

MINUTES FOR THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Wednesday, January 23, 2019
Siskiyou Room, 51 Winburn Way

1. Call to Order

The January meeting of the Conservation Commission was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Roxane Beigel-Coryell. Commissioners Risa Buck, Marion Moore, Jamie Rosenthal, and Bryan Sohl were present. Commissioners absent for the beginning of the meeting were Marni Koopman, James McGinnis, and David Sommer. Staff members Stu Green and Adam Hanks were also present. Councilor Stefani Seffinger was absent.

2. Commission Vacancies Update

Beigel-Coryell welcomed new member Moore to the Commission.

Sommer arrived at 6:01 p.m. and Koopman arrived at 6:02 p.m.

Commissioners and staff went around introducing themselves to Moore.

3. Consent Agenda

Beigel-Coryell asked for any changes to the November 28, 2018 and December 19, 2018 meeting minutes. Buck moved to approve both meetings minutes as written. Moore provided a second. With no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

4. Announcements

4.1. Next Regular Meeting: February 27, 2019

Beigel-Coryell announced that the next Conservation Commission meeting will be held as regularly scheduled on Wednesday, February 27, 2019. Buck and Sohl reminded the Commission that they will both be absent for the next meeting. Beigel-Coryell asked if anyone else cannot make the meeting to let her and Hanks know as soon as possible.

4.2. Upcoming Sub-committee meetings

Sommer announced that the electric small equipment group (sub-committee to be named later) will meet with Hanks on Thursday, January 25 at 11 a.m. Beigel-Coryell stated that the Waste Prevention Sub-committee could possibly reschedule their January meeting after this meeting.

Buck indicated that the Water Sub-committee has been meeting only as needed and working with Julie Smitherman, Water Conservation Analyst. Buck will email Sohl and Koopman about details of the Sub-committee and another possible meeting with Smitherman.

4.3. Other Announcements from Commissioners

Koopman announced that the Climate Bash will be held on February 15 at the Historic Ashland Armory starting at 7 p.m. Partners participating in the event include Rogue Climate, Citizen's Climate Lobby, Southern Oregon Pachamama Alliance, City of Ashland, and students from Ashland High School. The cost ranges from \$10 to \$15 and tickets can be purchased at the door. Koopman also emphasized that Electric Vehicles for Ashland (EVA) is still looking for businesses to participate since the program must disperse their grant money by June.

Sommer declared that Ashland School District (ASD) has narrowed down to two companies for managing their bond construction. ASD is also remodeling their maintenance shop and including

a bottle filling station for the maintenance staff. Sommer will buy stainless steel bottles for staff to help eliminate plastic water bottle use. Sommer also spoke to communicating with local hardware stores to provide discounts on electric landscaping equipment. Currently, ACE Hardware is the only business that has committed to participating in the program. Hanks will add the new Sub-committee to the agenda under Sub-committee updates for the next meeting.

Rosenthal announced that Recology driver Curtis Bentley has been nominated for the National Waste and Recycling Association's Driver of the Year award. This is the second or third time that Bentley has been nominated.

Beigel-Coryell stated that Southern Oregon University (SOU) will be hosting its second annual Zero Waste Week next week. Students and other participants will gain a perspective on waste by carrying all of their waste with them throughout the week (except for food and hygiene waste). The week is open to the public and will include films and a collaboration with the Ashland Food Co-op. Sohl asked if SOU has a formal program to track and reduce food waste. Beigel-Coryell said that the week will include a display case in the cafeteria showing the food waste. The University has also received a grant from the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to get smaller plates for the cafeteria. SOU will track the amount of food waste going through the dish room with the current large plates and compare it to the smaller plates when they are implemented. Currently, SOU donates extra food that has not been taken from the kitchen to the dining room and bagels to Ashland Food Angels.

5. Public Forum

McGinnis arrived at 6:20 p.m.

Egon Dubois, Ashland, OR – presented three items to the Commission that he hoped they would take action on. One was a suggestion that the City buy reusable water bottles for employees and offer a city sponsored free filtered water dispenser. The dispenser could be funded by placing a flat \$2 tax on all single use plastic bottles throughout the City. Next, Dubois stated that the Conservation Commission webpage's current projects section has not been updated since 2012. On this past current projects section, there was a no idling Ordinance listed that the Commission and the City should look back into expanding. This would include looking at states and cities around the country that also have no idling ordinances, which could be implemented here. The third item was the amount of unsolicited Mail Tribune ads in plastic bags that are delivered to homes around Ashland. Dubois has researched the issue and has found that the practice is illegal unless the solicitor can provide a way to opt out from the deliveries according to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) CAN-SPAM act. The solicitor could receive a violation penalty of up to \$40,000. Residents have tried contacting the Mail Tribune to opt-out and have received no response. This is causing ads piling up in the streets and getting into storm drains. Dubois proposed that elected and appointed officials from the City of Ashland write a letter to the Mail Tribune asking them to stop and explaining how they might be in violation. The next step would be a formal complaint to the FTC and possibly enacting an ordinance prohibiting unsolicited mail being delivered.

Buck suggested that this be brought back for the March meeting. Hanks will research what the City has done on this issue or similar ones in the past. Sohl also asked that discussing the idling ordinance be put on a future agenda.

Louise Shawkat, Ashland, OR – stated she spoke with Jordan Ely, Chief Finance and Operations Officer of ASD, about idling and he mentioned a possible pilot program at Helman Elementary. Hanks and Sommer will update the Commission on this at next meeting.

Huelz Gutcheon, Ashland, OR – mentioned that plastic water bottles can be reused and do not affect health of the user as long as the water does not contain contaminants, including chlorine.

Angelina Cook, Ashland, OR – announced a workshop being held in Medford on March 14 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. designed to engage restaurants and commercial food providers to reduce waste. DEQ is hosting the event and has been working with the drawdown group to put on this event. The event is aimed towards reaching Ashland restaurants and other stakeholders.

Sohl suggested inviting the school districts. Buck suggested inviting Medford restaurants as well. Beigel-Coryell will forward the flyer to everyone to pass along to those they think would benefit from attending.

6. Reports/Presentations

6.1 Council Liaison Update

Hanks informed the Commission of upcoming Council and City items to be aware of:

- an open house for the Ashland Canal (TID) Piping Project will be held on Thursday, January 31 at 5:30 p.m. in SOU's Stevenson Union gallery on the third floor;
- Council will hold its second goal setting session on Friday, February 1 at 9 a.m. in the Siskiyou Room;
- the Ashland Canal (TID) Piping Project will be discussed with Council at the Study Session on February 4;
- new Commission liaison appointments is scheduled for the Council meeting on February 5;
- City Hall concepts and Car Camping Ordinance will also be discussed on February 5;
- the final ad hoc Climate Energy and Action Plan Implementation Committee (CEAP 2.0) update and recommendation will be given to Council at the February 19 Council meeting;
- the 10 by 20 findings and request for direction from Council will be at the March 4 Council meeting along with the Transit Feasibility Study; and
- a staff report on the Climate and Energy Action Plan program will be given to the Council on March 18.

Beigel-Coryell asked about the timeline for the proposed change to the Conservation Commission and the creation of a new Climate Policy Commission if adopted by Council. Hanks stated that if adopted after the February 19 meeting both Ordinances will have to go through a first and second reading before going into effect. Hanks will forward the link to the Council meeting look ahead document to everyone, which lists the items scheduled for future Council meetings.

6.2 City Operations/Administration

Hanks stated that the City is in the process of selecting an Energy Services Company (ESCO) which will help project manage and fund future energy projects for the City. Hanks and Green have had several meetings with Craft3; a lending institution aimed at providing loans to residents for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. The City is hoping that Craft3 can help residents fund projects in conjunction the City's zero interest loan project has a limited amount to offer each year. The small rebates for energy efficient appliances are going away as many new appliances are all energy star approved, which is what the program was based on promoting.

Hanks along with other staff will hold a solar trade ally meeting this Friday, January 25. The topics for this meeting will include virtual net metering, challenges the allies are facing, operational paperwork, and if OSEIA is proposing any new state tax credits. McGinnis asked about the City's meeting with Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). Hanks stated that he will give a summary at the next Conservation Commission meeting, but there will also be a final report to Council on February 19.

7. Old Business

7.1 Commission Monthly Column in Sneak Preview

February – EVA + EV Empower (Marni/Stu)

March – Electric yard/landscape equipment (James/David)

April – Hazardous Waste (Jamie)

May – Water conservation/supply (water sub-committee/Julie)

Koopman and Green provided an article on electric vehicles to the Commission at the meeting. Changes made to the article during the meeting were:

- providing the consumer links from the City where it is referred to in the article;
- the section for EVA could state that the funds are limited to \$10,000 based on the grant awarded; and
- new or used eligible vehicles should also include wording about vehicles with leases signed.

Buck moved to approve the article with the edits that were discussed at the meeting. McGinnis seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the motion passed with all in favor.

Koopman will send the final version to Hanks after the meeting to be submitted by the next day deadline.

Beigel-Coryell asked for comments on the second article about recycling provided in the packet for March. Suggestions for edits included:

- clarification on what lids can or cannot be recycled;
- add that metal lids (both twist and from aluminum cans) cannot go in the commingle bins, but can be taken to the to the Recycling Center, which will eventually take them to the transfer station to be included in metal recycling;
- Remind residents that egg cartons are not recyclable, but can be taken to the Ashland Food Co-op (this needs to be confirmed); and
- more emphasis on why certain items cannot be recycled because of the facility that processes them.

Rosenthal volunteered to help Beigel-Coryell edit and include these additions to the article. Buck suggested that these articles also be posted on the City website. Hanks will look into the possibility of this. Moore requested that marketing ideas be added to the next meeting's agenda. Rosenthal moved to approve the second article with the changes discussed and a title. Buck provided a second. The motion passed with all members in the affirmative.

Beigel-Coryell stated that next month's packet needs to include the electric yard/landscape equipment article from McGinnis and Sommer (for the May publication) and the hazardous waste article from Rosenthal (for the April publication). This will push the water conservation and supply article to June's publication. Sohl asked if these articles could also go out in the utility bill. Hanks said that a condensed version could be included in the City Source (utility bill insert) with links to the website for the full version of the article. Green said it would be worth discussing this again at the next meeting with the marketing discussion. Buck also said that her column in the Ashland Tidings could be used as another source for getting these articles out.

7.2 Sub-committee updates

- Water

Buck met with Smitherman that day about the laundry to landscape program and helping people get permitted and working with DEQ. Buck also spoke with Ciara Marshall, Water Resources Technician, who might be able to attend a meeting in the future to discuss storm drains.

- Waste Prevention

Beigel-Coryell updated the Commission on various projects from the Waste Prevention Sub-Committee. Projects include:

- Downtown recycling basket expansion will include four new boxes (Buck is looking for a contact at Rogue Coworks. Hanks will send Buck a contact for Rogue Coworks);
- Green is working with the Sub-committee to provide marketing materials for the Straws on Demand program expansion; and
- the pilot program for the reusable to go containers received more information from DEQ about what they expect for reporting on the grant.

Sommer reminded the Commission that the electric landscape equipment Sub-committee will meet on Thursday, January 24 11 a.m.

8. New Business

8.1 DEQ Materials Management Grant Application Update

Green and Hanks met with a specialist from DEQ on the to go containers program grant. The specialist brought up the following items:

- the timeline for the grant will be pushed back from the original proposal with a signed agreement in April;
- getting data from restaurants before starting;
- make a participant agreement about who the containers belong to and how to get information about the usage; and
- the project having equity and a final report suggesting on expansion, if successful.

Beigel-Coryell stated that the pilot project is designed to see if this will work. A name and specific details will be confirmed within the next couple of Waste Prevention Sub-committee meetings.

8.2 CEAP 2.0 Committee Update

Green informed the Commission that wrapped up its meeting in December. Green will send out the final activity summary and Ordinances to the Conservation Commission. Sohl asked if the number of Commissioners for the new proposed Commission is known and if one person can serve on both. Hanks stated the typical number is nine members on a Commission and the serving on multiple Commissions is at the discretion of the Mayor and Council. Moore inquired about the timing on the new Commission would have to occur after two Ordinance readings and after appointments (most likely start in June). Hanks confirmed this for the new Commission, but said that Conservation Commission will have a faster process since they are existing.

9. Wrap Up

9.1 Items to be added to next agenda

Beigel-Coryell summarized the items to be added to the next meeting's agenda

- discussion plastic wrapped marketing papers
- idling ordinance expansion
- BPA update
- outreach and marketing discussion

Hanks will prepare background on the above items, as needed. Rosenthal will prepare an informational recycling update for either the March, April, or May meeting. Moore is interested in writing an article about what happens to recycled materials as a possible future article.

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Beigel-Coryell at 7:53 p.m.

Action Items:

- Anyone who cannot attend the February need to let Beigel-Coryell and Hanks know as soon as possible.
- Unsolicited mail/advertisement discussion and revisiting the idling Ordinance needs to be added to the February agenda (Buck originally proposed the March meeting, but is okay with the discussion starting in February).
- Buck will email Sohl and Koopman about details and possible future meetings of the Water Sub-committee.
- Hanks and Sommer will update the Commission on ASD pilot idling program at the February meeting.
- Hanks will add the new Sub-committee to the agenda under Sub-committee updates for the February meeting.
- Beigel-Coryell will forward the Food Waste Reduction Event flyer for to everyone to pass along to those they think would benefit from attending.
- Hanks will forward the link to the Council meeting look ahead document.
- Hanks will give a 10 by 20 and BPA meeting summary at the February meeting based on the final report to Council on February 19.
- Koopman will send the final version to Hanks after the meeting to be submitted by the next day deadline.

- Rosenthal volunteered to help Beigel-Coryell edit and add to the second approved article.
- Marketing discussion will be added to the February agenda.
- Rosenthal will write a hazardous waste article for approval at the February meeting (for the April publication).
- McGinnis and Sommer will write an article about electric yard/landscape equipment for approval at the February meeting (for the May publication).
- The water conservation from the Water Sub-committee and Julie Smitherman will be in the June publication.
- Hanks will send Buck a contact for Rogue Coworks.
- Green will send out the final activity summary and Ordinances to the Commissioners.
- Hanks will prepare background on the February agenda items, as needed.
- Rosenthal will prepare an informational recycling update for either the March, April, or May meeting.
- Moore is interested in writing an article about what happens to recycled materials as a possible future article.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Taylor
Executive Assistant