you cards from some of the Earth Bowl student participants.

#### **4. Public Forum**

Kristina LaFever – is a member of Advocates for Healthy Landscapes as well as the Rogue Valley Pollinators. She is here tonight to request the commission’s support to encourage no pesticide/herbicide use in Ashland. She is grateful to live in a community which already has such low usage but she would like the Commission to request that Council pass a resolution to expand the education regarding the toxicity as well as educate the community and businesses about non-toxic alternatives. Municipalities cannot ban the use of pesticides or herbicides, but can discourage their use by citizens and businesses.

Huelz – gave handouts and encouraged the commission to use them to guess what each green house gas component level may be in the future. He described the breakdowns shown in the charts, i.e. 1/3 to house, 1/3 to car, and 1/3 to things that we buy (manufacturing). He stated that the totals listed for current numbers are accurate based on the research he’s done.

#### **5. Reports/ Presentations/ Updates**

*Downtown Recycling* – Hartman reviewed the discussion from the last meeting. He would like the group to consider a pilot program with downtown businesses “adopting” a basket. The baskets would be labeled something like, “Thanks to \_\_\_\_\_ business” or “Recycling opportunity provided by \_\_\_\_\_.” He suggested working with the Chamber of Commerce to organize and take ownership of this program.

Group discussed possible program options. Agreed that the subcommittee needs another meeting to firm up a recommendation for the group to approve. If the pilot program works, it would need to go to Council for approval of budget, maintenance requirements, etc, to expand the program.

*City Conservation & Operations* – The Greenhouse Gas Inventory RFPs were due today and four proposals were submitted. The Climate & Energy Action Plan ad hoc Committee will have a role in selecting the consultant.

Buck asked for an update on solar programs. Solar rebates numbers are up, but interest in the Solar Pioneer II program has died down. Staff is looking into options for changing the program to encourage greater participation.

Recology Quarterly Update – The fall leaf programs this year include:

- Drop-off days on November 15 and December 13
- Prepaid leaf-bag program
- Green debris cans – can be kept all-year round, only in the Fall, only for one month, or residents can add an extra can for an additional fee

Recology is waiting for DEQ changes to the Opportunity to Recycle report. Buck reminded the group that prescription drugs can be safely disposed of at the Ashland Police Department. The Josephine County hazardous waste disposal event will be on September 26<sup>th</sup>, and Jackson County residents may participate (just as Josephine County residents can participate in the Jackson County event). There are currently 104 people participating in the recycling sticker

program. Recology will be testing one fully-automated garbage truck in the near future. Buck discussed some of the upcoming legislation regarding the expansion or elimination of the can and bottle refund bill.

## **6. Old Business**

*Sneak Preview Column* – Koopman submitted for the packet a draft of the Climate & Energy Action Plan article. If the group has any suggestions, they should let her know. This article will be approved at the next commission meeting.

Group discussed upcoming topics and would like the following:

November – Energy report written by Hanks

December – Holiday conservation written by Silverberg

January – Bag ban review, successes, and further education written by Weir

February – (Possibly) Climate event kick-off written by James

March – Natural yard care solutions written by Cara

Group thanked Hartman for originally coming up with the idea for the Sneak Preview articles. He stated he hoped that all the articles would be on-line as a permanent resource. Staff agreed to add them to the website.

*Climate and Energy Sub-committee* – Group discussed whether this sub-committee needed to continue now that the ad hoc committee has been formed, especially as most of the sub-committee members are in the ad hoc committee. Group decided it was appropriate to suspend the subcommittee for the time being.

Group discussed the ad hoc committee's initial tasks and how it will tie into the Geos Institute/Rogue Climate kick-off event. Sohl informed the group that the ad hoc committee will be working fast as the Council expects a report or draft plan by January of 2017.

McGinnis described some of the plans for the kick-off event. The goal of the event is to get the community to understand that Council is serious about the Climate & Energy Action Plan and also serious about getting community involvement.

*Councilor Rich Rosenthal arrived 7:07 p.m.*

McGinnis asked if any members of the group were interested in sponsoring, running, or creating an event the week prior to the kick-off event. Cruickshank, Sohl, and McGinnis agreed to consider options for participating.

*Earth Bowl Funding/Sponsorships* – Hanks informed the group that there is currently no formal policy regarding accepting sponsorships. The Parks & Recreation Department is currently creating a policy, which staff may be able to use as a template. For now, sponsorship of events is allowed, so long as what the parties agree to and expect in return are very clear.

*Leaf Blower/Air Quality* – Weir and Silverberg have been finding many ordinances from other cities. Some deal with noise while others deal with pollution but none seem to be a good fit for Ashland. Group discussed whether or not to continue to pursue this as it will be very divisive in

the community and most commission members are already busy with other issues. Group decided that Weir and Silverberg may continue to research, as time allows, but that no formal sub-committee will be created at this time. Group encouraged the committee members to include it in the Climate & Energy Action Plan work and also suggested that it might be a good future topic for a Sneak Preview article.

*Council Update* – Rosenthal expressed his excitement for the start of the Climate & Energy Action Plan process. He expects it to be good, positive work for the community. He will be chair of the ad hoc committee and his role is to get the process on-track and keep it moving forward. He hopes all the commission members will be able to attend Sunday's volunteer appreciation event.

## **7. New Business**

*Pesticide/Herbicide Discussion* – Cruickshank gave information regarding the ill effects of pesticides/herbicides. She hopes that a resolution from the Council directed more toward citizen use than City policy would be effective, as the City of Ashland has already done a good job of reducing use.

Group discussed options for educating the community and for encouraging local businesses to not sell the toxic products. Determined that the best place to start for educating the community would be the Parks and Recreation Commission, as they are already in support of banning pesticides/herbicides. They already understand the challenges and could be supportive of having a "sample garden" to show non-toxic options. Cruickshank agreed to pass this on to the group working on this and to pursue discussions with the Parks and Recreation Commission.

*Water sub-committee creation* – Group decided to table this until a later date due to lack of commission time and resources. Hanks reminded the group that with some lead time he can always have staff at meetings to give updates or answer questions regarding water use and conservation.

*Commission Annual Report to Council* – Hanks included the draft of the report Biegel-Coryell will be presenting at Tuesday's Council meeting. As this commission has been before Council many times this year, Hanks and Biegell-Coryell decided to not spend a lot of time before Council but instead to highlight the Commission's successes for the last year. Buck suggested that they also take this opportunity to highlight little-known conservation aspects like the availability of the car-wash kit, compost classes, etc. Group agreed to this suggestion and gave a general thumbs up to the draft presentation.

## **8. Wrap Up**

Meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Diana Shiplet  
Executive Assistant