

# CITY OF ASHLAND

## Ashland Housing and Human Services Commission Draft Minutes June 23, 2016

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chair Rhode called the meeting to order at 4:32 pm in the Siskiyou Room at the Community Development and Engineering Offices located at 51 Winburn Way, Ashland OR 97520.

<b>Commissioners Present:</b>	<b>Council Liaison</b>
Tom Gunderson	Pam Marsh
Rich Rhode	
Heidi Parker	<b>SOU Liaison</b>
Gina DuQuenne	Megan Mercier
Sharon Harris	
<b>Commissioners Absent:</b>	<b>Staff Present:</b>
Tom Buechele	Linda Reid, Housing Specialist
Josh Boettiger	Carolyn Schwendener, Staff secretary
Sue Crader	

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Parker/Gunderson m/s to approve the minutes of the May 26, 2016 Housing and Human Services Commission. Voice Vote: All ayes, minutes were approved as presented.

### **PUBLIC FORUM**

No one spoke.

### **LAUNDRY LOVE PRESENTATION**

Christina Kukuk, Senior Minister of the United Church of Christ located on the corner of Siskiyou and Morton Street introduced the volunteers and thanked the Commissioners for inviting them to come and speak. The Laundry Love program is a program that provides quarters and laundry detergent to everyone who comes to the Laundromat between 5:00 pm and 8:00 pm. The Laundromat being used is Henry's located at the Ashland Shopping Center. During this time the volunteers get to know the people, share conversation, good food and sometimes music. This service makes a world of difference in the lives of those that are in need. Wendy, one of the volunteers reported that the church has spent approximately \$2,000 in quarters. They estimate it costs about \$15 to \$20 a family to do their laundry. Mike, another volunteer said looking forward they are interested in inviting other faith groups to help so they could offer the laundry service once a week rather than once a month. They are also looking at fundraising and perhaps doing some grant writing.

Reid shared with the group the grant opportunities that the City offers. This program would likely qualify for a social service grant, the next cycle starts in January of 2017. Another grant funding source would be Community Development Block Grant Funds which does offer a small amount for social services.

### **ROGUE VALLEY TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT (RVTD) PRESENTATION**

Paige Townsend, Senior Planner and Support Services Manager for Rogue Valley Transit gave a presentation. With the passing of the five year temporary levy in May RVTD will be able to provide some additional services. The service expansion includes increased frequencies in Route 10, which serves Medford, Phoenix, Talent and Ashland. It's currently at 30 minute frequency but will bump it back up to 20 minute frequency. RVTD will also be adding Saturday service starting on July 9<sup>th</sup> as well as adding a route in the Southwest Medford area and a route to the Table Rock Campus in White City. RVTD buses tally a weekly ridership of more than 30,000 people. In addition to providing community members with access to jobs, education, health care and shopping, public transit gives mobility to disabled and senior citizens. Ms. Townsend said it is her job to look at the RVTD vision for the local cities transportation needs. Now is the time to look at what the current needs are, prioritize the projects and when the funding becomes available what do we do first, second, third, stated Ms. Townsend. The Commissioners discussed the need for a bus stop at the south end of town because Ashland Hills Hotel has re-opened providing employment. The Oak Knoll Community is located at the south end of town as well as the Resource Center and the Ashland Community Food Bank.

### **HOUSING CRISIS FORUM DISCUSSION/PLANNING**

Rhode gave an update from the Housing Crisis Forum Planning Committee meeting. The Committee includes Oregon Action, Interfaith Coalition and the Housing and Human Services Commission. The date for the forum is set for Wednesday August 10, 2016 from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm in the Gresham Room at the Ashland Public Library. Included along with the forum is a Housing survey inquiring about rental experiences in Ashland. The goals for the forum are; bringing together issues about homelessness and rental issues with a theme of "Looking at Positive Solutions" to these issues. The committee would also like to address the funding for the Housing Trust Fund. Rhode acknowledged they could use moderators for the breakout sessions if anyone in the Commission is interested in volunteering. The next meeting is scheduled for June 30<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm at the Pony Espresso located at Washington Federal Bank on Lithia Way.

### **PORTA POTTY SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Harris reported that the sub-committee (Harris, Boettiger, Gunderson) met on June 14. The committee is researching the cost for the funding of a porta potty and looking at possible locations. Some suggestions for locations were: A Street close to town, possibly by the bike trail, Ace Hardware, The Grange Co-op, by Fourth and A Street, on the south end of town by Bi-Mart and Shop-n-Kart. Harris commented it might be easier to place the porta potty on private property rather than City owned property. It was also mentioned of the possibility of leaving the bathrooms open at the Railroad Park and Lithia Park after dark, however the cost of that might be too much. Harris also suggested that it might be a good idea to put the porta potties at businesses on a temporary basis maybe for thirty days and see how it works out.

### **DONATION/RESOURCE COIN UPDATE**

Reid said that Brandon Goldman, City Senior Planner, spoke with Sandra Slattery at the Chamber to discuss their program called "Change with a Purpose." The fourth of July is such a busy time for the Chamber Goldman and Reid will need to wait and meet with Ms. Slattery after the Fourth. The idea is that the Chamber might be interested in incorporating the two programs together. Reid will meet in the early part of July and get back with the commission at the next meeting. The commission would like someone from the chamber to come and talk about the program "Change with a Purpose."

### **UPDATE ON THE DOWNTOWN SITUATION**

The Commissioners discussed the downtown situation regarding the homeless population. Gunderson commented that he has heard from business people that there have been less issues and fewer homeless or travelers' in the downtown area. They attribute this to the new police presence and the Chamber actively saying "Don't donate to the pan handlers." Reid has heard that the smoking ban has also discouraged the presence of the unhoused. Parker acknowledged that Uncle Foods numbers has dropped significantly as it appears the amount of traveler's have dramatically dropped.

### **LIAISON REPORTS DISCUSSION**

**Council** - Marsh reported that the Council has started their goal setting process. Affordable housing and the Housing Trust Fund is on that goal list. The Council is looking to match up funding sources with the most appropriate functions. The Verde Village project located at the old Ashland Greenhouses on Nevada is moving forward. The development includes a mix of single family homes, affordable housing and cottages totaling 68 housing units. Fifteen affordable units have already been developed. Fair Housing Ordinance is going to the Council at their July 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. Planning Commission is working on a cottage ordinance which might be of interest to the Commission. On August 28th at 3:00 P.M. the City is hosting a volunteer appreciation event at Oak Knoll. Commissioners are invited and are welcome to bring a guest.

**SOU** - Mercier excited about the Fair Housing ordinance going to city council. ASSOU student government has a new president, his name is Collin Davis. Mercier is no longer part of ASSOU, but will continue in her role as commission liaison and is still interested in collaborating on developing a rental reference website.

**Staff** – Reid said that next week she will be attending the Geos Institute Climate Change Vulnerability Accessibility workshop. Will report back. The Tiny House village in Medford is going to the City Council at the noon study session, the development is still being considered but having some opposition with the location.

### **GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS MAY 26th 2016 METTING AGENDA ITEMS**

**Quorum Check** – Gina DuQuenne will be gone

### **UPCOMING EVENTS AND MEETINGS**

Next Housing Commission Meeting – 4:30-6:30 PM; July 28, 2016 4:30-6:30 in the Siskiyou Room at the Community Development & Engineering Department located at 51 Winburn Way.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by Carolyn Schwendener*