



**Minutes FOR A MEETING OF THE
ASHLAND FOREST LANDS COMMISSION
Tuesday, August 10th, 2010
5:30PM to 7:30PM
Siskiyou Room, Community Development Building
51 Winburn Way**

I. CALL TO ORDER: 5:30 PM

Jeff McFarland, Chris Chambers, Steve Johnson, Torsten Heycke, Dan Maymar, John Williams, Melody Noraas, Anne Crispino-Taylor, Chris Iverson, Marty Main

II. INTRODUCTIONS

A round of introductions were done.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: July 13th meeting

Change the word “fell” to “cut” on the second page, second sentence.

All other minutes were approved as submitted.

IV. PUBLIC FORUM

McFarland explained that there are many dead trees in Siskiyou Mt Park and some are being cut down, but there won't be enough in solid condition during work on the AFR project to make it merchantable to remove them. Some are being left for habitat. Maymar asked about the history of the Siskiyou Mt Park property. McFarland explained briefly about the history of the Siskiyou Mountain Park property.

V. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

None.

VI. BUSINESS

A. Watershed Trails Discussion

Chambers introduced the topic and the need for collaborative management of the trail system. Steve Johnson of the Forest Service recounted the history of trails in the watershed beginning in the 1980s and leading up until present time. The use and construction of trails has increased greatly. At one point some of the trails were covered only to be uncovered within a few weeks. At this point, the management of the trails has escaped monitoring due to lack of resources. Recently, mechanized equipment was dragged in behind locked gates to construct trail features. This was investigated by law enforcement in the Forest Service but no arrests were made although the case is open. By using some surplus funds this year, the Forest Service contracted an assessment of the trails system, but authorized and unauthorized trails were mapped except those under snow at the time (June). The Forest Service group who conducted the assessment suggested forming a coalition of interest groups to form a non-profit group to create a

proposal to the Forest Service. The current idea is to have AWTA to be the larger group that facilitates the multiple users together to create a trails plan proposal. The Forest Service is hiring a law enforcement officer to patrol the watershed and he could issue tickets for illegal trail use. The cost of developing the trails proposal could be up to 100,000 dollars, or more if a full EIS was required. Heycke asked what might be the outcome if folks still build trails after this process. Johnson hopes that the process will help regulate the use, in addition to the new law enforcement presence. Noraas suggested that some of the users might police each other rather than government. There are also private land issues where trails pass through, especially the Alice in Wonderland trail where events have been going through private land for years and may not be allowed one day. There are many events through the year and Ashland is gaining popularity in the nation as a destination for trail running and biking. Noraas asked who will conduct the environmental assessment on trails. Johnson explained that the NEPA process won't address the carrying capacity of use per se, but the process might result in a better distribution of impacts across the area. Heycke explained that AWTA is measuring trail use to establish a baseline. Johnson estimates at least 40 to 50 thousand visits a year in the watershed. McFarland talked about the shuttles to Mt Ashland and how it's changed the impacts to the trails. Prior to the recent explosion in use, there was a volunteer who had done a lot of work on the BTI trail (200 hours over 2 years) which was undone in a year of intense use. This has created frustrating situations for users and managers. Parks is building a hiker only trail as an alternate to the White Rabbit trail. The Jabberwocky trail cuts below the private property as an alternative to the Alice in Wonderland trail, but isn't constructed well. That trail doesn't cut down to the water treatment plant area, which has been declared off limits by city public works. Frustrated user groups such as downhill bikers have been creating trails to satisfy their needs. Johnson mentioned a trail that could possibly cut through the City's Winburn Parcel and then back up to the Loop Road on the Granite St side without going to the reservoir, which could divert some traffic off the White Rabbit side. Noraas mentioned that there are many more users of the watershed through the use of water than there are hikers or bikers. Johnson and McFarland said that one of the businesses who shuttles bikes to Mt Ashland has been really responsible about maintaining trails and helping out. Other companies have not been so good in the past. An educational component is important to any effort. Noraas asked if the budding trails group had a name and Johnson said no, but Heycke said they are interested in keeping the group under the umbrella of the AWTA. There had been a coalition of users in the past that McFarland had been involved in that was good, but doesn't exist. Chambers asked about next steps and Heycke said that they are gathering the interest groups together to form this coalition. Johnson said it's important to map what we have right now on the ground. AWTA is helping to GPS all the trails and make it accessible to the planning group, but possibly not the public.

B. AFR Project Update including Community Engagement

Chambers gave an update regarding the project work plus watershed camping issues. Community engagement will be amping up due to the hiring of Anne Crispino-Taylor as the AFR project assistant and Chambers having more time to dedicate to AFR since July 1. Units in the lower areas of the project are largely flagged out on the ground along with special concern areas such as riparian, landslide zones and wildlife areas. Marty Main has spent a lot of time in the areas doing recon on the units to delineate which areas will be have density management or not. The monitoring plots are almost completely installed and Main has been helping with inspections on the data quality. Chambers mentioned that an agreement will be in place soon to dedicate another 2 million dollars to the AFR project but will not likely specify where the money will be spent on the ground, just the activities that will take place. One concern, although not a legal one, is the treatment of the roadless area that's part of the AFR project. City officials and Forest Service staff toured the roadless with Senator Merkley's local field rep last week to talk about the roadless area work. There is no legal problem, but perception may be different on this issue given its national importance. Chambers was out last week looking at homeless camps and two illegal camps were removed from the Forest Service property in AFR unit 1. There are camps on the City side that were discovered and will be removed with signs going up tomorrow.

C. Public Outreach Plan—Watershed Map Project

Iverson met with Pokey and hopes to pass on the changes to the map for him to make by next meeting. Iverson reviewed the comments in the minutes from last meeting regarding the necessity to pay him another 500 dollars for completion of the map. Iverson motioned that the commission pay the artist Pokey another 500 dollars to complete the map. Noraas seconded the motion. Discussion was made and a Vote taken and the motion was passed with all ayes to pay an additional 500 dollars.

Iverson covered the proposed changes:

1. Change the orientation of the map to place Mt. Ashland at the top of the map and the city at the bottom.
2. Requested a change to include the confluence of Ashland and Bear Creeks, Bear Creek to the Rogue River, and both Rogue Valley and Ashland airports (already on there).
3. Watershed should take up 75% of the map and shade the ridges of the watershed to delineate the boundaries of the watershed. A light shading was suggested and preferred by the commission.
4. Use similar fonts, colors, sizes for similar items like roads, etc...
5. Add more trees to show the forested areas such as pines, oaks, etc...
6. Commission suggests that a draft showing the major items and orientation be submitted in pencil for the next meeting.
7. USFS office be shown on Washington.
8. Siskiyou Blvd should be labeled distinct from Main St.
9. TID canal visible at some points.

10. 2060 road be visible at some points along with Ashland Loop Rd, Tolman Creek Rd, Hitt Rd, and Morton St.in the City showing access to the watershed.
11. Town plaza as a triangle
12. Lithia park bandshell as an iconic location.
13. Community gardens should be smaller or removed.
14. Add Science Works
15. Add dog park
16. Modify pig bear and remove rattlesnake
17. Remove buildings in places like OSF (keep masks and label).
18. Remove fairy ponds and show the swimming reservoir.
19. Remove carrot and Callahan's lodge.
20. Remove painter and easel, replace with mountain biker and/or hiker
21. Remove ice cream cone and put kite flyer at a park like N. Mountain Park.
22. Use Spring colors like greens.

Commission needs to think about what to put on the back of the map. Iverson and Williams will work on a contract for Pokey and to be reviewed by the City Attorney. Iverson suggested bringing in the Public Arts Commission during the review of the first final draft (pencil sketch).

- D. Public Outreach Plan—Watershed Engagement Plan
- E. Commission 3-Year Goals progress

VII. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

VIII. REVIEW AND SET COMMISSION CALENDAR / NEXT MEETING

- A. Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting: September 14th, 2010

IX. ADJOURN: 7:30 PM

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