



**Minutes FOR A MEETING OF THE
ASHLAND FOREST LANDS COMMISSION**

Tuesday, December 10th 2013

5:30PM to 7:30PM

Fire Station #2 Conference Room

1860 Ashland Street

I. CALL TO ORDER: 5:30 PM

Present: Frank Betlejewski, Dan Maymar, Marty Main, Albert Pepe, Stefanie Seffinger, John Williams, Dave Brennan

II. INTRODUCTIONS

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: November 12th minutes

Seffinger motioned to accept as submitted, Brennan seconded. All ayes.

IV. PUBLIC FORUM

None

V. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

None

VI. BUSINESS

A. Commission Vacancy

There is a commission vacancy left by Jim Berge. Williams is discussing a potential candidate. Seffinger mentioned another candidate and Chambers had heard that there was an application already submitted. This turned out to be the same gentleman.

B. Trails/Recreation Update

Seffinger said that two trails easements are in place and one is still pending for the Alice in Wonderland trail reroute. Maymar asked about the potential liability of having an easement on private land. The group discussed various assumptions of liability related to recreation and trespass on private land.

There is likely involvement from legal representatives to figure this out. This would be a question for Jeff McFarland and/or the City Attorney.

Main and McFarland reinstalled water bars on the City portion of the Alice in Wonderland. They were made bike-friendly. Brennan hiked the trail from Crowson Reservoir up to Alice in Wonderland to see what the issue looks like on this “unofficial” trail.

Williams left a message for a gentleman who broke his leg on the BTI trail and wanted to be contacted by the Forest Lands Commission.

C. Ashland Forest Plan Revision

Williams showed the commission his Google Drive folder for sharing work on the forest plan update. There are versions of the original document and some of the drafts submitted to date already loaded. Frank asked that when anyone posts an update to their section via Google Drive, they send an email out to the group. Seffinger would like to present data around the issue of noxious

weeds and treatments. She also asked about how to present budget recommendations in the Plan. Frank said there is a section on noxious weeds in two appendices. There was a short discussion of how to identify specific needs related to the Plan update. Brennan asked if there was a way to automatically notify all users when there are changes. There may or may not be a way in the Google framework according to Williams. Frank brought up that we will need discussion on several issues related to noxious weeds and old growth definitions and spotted owl habitat used in the Winburn plan. Some of the direction may be at odds. Williams asked about decisions on policy and who would make them and how. The commission is responsible for recommendations to City Council, who makes the ultimate decision. Main commented on the difference between the City Winburn parcel forest structure compared to Forest Service forest just across the border, which may be due to homesteading of Winburn around 1900.

Frank referred to his list of GIS map needs for the veg section. Much of the data is already available, though needs normalizing to make it work together. Frank has spent time putting together reference documents, mainly from The Nature Conservancy. Main has some historical documents that he will get put together for this effort. Frank discussed the O and C revestment notes from roughly 1920 where each 40 acres was surveyed. There are notes for each of these areas measuring trees over 16 inches, common hardwoods and shrubs, whether the parcel had signs of a recent burn, human activity and notes. Source of this info is in the Ashland Forest Resiliency Community Alternative.

D. City Lands Work Update

Main is summarizing work done on the Winburn parcel and will report to the Commission at the next meeting. The discussion brought up the limits of data collection for the purpose of the Plan update. There will have to be a discussion to set this limit. Main said the mantra of the City has always been to get enough data to conduct responsible management and not for research purposes.

Main talked about the strategy for measuring prescribed burning outcomes on City land. The data collection and assessment is on the list of things to do in the near future.

E. AFR Project Update

Chambers talked about the recent AFR burning of over 250 acres in two days last week. The smoke was very visible one day but not the other, but did not get into the valley either day. About 17% of the work was completed, leaving 6-7 burn days to complete what's needed before next fire season.

Chambers also talked about AFR funding. The 6.5 million dollars in federal stimulus dollars will be spent by the end of the month. The Partners have signed another agreement bringing in \$150,000 in Forest Service money, in addition to \$175,000 contributed by the City of Ashland in each of the current and next year. The partnership also applied for a program through the U.S. Forest Service Chief's Office for \$1 million dollars for AFR and \$1 million dollars for non-federal lands through the Natural Resources Conservation

Service (NRCS). This is pending notification in December sometime. Chambers also described an Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board grant submitted for \$40,000 dollars to support AFR partner involvement. That grant will be announced in December as well.

F. Fire Adapted Communities

Chambers updated the group on the City's move into the Fire Adapted Communities (FAC) program. FAC is part of the National Wildland Fire Cohesive Management Strategy, a national effort being implemented at many levels and prioritizing three major elements including Fire Adapted Communities, Restore and Maintain Resilient Landscapes, and Response to Wildfire. The City is committed to the Fire Adapted Communities approach and the Firewise Commission is morphing to a steering body for this effort. It will involve updating the CWPP document which guides City wildfire mitigation programs and is currently out of date. The effort will actually encompass some of the Ashland Forest Plan update and the AFR project, but any overlap via the CWPP will be a reference to those other documents as they're written or updated.

VII. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

VIII. REVIEW AND SET COMMISSION CALENDAR / NEXT MEETING AGENDA

A. Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting, January 14th, 2013

IX. ADJOURN: 7:30 PM

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Public Works Office at 488-5587 (TTY phone number 1 800 735 2900). Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title I).