

DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, September 26, 2018

Siskiyou Room, 51 Winburn Way

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Roxane Beigel-Coryell at 6:00 p.m. Commissioners present were Roxane Beigel-Coryell, Risa Buck, Marni Koopman, James McGinnis, Bryan Sohl, David Sommer, and Jaime Rosenthal. Staff member Adam Hanks was also present. Councilor Stef Seffinger was absent.

2. Commission Vacancies Update

Beigel-Coryell informed the Commissioners that there are two vacant seats and for Commissioners to encourage community members to apply.

3. Consent Agenda

Beigel-Coryell asked for any corrections for the August 22, 2018 minutes. Buck stated that the Waste Prevention Sub-committee was scheduled before the next meeting. It was previously stated in the minutes that this scheduling would take place at the next meeting. Koopman moved to approve the minutes as written with Sommer and Rosenthal providing a second. The motion passes unanimously.

4. Announcements

4.1. Next Regular Meeting: October 24, 2018

Beigel-Coryell announced the next regularly scheduled meeting on Wednesday, October 24, 2018. Koopman stated that she will be absent for that meeting. Beigel-Coryell requested that other Commissioners let her know if they will be absent before the next meeting. Sohl asked if the November and December meeting dates have been confirmed. The November meeting will be held as regularly scheduled on November 28. The December meeting will be moved a week to December 19.

4.2. Upcoming Sub-committee meetings

Currently, there are no Sub-committee meetings scheduled.

4.3. Other Announcements from Commissioners

Sommer announced updates from the Ashland School District (ASD):

- ASD has purchased electric battery powered grounds equipment switching completely from gas powered ones.
- ASD is also talking to Ameresco about funding for renewable energy projects.

Rosenthal mentioned that Recology is starting to sell compostable leaf bags on Monday, October 22, 2018. The bags are normally priced \$14.50 for five, but will be on sale for a limited time for \$10 for five for Ashland residents because of a subsidy from the City. There is also designated leaf drop days on November 4 and December 9 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and to spread the word. Rosenthal also brought up that the Straws on Demand video showing the success of the program.

Koopman stated that Electric Vehicles for Ashland (EVA) is moving forward with negotiation with dealers and a large list of interested parties. Koopman was hopeful that some connection to the Chamber of Commerce could be made to announce the program to local businesses. Hanks stated that he will contact Dana Welsh to see if Koopman can participate in the Chamber's greeters or another way.

Beigel-Coryell announced that Southern Oregon University (SOU) started on September 24. The first of three new rooftop solar installations are being built on SOU's campus. This project will increase SOU's solar production by 50%. The official opening ceremony for the new Lithia Motors Pavilion has taken place and SOU are still waiting on its LEED certification which will take time.

5. Public Forum

Huelz Gutcheon/2253 Highway 99 – reiterated he talks always about energy and the possibility of solving problems with clean energy. Gutcheon mentioned an article written by Dave Kanner against the potential solar farm on the Imperatrice property. Gutcheon emphasized that the solar farm would provide renewable and clean energy versus the electricity bought from BPA that is not always clean. He also emphasized the importance of new constructions being wired for car charging capacity. This prevents the developers having the new constructions as well as parking areas from being able to house electric cars.

6. Reports/Presentations

6.1 Council Liaison Update

Seffinger was absent and not able to give a Council update. Beigel-Coryell and Buck had met previously with Seffinger to introduce her to the Conservation Commission goal setting and its future with the Climate Energy and Action Plan ad hoc committee. A more in depth discussion can be presented at a later meeting.

6.2 City Operations/Administration

Hanks updated the Commission on City Operations. The following were presented:

- City looking into selecting an Energy Services Company (ESCO) to help with potential future energy efficiency and renewable energy projects
- The EV charging incentive pilot program has been launched.
- A request for proposal for the 10 by 20 Imperatrice solar farm is being finalized for Council approval.
- The permitting process for solar trackers as requested from last meeting.

McGinnis asked if Julie Smitherman, the water conservation specialist, would be able to make it to a future meeting. Hanks stated that she would probably be able to attend in November since she is attending the CEAP meeting in October.

7. Old Business

7.1. Commission Monthly Column in Sneak Preview

The November article will be a progress report on the Straws on Demand pilot program. Beigel-Coryell asked for ideas for a title. Sommer offered the title to be “This is the Last Straw”. Beigel-Coryell asked for comments, changes, and feedback on the article. No members had changes. Sommer moved to approve the article and Koopman seconded. After no further discussion, a vote was taken and the motion passed with all in favor.

There was discussion about the December article being a recycled one from previous years unless a Commissioner would like to write one. McGinnis moved to adopt the “Most of Us” article for the December issue with Sohl as a second. Beigel-Coryell asked for discussion and Rosenthal stated she also like the waste zero one. A vote was taken with all members in favor. Hanks will review the “Most of Us” article for any dating, correct the “according EPA” typo, and add in climate change goals based on McGinnis’ suggestion.

Beigel-Coryell asked if anyone had ideas or an interest in January’s article or if they would like to discuss that at the October meeting. Hanks stated that the timing could be used for an EMPOWER winter heating change over article which he would write with Stu Green. McGinnis moves to have the January article be on EMPOWER winter heating change over with Buck providing a second. No discussion and the motion passes without opposition. Hanks will work with Green to write the EMPOWER winter heating change over article for January.

Hanks mentioned the memo the Conservation Commission had previously written Council about the 10 by 20 RFP. Beigel-Coryell asked the group if they would like to resend the same memo or send a different one to Council. Koopman moved that Hanks update the memo with a cover stating the decision made at this meeting. Buck seconded the motion. Sohl asked if any were opposed to the RFP being below the ditch. Koopman stated that the memo recommends the land is preserved for recreation and biodiversity and to talk about the entire parcel of land not just below the ditch. McGinnis emphasized the multiple uses for the land and the value there. Koopman stated that the Commission had previously discussed this in length for their first memo. Buck suggested to let Council decide and revisit closer to when the RFP is being posted. A vote was taken with all members in favor.

7.2. Sub-committee updates

The Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy Sub-committee has not met recently. The Water Sub-committee has also not met, but Buck has some ideas for the sub-committee in mind and will share with Koopman.

The Waste Prevention Sub-committee has met and Beigel-Coryell gave an update on the Straws on Demand pilot program which officially ended in August. A short survey to participating businesses was sent out. The response was overwhelming positive with some businesses wanting to continue the program on they’re own. Some complaints were that some employees said it was inconvenient when customers asked and some customers complained about the temperature change in the straw. This is leading the sub-committee to look into more programs for preventing single-use disposals. Koopman mentioned the next venture of expanding to lids. Beigel-Coryell stated that the pilot program would be called “Lose Your Lid” and is being considered.

8. New Business

8.1 DEQ Materials Management Grant Application

A grant application is being submitted to Department of Environmental Quality for materials management to start an eco to-go program available at five to six restaurants in town. The grant will help with the purchasing of the actual boxes as well as marketing and outreach funding. McGinnis moved to recommend City submittal of the application as written with Koopman providing a second. All votes were in favor and the motion passes.

8.2 CEAP 2.0 Committee Update

McGinnis mentioned that CEAP 2.0 is looking at the relationship of the Conservation Commission and a possible permanent CEAP commission. Hanks stated that CEAP 2.0 is working through its scope and charges to help with its recommendation with to Council. Hanks will send out the presentation that Stu Green had for the CEAP ad-hoc committee. CEAP 2.0 is still in discussion, but looking towards having a permanent CEAP Commission with a charge different from the Conservation Commission to prevent overlap.

8.3 Commission Powers and Duties Review

- Review Commission Rules
- Review Commission Goals

Beigel-Coryell presented the goals voted on last year. The priority areas also agreed upon were:

- Waste Reduction,
- Water Conservation,
- Energy Conservation,
- Renewable Energy,
- Air Quality, and,
- Education and Outreach.

Sohl asked if the priorities have been assessed over the last year. Beigel-Coryell said this could be presented at the next meeting. McGinnis proposed putting off revising the goals and priority areas until after CEAP 2.0's recommendation to Council. Some discussion surrounded water conservation on private properties, specifically a leak near Lincoln school caused by an adjacent apartment complex. Hanks stated Julie Smitherman could speak to what the City and the Commissions abilities to help prevent this when she attends the November meeting. Koopman will join Sohl for a water conservation sub-committee. Beigel-Coryell will print out packets for next time.

9. Wrap Up

9.1 Items to be added to next agenda

The Commissioners would like the following on the next meeting agenda:

- Follow up on CEAP 2 recommendation formal and slides
- Climate recovery ordinance
- Updates on Imperatrice Solar RFP

If any members would like to add anything to the next meeting's agenda, please email Beigel-Coryell with the items. The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m. by Chair Beigel-Coryell

Action Items:

- Beigel-Coryell requested that other Commissioners let her know if they will be absent before the next meeting.
- Hanks stated that he will contact Dana Welsh to see if Koopman can participate in the Chamber's greeters event or another way for outreach to local businesses.
- A more in depth discussion of Seffinger's introduction to the Conservation Commission and its future with the CEAP 2.0 ad hoc committee can be presented at a later meeting.
- Hanks will ask Julie Smitherman to attend November's meeting.
- Hanks will review the "Most of Us" article for any dating, correct the "according EPA" typo, and add in climate change goals based on McGinnis' suggestion.
- Hanks will work with Green to write the EMPOWER winter heating change over article for January.
- Hanks will update the memo with a cover stating the decision made at this meeting.
- Hanks will send out the presentation that Stu Green had for the CEAP ad-hoc committee.
- Beigel-Coryell will provide an assessment of last year's priorities for the October meeting.
- Beigel-Coryell will print out packets for next time.
- If any members would like to add anything to the next meeting's agenda, please email Beigel-Coryell with the items.