

MINUTES FOR THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, March 27, 2019

Siskiyou Room, 51 Winburn Way

1. Call to Order

The March meeting of the Conservation Commission was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Chair Roxane Beigel-Coryell. Commissioners Risa Buck, James McGinnis, Marion Moore, Jamie Rosenthal, and Bryan Sohl. Staff member Stu Green was also present. Commissioners absent for the beginning of the meeting were Larry Cooper, Marni Koopman, and David Sommer. Staff liaison Adam Hanks and Council liaison Julie Akins were absent.

2. Consent Agenda

Beigel-Coryell asked if there were any corrections to the January 23, 2019 meeting minutes.

Koopman arrived at 6:02 p.m.

Buck moved to approve the minutes with a second from McGinnis. A vote was taken with all members in favor of approving the minutes and the motion passed.

3. Announcements

3.1. Welcome new Council liaison Julie Akins

3.2. Commissioner Term and Expiration Dates

Beigel-Coryell announced the list of Commissioners and their term expiration dates. Buck and Koopman are the only Commissioners up for reappointment this year.

3.3. Next Regular Meeting: April 24, 2019

Beigel-Coryell announced that April 24, 2019 will be the next Conservation Commission meeting.

Sommer arrived at 6:05 p.m.

3.4. Upcoming Sub-committee meetings

Beigel-Coryell announced that the Waste Prevention Sub-committee will be meeting on Wednesday, April 3 at 1:30 p.m. at 351 Walker Avenue. Buck stated that the Water Sub-committee will be meeting with Julie Smitherman, Water Conservation Analyst, in April, but the date will be decided later on.

3.5. Other Announcements from Commissioners

Sohl requested to have time on the next meeting's agenda for Smitherman to present the Ashland Canal Project. The project will be presented to the City Council at the Monday, April 1 Study Session and will be decided on by Council at the May 7 Business meeting. Sohl would like the Commissioners to hear the project and discuss if as a Commission they want to send a formal letter of support to the Council. Sohl also encouraged Commissioners to write to the City Council individually if they are in support of the project. Green mentioned that updates and information on the project can be found online at ashland.or.us/ashlandcanal. As this is a controversial issue, McGinnis, with permission from the Commissioners, will invite a member of the public who is opposing the canal project to the meeting as well.

Sommer updated the Commission about Ashland School District's (ASD) progress after the bond passed. Currently, ASD has selected a construction management company and are looking at architects. He has installed a water bottle filling station at the maintenance department and supplied the maintenance staff with metal reusable water bottles. Sommer also secured a \$30,000 budget for landscaping improvements aimed at reducing water use.

Beigel-Coryell announced that the Lithia Motors Pavilion at Southern Oregon University (SOU) received LEED certification. SOU will also be celebrating Earth Week from April 15 through 20.

Koopman informed the Commission that she will not be able to attend the April meeting as she will be attending the National Adaptation Conference in Wisconsin. Electric Vehicles Ashland (EVA) is still doing outreach to businesses and non-profits interested in purchasing electric vehicles. Koopman asked that if any Commissioners want to help with the outreach to contact her or McGinnis. The deadline for applying for the program is the end of June. Koopman also announced that they are looking into offering future incentives for electric bicycles.

Moore brought bumper stickers about reducing consumption for the Commissioners and any public members attending the meeting.

Rosenthal announced four upcoming events:

- Monday, April 1 she will be giving a lecture on recycling from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Ashland Food Coop.
- Saturday, April 20 is Earth Day and ScienceWorks Museum will be holding events in celebration.
- Saturday, May 4 is the annual household hazardous waste event. This event is for residents of the Rogue Valley to get rid of chemicals at the Rogue Transfer and Recycling Center in White City. The day before is a time for Commercial entities to drop off hazardous waste, but they will need to fill out an application first whereas the residents do not.
- Saturday, May 4 is also the annual Firewise event where Ashland residents can bring any leaves or dry plant material to the Transfer Station in Ashland. This event is co-sponsored by Ashland Fire & Rescue.

4. Public Forum

Huelz Gutcheon, Ashland, OR – spoke to the fundamentals of climate change solutions which is lowering carbon emissions. Energy has four important parts including generation, conservation, efficiency, and ecology. Gutcheon demonstrated that in America emissions come from one third households (which is generally half electric, half fossil fuels), one third transportation (100 percent fossil fuels), and one third factories (100 percent fossil fuels).

Egon Dubois, Ashland, OR – asked who manages the Climate and Energy Action Plan (CEAP) other than paid staff. McGinnis responded that a new Commission is being formed to help with CEAP. Dubois was concerned that no evaluations have been published since CEAP's creation in 2015. Beigel-Coryell stated that Green gave an update to Council at the Monday, March 18 study session about the progress of CEAP. Dubois was not able to find the notice for that study session and feels like the City does not engage with citizens as the plan states. He is hoping that the City will follow the plan to ensure all City Departments are educated about CEAP and that the Council considers climate change effects as they make decisions. Moore informed Dubois that he can sign up for email updates from the website by subscribing on the website.

Beigel-Coryell asked the Commissioners if they would like to see quarterly reports from SOU, ASD, and Recology back onto the agendas. Rosenthal suggested that they include this information in the monthly Commissioner updates. Sohl suggested keep the monthly updates, but have an annual or biannual report from each to the Commission. Buck suggested to keep them in the monthly updates and if an item presented needs more time to create a separate agenda item.

5. Reports/Presentations

5.1. Council Liaison Update

5.2. City Operations/Administration Update

Green announced again that the Ashland Canal Project will be presented to Council on Monday, April 1 as stated previously. Green stated that the Commissioners would need to create a draft letter that could be edited at the next meeting for the Canal Project to meet the deadline for the packet materials.

The progress report on CEAP was presented on the Monday, March 18 study session and those interested can watch it online. Green will also send anyone who would like a copy the packet for that item.

The amendment to the Conservation Commission and the creation of the Climate Policy Advisory Commission (CPAC) is currently going through legal review.

6. Old Business

6.1. Commission Monthly Column in Sneak Preview

McGinnis introduced the “Greening of Ashland’s Landscapes” article for review. The version presented to the Commission included reference and background material not to be published, but a good resource for Commissioners. Buck liked the article overall, but asked that the word academia could be changed to ASD and SOU as it might confuse some readers. Buck suggested that in addition to publication in the Sneak Preview that it also be shared with landscaping businesses, submitted to the Ashland Tidings and Medford Mail Tribune, and possibly put on the City website. Moore further suggested that this could be shared as a link to the next door neighbor app discussions surrounding the issue and on Facebook group Ashland Peeps. Koopman had some minor edits that she will send to McGinnis directly. One in particular was to list the businesses offering discounts on the equipment.

Buck moved to approve the article with minor changes discussed to be changed by McGinnis. Moore seconded the motion. Green asked if the gas to electric trade in program details could be taken out since it is not planned to be done by the City. Green recommended instead saying that a program like this may be initiated, but could also be done with another group who could get grant funding. With no further discussion, a vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Beigel-Coryell announced the other articles and asked for others interested in writing future ones. The updated article list is:

- June – Water Conservation/Supply (Water Sub-committee and Smitherman)
Deadline for April meeting packet: April 15. Green will invite Smitherman to the next meeting.
- July – Paper Reduction Use (Moore)
Deadline for May meeting packet: May 13.
- August – Virtual Net Metering (Green/Beigel-Coryell)
Deadline for June meeting packet: June 17.
- September – Climate Equity (Koopman/co-author from community)
Deadline for July meeting packet: July 15.
- October – CPAC Joint Commission article (McGinnis/CPAC members)
Deadline for August meeting packet: August 19
- November – Leaves and Composting Options (Rosenthal)
Deadline for September meeting packet: September 16.
- TBD – Pilot program for Straws on Demand, Juicebox Electric Car Charger, and addressing consumption emissions articles.

6.2. Sub-committee updates

- Water

Buck stated that she will contact Smitherman to decide upon a meeting time and that they are prepared to write the next article.

- Waste Prevention

Green updated the Commission that the sub-committee is continuing to work with the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and GO Box for the reusable restaurant to go containers pilot program. Four new recycling baskets downtown are now in use. Beigel-Coryell announced that the next sub-committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 3 at 1:30 p.m. at 351 Walker Avenue.

- New Sub-committee on electric landscaping equipment

Sommer stated that the group has met, but does not currently have another meeting scheduled.

7. New Business

7.1. Nomination and Election of new Commission Chair/Vice-Chair

McGinnis self-nominated to be the Chair of the Commission and Beigel-Coryell agreed to be Vice Chair. Koopman moved to elect McGinnis as Chair and Beigel-Coryell as Vice Chair. Sohl provided a second. With no further discussion the motion passed unanimously.

7.2. Plastic Wrapped Marketing Papers Discussion

Beigel-Coryell mentioned the memo from Hanks concerning the unsolicited advertising from Rosebud Media and the City's code AMC 9.08.110 Scattering Rubbish. The City is willing to contact Rosebud Media and inform them of the violation and let them know they need to create and maintain an opt out program. Discussion surrounded creating an opt-in list instead, restricting the practice all together, having Rosebud Media pick up the unwanted papers after 48 hours, and possibly controlling where these can be delivered or thrown. This item will continue to the April meeting for Hanks to weigh in on the City's ability to enforce the presented items.

7.3. Idling Ordinance Expansion

Beigel-Coryell described the current code (AMC 11.26.020 Parking Prohibitions) covers public streets and parking lots only. Buck suggested that the Conservation Commission use this as a subject for their outreach. Sommer stated that working with the Transportation Commission on this issue would be beneficial. Hanks was assigned to check with the Transportation Commission to see if they would be interested in collaborating. This outreach could also include educating parents dropping off and picking up their children from school and delivery trucks who idling on private property. McGinnis recommended a Sub-committee could be created. Beigel-Coryell suggested that the Sub-committee dealing with electric landscaping equipment could take on this issue as the Air Quality Sub-committee. Moore volunteered to join this Sub-committee with Sommer and McGinnis.

7.4. Outreach and Marketing Discussion

Moore is interested in starting outreach for topics which the Commission covers. Specifically, she would be willing to give CEAP presentations tailored to specific groups and focusing on Empower Ashland's 3.3 item of pulling together local climate groups to help with spreading awareness within the community. In agreement, Green would like to move forward by focusing on 1) What questions do citizens have? 2) Standardized slide show with one or two key messages 3) How to reach those who are not aware of CEAP?. Some ideas included an online survey (that could refer to the last survey done on this issue) and bulk mailer to households in Ashland. Green asked to bring this item back for discussion on actions and key messaging.

7.5. Nov/Dev Commission Meeting Schedule

Buck proposed meeting in both months just the week prior for each (November 20 and December 18). Sohl requested not to meet on November 20 as he has a work commitment. Buck suggested November 13 instead. All Commissioners settled on November 13 and December 18 as the meeting dates.

8. Wrap Up

8.1. Items to be added to next agendas

- BPA Update (April meeting)
- Information on Recycling (March, April, or May meeting)

Per Sohl's request Smitherman will present on the Ashland Canal Project at the April meeting. McGinnis will draft a general letter on the project that can be edited at the April meeting as well. The information on

Recycling item will be removed as Rosenthal is giving this talk at the Ashland Food Coop on Monday, April 1 from 6 to 8 p.m. and the previous Conservation Corner article also detailed this issue.

9. Adjournment

Beigel-Coryell adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Taylor, Executive Assistant

Action Items:

- Any Commissioners want to help with EVA outreach can contact Koopman or McGinnis.
- Green will also send those interested the packet materials from the March 18 CEAP update to Council.
- Koopman will send article edits to McGinnis.
- The Water Sub-committee and Smitherman will write an article for the April meeting packet (due April 15).
- Green will invite Smitherman to the next meeting.
- Hanks is assigned to check with the Transportation Commission to see if they would be interested in collaborating on outreach for idling vehicles.