

Minutes of the
PARKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
Thursday, October 19, 2023
Council Chambers

Members: Betty Gearen, Stacy Benefield, Anita Dueber, Les Sinclair, and Tom Landrum in person.

Absent:

Staff: Assistant Public Works Director Trevor Mount, Parks Division Utility Workers Kirk Anderson and AJ Welliver, and Public Works Administrative Assistant Tessa Schutt.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Benefield called the meeting to order at 8:59 a.m.

Benefield welcomed Tom Landrum to the Committee.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Committee considered the Minutes of September 21, 2023.

Motion: Dueber moved to approve the meeting minutes of September 21, 2023; Sinclair seconded the motion.

Vote: Dueber, Sinclair, Gearen, Landrum, and Benefield voted: AYE. The vote was 5:0 in favor and the motion carried. The minutes were approved.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Lynn Sinclair, 179 E Coolidge: Sinclair requested the Committee set the date for the 12 Days of Earth Day at their December 2023 meeting.

Will Rasmussen, on behalf of Miller Nash: Rasmussen explained his history of work with Haystack LLC., and said he had heard Committee members discussing a lack of Heritage Tree Program applications at an earlier meeting. Rasmussen referred to an application proposed about roughly 55 trees at Inspiration Point. He said he would like to resubmit the application and explained that the application was well-documented, and the location was historic because of Oswald West's contribution to public land along the coast. Rasmussen said that La Bonte and Mount had explained that the Committee desired to focus on a single tree to begin. He urged the body to consider the application for the following year.

4. DISCUSSION AND INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Monthly State of the Parks Report

Welliver said he installed playground pieces around town and repainted rusty spots on the Main City Park playground. He explained that new trees had arrived, and three shore pines would be planted in Whale Park after the nasturtiums died. Welliver said he planted lemon cypress and yews in front of the recycling center.

Anderson informed the body that the men's soccer league had wrapped up for the season. He said the department should plan to cut power to the bandstand for the winter. Anderson explained that he would look into heavy duty pickleball nets, as the one currently in place are wearing out. He spent a little time trying to patch the pickleball nets, so pickleball use was "extensive," likely more than tennis. Thinks we should probably purchase new ones again and deploy them after the winter. Will research heavy duty ones. The weather and two years of heavy use have affected them.

B. North Coast Watershed Association

Graham Klag and Kelli Daffron of the North Coast Watershed Association introduced themselves. Klag explained that he wanted to provide an update about the beaver restoration grant application they'd submitted to OWEB. Klag said they were not awarded the grant, but were still committed to meeting Goal 13 of the ECFR Stewardship Plan to increase beaver habitat. Klag shared an interactive map onscreen to explain areas of beaver dam building capacity and explained how NCWA hoped to improve these areas through native planting and invasive species treatment.

Mount asked Klag to show the location of blackberry removal sites that the Committee could commit to addressing during their monthly cleanups. Klag and Daffron explained their collaboration with a graphic design company that would work with NCWA and OWEB to create informational signage for public awareness. They also discussed a partnership with Public Coast, who they said benefits directly from the watershed's supply.

Klag and Daffron explained that they would like to begin the project in the coming spring. Mount suggested NCWA table at the Earth Day Street Fair to get more volunteers.

Gearen asked for suggestions of native plants to shade out blackberries in the ECFR. Mount requested photos of the affected areas to match up with the interactive NCWA map. Anderson said that he doesn't think more planting will fix it, but continual maintenance will be the best fix.

Sinclair clarified the removal methods the NCWA will use, which they confirmed would be non-invasive.

Daffron said she'll be in touch with Mount to request a letter of support from the City and the Committee, ideally before October 30th.

C. ROW Tree Removals

Benefield asked if there were any questions about the emergency application included in the packet. Mount explained that the tree was damaged in a windstorm.

D. Tree Focus Group

Benefield said the focus group has hoped to be prepared by the meeting, but needed more time. She said the item would be on the agenda when they're ready. The associated Council meeting would be cancelled, she explained.

Dueber asked which direction the group was moving. Sinclair responded that they were hoping to make the removal application process more visible and publicly-involved by identifying the difference between "significant" trees and others, and providing enhanced protection. Sinclair said they were drafting language to encourage preservation. Dueber asked about the potential of increasing the removal application permit as motivation for creative design.

Anderson responded that the permit fee was to cover administrative costs rather than a penalty. Sinclair said the focus group considered increased penalties for removal without a permit, but had not yet run this by staff.

Anderson: isn't the permit fee to cover administrative costs? Not as a penalty? Sinclair: considered enhanced penalties for a removal without a permit. Haven't run it by the staff to see how their aspirations fit with the existing process. Sinclair: would be proactive to have more eyes on application process than there are currently.

E. Community Grants

Benefield: talked about streamlining the process a little bit, shortening it instead of current timeframe. Talk more about this next month? Will change with Schutt moving on, too. Keep on the agenda.

F. Heritage Trees Program

Benefield: started the application, requested that everyone email her their thoughts. They'll plan to vote on it at December meeting. Will talk about Rasmussen's thoughts after that. Gearen: can we put it forward as a suggestion for the future?

G. Monthly Reserve Cleanup

Meeting at parking lot at Little Pompey. Walking trail and addressing mostly blackberries, will leave in the parking lot. 10-12 this Saturday the 21st.

5. GOOD OF THE ORDER

Mount: ODFW contacted him and will start annual fish survey in ECFR, possibly today. Will do a site visit once a week until 31 January. Looking for coho and hopefully chinook. Some of you may have seen a 5th wheel in the ECFR, no one is camping there, someone got in trouble, and it got stuck.

Benefield: presented Memorial Policy to Council, they were pleased and made a small clarifying change to the language. Kirk died in his seat.

Benefield: received email that Schutt is moving on from Cannon Beach. Brought treats for the end.

6. ADJOURN IN FIELD

Benefield adjourned the meeting at 9:53 a.m.

Tessa Schutt, Public Works Administrative Assistant