



**Minutes FOR A MEETING OF THE
ASHLAND FOREST LANDS COMMISSION
Tuesday, October 11th, 2011
5:30PM to 7:30PM
Siskiyou Room, Community Development Building
51 Winburn Way**

I. CALL TO ORDER: 5:30 PM

Dan Maymar, Chris Chambers, Stefanie Seffinger, Albert Pepe, John Williams, Gary Pool, Marty Main, Pieter Smeenk, Chris Iverson (late).

II. INTRODUCTIONS

New Commissioner Jim Berge is out of town on a fire assignment.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: September 13th meeting. Seffinger motioned to accept as submitted and Williams seconded.

IV. PUBLIC FORUM

None

V. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

None

VI. BUSINESS

A. Watershed Map Distribution

Pool dropped off maps at Science Works. Maymar will get to the running store downtown. Williams talked with Juli DiChiro about distributing the maps to schools and she was excited about providing education along with the maps targeted to certain grades. The group talked about whether or not it would be a good idea to give tours of the water treatment plant and dam to school groups. There are pros and cons, but the experience of seeing their local water treatment plant and watershed could be valuable as long as kids know what the rules are and understand why it's off limits except for a special tour. Williams will look into getting the classes interested and signed up as long as Public Works is on board. Smeenk hasn't seen vandalism to any extent. Williams said you could record from a camera to a DVR and only have to look at it if something happened. Chambers said that the maps have been dropped off at City government outlets and he has permission from the Chamber of Commerce to put them out.

B. Outreach Plan Review and Discussion

Tabled due to Chris Iverson not being present.

C. Trails/Recreation Policy Subcommittee

Chambers commented on the ongoing process to sanction City trails and the complicated issues with the BTO, BTI alternative, Jabberwocky, and

Waterline trails. AWTAs has submitted an initial proposal to sanction the BTO and BTI alternate trails. There were some elements lacking or unclear and they will have to clarify some points before the sub-committee reviews the applications. Pool commented that there was a lot of talk about equestrian use at the last trails meeting.

Smeenck asked if trails on City property would need to be officially authorized through easements or not. Chambers didn't know for sure, but would pass that on. Smeenck asked if the City had any updated maps showing landslide areas in the trails area. Chambers said that the field reports done by Bill Hicks are only on paper. Smeenck is going to an engineer's meeting soon and a presentation on landslides done by the State of Oregon regarding the use of Lidar technology to map landslides. Pool asked about landslides and Smeenck said they are studying earthquake effects on the water treatment plant and dam this year. There are concerns about the Cascadia subduction earthquake that might last 3-4 minutes. Landslides are still the biggest concern. Main commented on the likelihood of trails and old roads to flow water during big storm events when the lion's share of sediment flow happens. Pool had done some work with ski areas in Colorado to mitigate water flow and wondered if there was anything that could be done to minimize the impacts. Main said they'd used water bars to divert flow off the trails or roads, but they are difficult to maintain consistently for that one big storm in the winter or even summer thunderstorms. Accumulating water has a lot of force and our soil type is very sensitive to water flow and erosion. Pool asked about efforts after 1997 flood to repair roads or trails. Main remembered work to repair areas that had landslides and also work to install rolling dips in the 2060 road on the west side of the watershed. Smeenck said that the slide that affected the treatment plant was from the 2060 road above the plant so that was important work completed. Main said that we need more of that type of preparation work.

D. AFR Project Update including Community Engagement

Main commented on the marking and eventual thinning operations. There is a small amount of ground based thinning to be completed next spring and then followed by a larger project for helicopter based thinning. The City will be working on the contracting portion of the helicopter work. Main said the partners have been taking a look at the progress that's been made and the process that's been used thus far amongst the partners. If there's value in the trees to be thinned then it will be taken to the mill and the money will be put back into the project to accomplish more work. ARRA money will be used to fill the deficit between work costs and the value of logs. There will be an ongoing need to do maintenance work including prescribed burning. Some of the money that comes back to the project will be used for prescribed underburning in the future. Maymar was thinking about the small size of the trees to be thinned and the need to recognize some economic reality in the project. Main said that although the project has overarching ecological goals, there was some effort not to mark trees that were uneconomical. In certain situations it was worth marking a tree or several where there were ecological situations that warranted it, such as protecting rare black oaks. Main stressed the need to

realize the operational reality involved as well as the other influences. Williams brought up that individual's decisions are a factor as well. Main said that there were several individuals from the City and Lomakatsi that helped keep the crew on track as they were marking across the slope. Mistakes could be found at a small scale, but the overall diversity of the individual is important across the landscape. Williams asked about rare trees. Main said sugar pine is highly prized as are incense cedar and black oak. Large trees are always a priority and sometimes shrubs are locally rare as well. There are some notable large trees in the watershed. There are many judgment calls to be made out there by informed workers. Seffinger said that students would benefit from the discussions we have about trees and the watershed. Fire season is over and work will start soon before the main snows come. Burning will be part of that this fall, winter, and spring. Maymar experienced marking on a State forest where there were many small trees marked for cutting and very few, if any, large trees. Main said that data has been collected from the marking that shows a similar curve of many small trees. He also said that the data showed only 1/3 to 1/2 of one tree over 24 inches was marked and the maximum allowed was 2 trees per acre of that size, so that was on the low side which was good to see. The Forest Service has been trapping Pacific fishers in the watershed lately and keeps getting more trapped and collared. Williams ran into a bear along the Alice in Wonderland trail recently—with no problem.

Chambers talked about community engagement efforts including the signs that will be installed at four locations in the watershed. The signs will be permanent but will have the ability to change out the signs for low costs when needed. There is a notice coming out in the City Source newsletter regarding controlled burns this fall. Seffinger asked about poison oak and Chambers talked about the difficulty in getting kids into low elevation forests close to town where poison oak is common. Pepe asked about opportunities to use small diameter trees that result from thinning. Main answered that there will be material available, but the economics of getting it out and to a place where it can be used is challenging. The project also has to meet the Forest Service's accountability requirements, which can be difficult. There is a pile of firewood that will be offered for public use in the next year sometime through permits. Pepe would like to see material offered in some way for the public. Main has done similar work on his own private property despite the financial drawbacks. Williams commented on the public relations benefits of investments in that sort of project, similar to the effort to using certified sustainable wood. Local wood would be appreciated in Ashland. Main stressed that the nature of the City's ownership is difficult to manage for a consistent supply of sustainable wood. Burls were mentioned as a product, but with too much impact to the soil resources.

- E. Ashland Water Advisory Committee Update
No update this month.

Map distribution was revisited with Iverson present. Most of the map distribution points were already addressed. Iverson would like to advertise where the maps are available on the site with the map files.

Chambers will post the map and map back side as a single PDF file with the map and the children's map and distribution points.

Adjourned at 7:30 pm.

F. Commission 3-Year Goals progress

VII. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

VIII. REVIEW AND SET COMMISSION CALENDAR / NEXT MEETING

A. Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting: November 8th, 2011

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).