



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

Tuesday, November 12th 2013

5:30PM to 7:30PM

**Fire Station #2 Conference Room
1860 Ashland Street**

I. CALL TO ORDER: 5:30 PM

Frank Betlejewski, John Williams, Chris Chambers, John Karns, Stefanie Seffinger, Dennis Slattery, Albert Pepe, Dave Brennan, Jeff McFarland, Jason Minica

II. INTRODUCTIONS

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: October 8th minutes

Add Frank Betlejewski and John Karns to the list of attendees. Change VI. Business item A last sentence to “above” instead of “about the junction...”

Dave Brennan moved to approve, Frank seconded with all ayes.

IV. PUBLIC FORUM

V. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

VI. BUSINESS

A. Trails/Recreation Update

No updates on the trail easements. Karns said the FS is going to approve trails by end of December. Chambers commented on a rescue of a biker on the BTI trail near the bottom and encouraging the patient to talk with Ashland Mountain Adventures about rerouting that section. McFarland came in and the group asked him about the trail easements on the Alice in Wonderland trail. One owner, Mr. Palen, has not been in contact recently about the easement. McFarland is working with the AWTA group to get Palen’s approval. One owner has already signed the easement forms, another is ready to, and Palen is the last. McFarland sketched a map of the trail layout for the group. Brennan commented on the size of the trail sign on Bandersnatch at the picnic table. McFarland said that the sign and table are an experiment to see if there are impacts. AWTA put the table in.

B. Ashland Forest Plan Revision

Frank put together pieces of several existing documents and his own work to get out a draft of the vegetation section. Frank commented on some of the items in the 1992 plan that didn’t take place and should be eliminated or updated. There will be an increasing need for GIS products as well, either from in-house or external sources. Frank would like to see the Social section be first. Williams will create a Google Drive folder for this project so people can access the work on line. Williams will email a link by Thursday for

everyone to use. Williams is getting close to a draft version of the aquatic section. Group access to the document will help with the formatting. Seffinger would like to call out certain facts and figures in the text by bringing them out into their own sidebars or windows. There has been a fish trapping effort on Ashland Creek over the past couple years where ODFW has found trout, salmon, and other species like a non-native crayfish. Group discussed the database and list of common attributes, or current condition. The common attributes will tie together the Parks and City lands. Frank asked Chambers what format we want to use for the data, and he wants to use the standard nomenclature for species based on the scientific names in order to connect the City and USFS lands together for cross boundary analysis purposes. A guide to the abbreviations/codes will need to accompany the plan. Seffinger asked about recommendations for future work and follow up. Frank suggested bringing together recommendations from the various documents. There may be suggestions in the updated plan that are changes from prior policy. Herbicides have gone through this in the Parks system in recent years where policy has changed and not allowed certain uses of chemicals for control of invasive species such as Japanese knotweed. Leafy spurge is another one that is now on Parks land and very difficult to remove, especially without herbicide use.

C. City Lands Work Update

Chambers described the recent work on the Winburn property. Marty's crew has piled all the activity fuels left from the helicopter thinning project. In addition, they are thinning non-commercial trees in the same area where there are already piles in order to take advantage of the burning to come. They'll also rake around some of the legacy trees to prevent damage during future burn operations.

The next project is to prioritize underburn units on the City ownership and possibly Parks as well. The priorities will then be used to create a request for proposal in order to contract for burning on City land this spring. There is looking like an opportunity to burn under a grant from The Nature Conservancy in 2014 across City, USFS, and possibly private land.

D. AFR Project Update

Work began this past week on AFR with Lomakatsi's crew thinning a unit above Weasel Creek that connects to the City Winburn parcel on the western edge. The AFR unit (43) is within two spotted owl nesting sites and is therefore solely non-commercial. It's a strategic ridge for fire suppression and also has a high concentration of older trees, many of which are in poor shape or already dead, and especially Douglas-fir with dwarfmistletoe. The next unit will be 36/37, which is located downhill from Horn Gap on the west side of the watershed. This is another strategic area for suppression. That unit has been contracted by the City as part of the 175,000 dollars the City contributed to AFR work this year.

There are also over 1400 acres of piles to burn and we are looking to burn on any appropriate day.

E. Fire Adapted Communities

The Firewise Commission is meeting next week to redefine their charter and name to reflect their developing role as the lead in developing a revised CWPP for Ashland.

F. Watershed Outreach Plan Discussion

a. Brochure Tasks

This item was removed at the last meeting until the Forest Plan update is completed.

VII. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

McFarland asked about maintenance of treatments and the analysis showing outcomes of not doing anything versus re-treating the landscape over time. Chambers explained that the GEOS institute is funding a study of the Ashland watershed from this perspective and has been done in Colorado on watersheds. It can show the benefit of doing active stewardship versus a “business as usual” approach to watershed management. This can be useful at the large, watershed scale, but doesn’t help a land manager decide what should happen at the site level for maintenance cycles. The historic fire return interval can be useful, but we’ve seen stands with a heavy madrone component need work every 5 years. So there has to be recognition that we’ll lose fire safety goals in some settings if we don’t retreat vegetation more frequently than the historic fire return interval. Frank suggested a maintenance table by Plant Association Group. Chambers agreed and added that each PAG can be broken down based on the stand disturbance history.

VIII. REVIEW AND SET COMMISSION CALENDAR / NEXT MEETING AGENDA

A. Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting, December 10th, 2013

IX. ADJOURN: 7:29 PM

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