



**Minutes FOR A MEETING OF THE
ASHLAND FOREST LANDS COMMISSION
Tuesday, September 13th, 2011
5:30PM to 7:30PM
Siskiyou Room, Community Development Building
51 Winburn Way**

I. CALL TO ORDER: 5:30 PM

II. INTRODUCTIONS Chris Iverson, John Williams, Gary Pool, Albert Pepe, Stefanie Seffinger, John Karns, Chris Chambers

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: August 8th meeting. Motion to accept minutes as submitted made by Williams, seconded by Pepe. All ayes.

IV. PUBLIC FORUM

V. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Chambers asked that an item be added called “Nature Conservancy Grant Opportunity”. The item was placed under “Business” as item F.

VI. BUSINESS

A. Watershed Map Distribution

None had been distributed as of yet. Iverson ran down the list of places where the maps were agreed to go last time. Karns and Chambers will hit all the City offices. Chambers will get the Forest Service and Northwest Nature Shop. Other designated drop points that were identified in the last meeting. The discussion finished with the group agreeing to distribute the maps to all points except the schools, which will need a plan for working them into the curriculum or on special days. Karns brought up a competition for coloring the maps in the schools with the prize a ride to school in a fire engine. This has been done with Fire Safety month in Ashland 4th graders. Williams and Chambers will talk more about the schools and the group will talk more about the schools next meeting. Karns will take maps to Ashland Mountain Adventures. Iverson will email out the list of locations. Iverson brought up that the Watershed Map isn’t available on the City’s website. Chambers will post the map and send out the link to the commission. Iverson asked about the poster that was submitted to Council. It’s in Chief Karns’s office at the moment, but could be moved to a better spot. Williams will look further into a Café Press site for printing watershed posters.

B. Trails/Recreation Policy Subcommittee

Karns met with Rob Cain to talk about the trails planning and new trail proposals. The group meeting was postponed this past month. Karns would like Cain and the AWTA to go through the process to gain acceptance of the proposed BTI

pedestrian trail, in part to test the process for getting the trails approved. Karns also met with the US Forest Service to coordinate between the City's efforts and the Forest Service trails work. Williams asked about the private properties along the Alice In Wonderland trail and Karns answered that he was waiting on the plan to be in place. There is no formal easement for that trail across private lands and it could be shut down without agreements in place. Seffinger asked about the ski area expansion and possible trails on the ski area. Chambers said that there has never been bike access on the ski slopes although the trails start there and stay on the road below the lodge, or even on the road to the top of the mountain. The time warp trail goes from the Rabbit Ears area west of the summit down to the Loop Road. Time Warp was covered up many years ago by the Forest Service and it was quickly uncovered by recreationalists. Williams mentioned there are signs on the mountain to keep people off the slopes. That is popular in Colorado with bikes going on the chair lifts up the hill.

C. AFR Project Update including Community Engagement

Chambers said that the tree marking in AFR blocks 1 and 2 (Granite St to Horn Gap) is completed and being cruised and appraised by the Forest Service. Much of that area is not marked or will be marked for various reasons including habitat. Pool asked why the trees are painted blue. Chambers explained that the AFR partner crew used white paint to mark the appropriate trees but federal employees have to mark the trees with tracer paint in order to be able to track the marked trees due to accountability rules for federal lands. The average tree marked is 13 inches in diameter and there is a more formal appraisal about to be completed that will give solid numbers on the marking work just completed. Chambers asked if the commission got the email with the newly released AFR video. The commission did see the video and like the production done by Darren Campbell. The video is a good and different way of getting information out other than the website and press releases. Pool asked if there is a plan for getting information out to the public and Chambers answered that there is an engagement and outreach plan on the AFR website that's been updated several times since it was created 2 years ago. There are 7-8 goals identified and associated action items that are being worked on. The recent video was part of this. There is overlap between the Forest Lands Commission's outreach plans and the AFR plan. Education is part of that plan as well and some work has been done with the School District. A tour was conducted of the tree marking that is part of the outreach plan. Albert Pepe came and he commented that it was great to be out there and seeing the issues on the ground. Iverson commented that the FLC hasn't been to the Winburn parcel in a couple years. The last trip was just before Mayor Stromberg was elected. The best way to get information about tours is to be on the AFR mailing list. There aren't any tours scheduled for this fall for AFR. Pepe asked when the AFR thinning will happen. Chambers said once road maintenance is completed then the work can move ahead, likely next spring/summer for the 100 acres or so of ground based thinning and then the fall for helicopter thinning. Iverson asked about the www.ashlandwatershed.org site and how to access the new Watershed Map on the web. Chambers will put up a link to the map on the Forest Lands Commission site. Iverson then asked about the poster size map that was presented to the

Council. Karns has the map in his office and will use it for the new Station 2 unless an effort to get it framed and mounted in the Council Chambers is undertaken.

D. Ashland Water Advisory Committee Update

The options are still on the table and the committee may need to vote soon on the issue. There is some more data being gathered to inform the decision. Public Works is trying to summarize the proposals for a better comparison. Seffinger asked about the longer term impacts. Williams is worried that even with TAP, we might have to replace our water treatment plant down the line anyway. There are many things to balance. Pepe asked about the life of the current plant. Williams said that Smeenk has indicated that the plant will be good for 50 years as long as upgrades are made over time. The plant is still in a hazardous location and putting funds into it over time will not change that. There was a brief discussion about a recent power outage and that Karns had sent out a message on the new City emergency alert system. Everyone was encouraged to sign up for the new system by going to the City's website, especially if you only have a cell phone. You can get emails and text messages as well. Williams asked what Karns thought of the proposals. Karns commented that the TAP option is the only way to have true water supply redundancy for fire supply. Williams said that there are many scenarios where the plant could be rendered useless including fires, earthquakes, rock slides and with global warming predictions for this area we are faced with more rain in the winter and possibly more fires in the summer. Pepe asked about rain water harvesting and comments were made to the effect that the desire is there, but the technology and cost are still catching up especially in the depressed economy.

E. Nature Conservancy Grant Opportunity on City Lands

Chambers explained that the Nature Conservancy (TNC) was offered federal funds to expand forest restoration programs at nine sites across the country. 1.5 million dollars was allocated to TNC to expand restoration projects from existing federal projects to adjacent non-federal lands. This recent opportunity was presented to the City to expand the work of the AFR project to City and private lands around the AFR project. The City is prime to take advantage of this given the history of work on City lands and the need to undertake thinning on the Winburn parcel with a plan on the shelf. There was already a movement to mark trees at Winburn in order for the City to take advantage of the adjacent work on the AFR project when there are helicopters flying in the area already. This grant may provide the opportunity for the City to get this project done with 25% match from the City, which can likely include the value of the trees thinning and sold as a by-product of restoration. There are also 100 acres of prescribed burning planned on the lower City lands that could be largely paid for by this grant program. There will be a quick turn around on the grant application that includes some work on private landowners and City Parks lands. The application was large in scope and will likely be scaled back based on the actual award.

F. Commission 3-Year Goals progress

Iverson brought a copy of the community outreach plan that the commission worked on more than 2 years ago. **Chambers will dig out the latest version and discussion of the goals for next meeting.**

The first goal was to identify the appropriate information and level of information for the community. Second goal was to design a handout or brochure about the Ashland Forest Plan and the Forest Lands Commission to explain the watershed and forest management to the community. Pool asked what parts of that aren't covered by what was written on the back of the current color map. Iverson thought that the handout was a little more serious and targeted to a different audience than the map. Seffinger asked about possible interaction with the Water Advisory Committee effort. Iverson said that the brochure could bring this in. Seffinger had to leave the meeting so the quorum was lost and the meeting was adjourned. Iverson motioned to adjourn, Pepe seconded at 7:05 PM.

VII. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

VIII. REVIEW AND SET COMMISSION CALENDAR / NEXT MEETING

A. Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting: October 11th, 2011

IX. ADJOURN: 7:30 PM

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