

**CITY OF CORVALLIS
MINUTES OF THE
CIVIC BEAUTIFICATION AND URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION
APRIL 12, 2012**

Attendance

Angelica Rehkugler- Chair
Tim Brewer, Vice Chair
Tony Livermore
Becki Goslow
Ross Parkerson
Larry Passmore
Kent Daniels
Dan Bregar
Joel Hirsch, Council Liaison

Staff

Karen Emery, Director
Becky Merja, Urban Forester
John Hinkle, Park Operations Specialist
Mark Lindgren, Recorder

Visitors

Erik Burke
Josh Hooley
Randy Miller
Deb Curtis

Absent/Excused

Joe Majeski, OSU Liaison

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Agenda Item	Information Only	Held for Further Review	Recommendations
II. Review of Minutes	X		
III. Visitor Propositions- Deb Curtis, Recreation Coordinator	X		
IV. Staff Reports- if questions			Motion passed to change regular meeting times to 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. on the second Thursdays of the month.
V. City Council/ OSU Liaison Reports	X		
VI. Report on Subcommittees	X		
VII. Break into Subcommittees	X		
VIII. Adjournment	X		The next CBUF meeting will be at 8:30 a.m. May 10, 2012, at the Parks and Recreation Conference Room.

CONTENT OF DISCUSSION

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Rehkugler called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.
- II. REVIEW OF MINUTES.** Ross Parkerson moved and Kent Daniels seconded to approve March 8, 2012 minutes as presented; motion passed.
- III. VISITORS' PROPOSITIONS.**
Recreation Coordinator Deb Curtis said last fall's garden tour will be repeated on May 19 and September 15. She highlighted posters and asked members distribute them. The May 19 tour will be in South Corvallis; many have additions such as rainwater catches, chicken coops, permeable hardscape, water features, etc. Tickets are \$12 ahead of time and \$15 on the day. There are seven gardens on the tour; she

is asking a community garden to participate as well. It is a Parks and Rec fundraiser. She said 180 people attended last year, netting \$1,800. She plans to include Japanese garden in the Soap Creek area in fall; she solicited suggestions for gardens. Daniels suggested including the recently upgraded Peavy Arboretum as well.

Rehkugler said she liked the idea of themes. Curtis related that last fall's gardens bought locally and hired local workers, creating a local economic stimulus.

Josh Hooley, a Pacific Power certified forester, introduced Randy Miller, Director of Vegetation Management. He said normal line maintenance activities are underway, especially in the Kings Boulevard, Circle Boulevard, and Grant Street areas. Some of the work is around wires in backyards. The intent is to cover all circuits in the Corvallis district, finishing by July or August. He said inspectors are certified arborists ("forest techs"), who give property owners 48-hour notice as they perform inspections on circuits, knocking on doors and leaving notice hangers if no one is at home; and also leaving survey cards on doors for feedback afterwards. Miller emphasized that forest techs knock on doors to try to address residents' concerns. He noted the State has clearance requirements for wires; the company must be responsible for trees being clear from wires, protecting the public from possible electrical contact. The company seeks to find a balance between tree health and providing proper service.

Miller noted that sometimes the company can accommodate concerns, but sometimes it can't, and in those cases, it does its best to explain. Merja related that CBUF has had a longstanding relationship with PacifiCorp and it has improved its communications with customers. She noted that it has a program for tree removal and replacement, to put appropriate trees under power lines, which is the best ultimate solution. Miller agreed, saying it's not fair to trap a tall-growing tree under a power line.

Miller stated they are just starting to work on incorporating professional tree climbing techniques, and moving away from spur climbing. He agreed that professionals all over the state already use proper climbing techniques, and don't use spikes. He emphasized that maintaining a relationship with CBUF was very important and would try to address its concerns. Hooley said his phone number was 541-223-4356; his email is josh.hooley@pacificorp.com. He said they grind up brush with chippers and are always looking for locations to deposit them.

V. FRIENDS OF TREES-ERIK BURKE.

Erik Burke stated that the best examples of municipal arboriculture were Vancouver and Eugene; Portland is a mixed bag. Having a commission, a well produced urban forestry study and a canopy study (like Corvallis has) are among the best practices. He said Eugene was working to get an urban forestry management plan and related the City of Eugene was having serious funding issues.

Another issue in Eugene was planting trees when there wasn't enough money to maintain them; there is a huge maintenance backlog. The homeowner is considered responsible for all care and pruning of trees; that is fairly common in code nationwide. However, the City of Eugene perceives itself to be responsible for all pruning of trees in the public right-of-way, but can only afford to do hazard pruning. He said the right-of-way comprises about 15% of the city. The Eugene population is 180,000, with a metro area of 350,000. He praised the Corvallis Urban Forest Management Plan, with its goals and action items; he said relatively few cities were doing that.

He stated that Friends of Trees (FOT) is an organization whose mission is to build community through planting and caring for trees; it was established 25 years ago. The Eugene FOT chapter is a year old, following several years of preparation work. For fourteen years before that, many of the principals were involved in the Eugene Tree Foundation (ETF), founded in 1997, focusing on education, advocacy and

tree planting. They got tree codes passed, but these were challenged in LUBA and were lost in court. Portland has one of few new tree codes passed in the US; they should go into effect this year.

Burke summarized that FOT has three programs. The **Green Space Initiative** (GSI) is the tree-planting program for natural areas, parks, roadways, industrial ways, etc. It is currently planting thousands of trees along the multi-use path that parallels I-205 in Portland, funded by a four-year Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District and ODOT. Their GSI project in Eugene is planting a half-mile buffer between a poor neighborhood and a rail yard; Union Pacific indefinitely leased a ten-yard wide swath for the trees.

The **Stewardship Program** includes a volunteer pruning program and volunteer work parties for plant removal, watering, weeding, mulching, etc.

He related that the Eugene FOT is doing its first **volunteer tree inventory** by neighborhoods, copying the recent Portland Parks and Recreation program. Portland's first year's inventory was in the Concordia neighborhood, where there were many active volunteers. Last year's inventory covered six neighborhoods. He related he attended the Tree Inventory Summit last fall, where FOT presented their data. He said 150 volunteers participated (25 per neighborhood) in collecting information on right-of-way trees in the neighborhood. City and temp workers collated the data. The Tree Stewards created a plan for their own neighborhoods. They found no statistically significant between tree species under power lines and not under power lines.

He said it was exciting to involve neighbors in understanding and managing the urban forest in their area as part of the Stewardship Plan. They'll update the City of Eugene's tree inventory by looking at gaps in it, like sidewalk and utility conflicts and hazard trees. The Eugene FOT will try to store information on hazard trees to reduce possible liability to the city. One of the big issues with tree removal in Eugene is sidewalk conflicts; they are looking for opportunities to try out solutions such as rubber sidewalks and other techniques to avoid removing trees.

Emery asked about the group's relationship with the City of Eugene; Burke replied that the Eugene Tree Foundation did all of the planting and founded the Eugene NeighborWoods program in 1992. He said the ETF had been the last remaining Eugene tree group, following the previous demise of Friends of Eugene's Urban Forest and the Eugene Tree Commission. He said the all-volunteer ETF had collaborated with the City on all its projects, but it has been put on hold and they hope to re-form it as an advocacy group in the future. The metro area plantings, the Stream Team, and street tree plantings were with the NeighborWoods Program. He said the ETF founder Dennis "Whitey" Lueck continues as newsletter editor. He clarified that the ETF board moved over to the Friends of Trees and took over as a steering committee.

Burke related that FOT is negotiating a contract with the City to do volunteer planting, tree pruning and inventory. The group is moving from an all-volunteer group to having staff. It is a non-profit group. Funding comes from the Neighborhood tree program; Vancouver pays \$140 for every tree planted (which actually costs \$350). Each tree gets a tag that list care instructions, species info, and corporate sponsors (covering about 20% of the cost). He said they have found that trees get much better care if owners pay a nominal fee for a tree; they have sliding scale scholarships.

He said FOT gets grant funding and individual donations; he highlighted FOT's annual reports he'd brought. He related that during the recent Arbor Day, the City of Eugene paid for 50 street trees; the utility paid for 35; and FOT paid for 15, as well as all yard and fruit trees. Burke said the City of Eugene is negotiating on paying FOT to run volunteer pruning programs. FOT is working in Vancouver, and all Portland metro cities; the model is different in each city. In Vancouver, the City plants 800 trees a year:

400 with a contractor and 400 with FOT; he said the FOT was negotiating a new three-year project. Portland has a Grey to Green initiative, launched by Environmental Services in 2008 with a five year, \$55 million investment to sustainably manage storm water runoff, control invasive plants, restore native vegetation, protect sensitive natural areas, and replace culverts that impede fish passage. FOT has a contract to be the primary tree planter, getting some \$400 per tree. The program includes a lot of marketing for Portland's plan; the contract was extended from five to eight years.

In Eugene, the program got six large grants last year; they are hoping to get another this year to help stabilize the Eugene chapter funding. He related that while Portland has 24 employees; he is currently the only Eugene staff, at .75 FTE; the planter works hourly and there are interns. The Portland Executive Director does the grant writing; Burke has written a couple last year. The group is very successful at writing grants. He related that staff have time-keeping software on their computers to keep track of their hours for different localities. He related the current Eugene intern lives in Corvallis and would like to see FOT programs in Corvallis. The plan is to be a statewide organization; the Eugene chapter is the first one outside of the Portland area. There is a lot of excitement for the Portland area. The recent Eugene Arbor Day event was very successful, with 128 volunteers in eight teams planting 100 trees, with one of the teams planting them all from bike trailers. Portland has eight all-bike-plantings a year.

He highlighted the open source tree inventory program that FOT is developing, which copies the Philadelphia and San Francisco programs. He said the two cities' programs have not had vandalism problems with their databases, which allow anyone to enter trees, but Eugene will only allow those who have undergone training to use its database. The Eugene program will include not just right-of-way trees, but the entire city of Eugene, including yard trees, fruit trees, habitat relics and native habitat components. They hope to expand it further into the Willamette Valley in a year; it is being developed in Corvallis. He encouraged members to look at the databases at www.phillytreemap.org and www.urbanforestmap.org. The inventories are a collaboration between the municipality, the power company and the non-profit. The combined inventories are searchable by species, diameter, and other fields. He related that he found that the TreeWorks program (used by Corvallis Parks and Rec) was rather slow. He said they would get input from individuals and scientists.

The street and yard tree program, **The Neighborhood Tree Program**, brings people together. He estimated that 90% are public right-of-way street trees and 10% are yard trees; he added that it was nice to include some yard trees. He noted that in Portland conifers and fruit trees are allowed in park strips, while in Eugene they are banned. In Eugene the tree lists are by soil type; in Eugene soil types vary much more widely than Portland, which has uniformly excellent soils. He said much of Eugene has wetland clay soils, in which most trees don't thrive. Few under power line trees exist, other than golden ash.

The Neighborhood Tree Program is almost entirely run by volunteers; staff are glorified volunteer coordinators. Volunteers are trained to do leadership work. Neighborhood coordinators go through training and form neighborhood tree committees of several people to organize plantings. They find staging areas for plantings, they organize food donations, and each planting ends with a neighborhood potluck. They go door to door to every house that has a blank spot in its planting strip and offer discounted trees, (it varies according to the relative wealth of a neighborhood) and organize plantings. The FOT plantings generally do 100 to 300 trees at a time, with an average of one volunteer per tree. Generally teams of ten people plant ten trees, and each team has a Lead Crew Leader and an Assistant Crew Leader that go through a training program. The Lead Crew leader does a planting demonstration on the first tree, carefully highlighting quality and safety issues and roles on planting day. That seems to work better than trying to do training with several hundred people at a time. It also seems to work best to have two leaders per five general volunteers, to keep the event tightly organized.

He explained that the events are completely run by Friends of Trees. A volunteer pickup truck hauls ten trees and tools. All trees are delivered to a staging area, where they are divided into piles and volunteer pickups load trees and tools. He said a critical element is that when people sign in, they get a nametag and are broken into teams. The GSI program uses native plant names for the teams, while the street tree program just uses letters to identify teams. Everyone goes to their assigned team name or letter. A homeowner gets assigned to the team planting their own tree and nearby trees. Neighbors who often have never met finally get to meet each other. There are different waiver forms and rules for children.

Neighborhood coordinators go door to door in the neighborhood in the evenings, signing people up. The ETF and the City of Eugene had an "opt-out" method; they identified blank spots in the park strip and left letters or door hangars stating that they would plant unless the property owner says they didn't want a tree. Most recipients did not read the letters. On planting day, some property owners would be surprised and state that they did not want a tree, and then the City would be responsible for watering the tree; the City can no longer afford to do that. In contrast, with the FOT model, the homeowner does all the watering and they are given a tree care sheet. The trained volunteer Tree Inspectors follow a route of thirty trees planted in their neighborhood for the trees' first two years, making sure the trees are being watered and are healthy. They are essentially volunteer stewards for 30 trees, and do follow-up talks or calls or leave door hangars.

He cited a 2010 research paper that showed much higher tree survival rates with Stewards; FOT has a 97% survival rate the first year. The FOT database records every tree the group has planted. It has planted a total of 420,000 trees and shrubs. Portland FOT planted 5,000 street trees this year.

He said FOT sees their activities as a pyramid; some people who get involved as volunteers go on to become leaders. Many volunteers have been involved for many years. They have annual award events to recognize volunteers. They ask volunteers to commit to four plantings each year.

He noted that Portland has very narrow planting strips, between 2.5 to 4'; they plant smaller ornamental trees there. Under power lines, Douglas Hawthorn and Cascara are planted. He said that ideally, you wouldn't plant in planting strips; they were developed as a place to plow snow to and to house utilities. Ideally, you'd plant between the sidewalk and the house, on private property. He noted that people often plant inappropriate trees in their yards.

He related that Aaron Lesan is the Corvallis intern. Daniels asked how we would adapt this in Corvallis, and how to get involved as a public body. He related there are many absentee landlords in his neighborhood, so volunteers must care for trees; Burke replied that that was true in the U of O area as well. Merja said she will be meeting with Burke after this meeting to find out what we can learn from them; she noted that FOT has a volunteer base of people willing to assist in tree projects.

Emery added that Burke's presentation brings the topic to the forefront and brings up ways to improve our program, and perhaps broadening the volunteer program. She noted that CBUF has an obligation for tree education through some of its funding, so CBUF needs to look at how it can achieve that goal. Daniels said if Corvallis had a FOT program, it would be a non-governmental program, but it wouldn't be part of CBUF. Burke remarked that it is different in different cities; in Vancouver, for example, FOT volunteers are housed in the Urban Forester's office and they have a joint AmeriCorps worker.

He related FOT has been using iTree, the Forest Service open-source, free software for its inventory and to evaluate benefits of trees and canopy cover. They used it for an analysis of Corvallis, and found canopy cover of 28%, and compared it to CBUF's LIDAR analysis, which found 28.38% cover, which is very close.

Goslow asked if there were open spaces where volumes of trees could be planted; Merja replied that some neighborhoods, such as the Hayes Avenue area, where the tree stewards group is working, is a good example, where declining older cherry trees must be replaced over several blocks; 50-60 trees could easily be planted. Bregar noted that while Corvallis has a number of natural areas, often the issue there is keeping trees from growing in maintaining prairie areas. Burke related that the West Eugene wetland program removes trees as part of prairie restoration.

Rochefort said a private Friends group could come into its own where neighborhoods don't have planting strips; such a group could work with homeowners to plant trees in their front yards. Emery said Parks and Rec manages 1,200 acres of natural areas. She related that the department Volunteer Coordinator McGettigan recently worked with 174 7th graders planting trees at Village Green along Dixon Creek, in a stream restoration partnership with Public Works. Rochefort added that stream shading to reduce stream temperatures was a big goal for the city. Merja added that clearing out invasive species was another goal of that planting.

Burke related that that FOT was negotiating to take over some of Portland's Forest Park ivy removal management. In Eugene, most natural area plantings are along Amazon Creek and the Willamette River to reduce stream temperatures. For riparian forest, they often focus on invasive species removal.

Burke asked how much stormwater drove the tree programs in Corvallis. He noted that in Portland the EPA will levy a huge fine on Portland for discharges in Willamette, so almost all tree planting in Portland is based on mitigating stormwater. The Big Pipe sewer line will be at capacity when it is finished. In Eugene, they don't have a combined sewer, so Eugene is more driven by stream temperature concerns. Portland offers a 'treebate' of \$10 to \$50 based on the size of the tree on private land for stormwater abatement. Emery related that when cities place parks under Public Works rather than Parks and Recreation, there is a different focus. The storm water program doesn't drive department choices, but they try to partner with Public Works on projects. Rochefort added the City does have a stormwater management plan; there is a combined sewer (CSO).

Merja related that raingardens were established in the Beca area since there was nowhere to pipe the stormwater to; they were intended to slow and cleanse water before it enters the stream.

Rehkugler suggested a follow-up visit by Eric Burke would be helpful. Burke distributed FOT materials.

V. STAFF REPORTS- IF QUESTIONS.

Rochefort related the CIP subcommittee will meet this month or in May. She asked for one or two volunteers for a single two-hour meeting; Daniels volunteered.

The Arts Center Plaza has been officially named; the dedication is Sunday, May 6 at 10:30 a.m. during the Spring Garden Festival.

Daniels asked for an update in the future on staff regarding plantings and removals, including how tree utility funding is impacting that. He said he is seeing a lot of activity around town; he would like an overview. Merja replied that there has been a lot of storm cleanup; there were 21 removals; there will also be work on Country Club Drive to replace over-mature trees. Emery said there will be a report to Administrative Services in May, so a report to CBUF in May or June is good timing. John Hinkle related that a Cryptomeria was removed after storm damage.

Director Emery related that the Budget Commission will meet April 19; the City Manager will present a balanced budget; every department has made reductions. There will be a public hearing the following week to respond. After that the budget will be altered or accepted as presented.

Staff negotiated with Northwest Gas on the proposed pipeline on an easement; about \$140,000 will come to the department, and they are prioritizing funding of deferred maintenance and ADA projects in parks. She outlined the proposed 10" pipeline route from Orleans Natural Area to OSU campus, running 60' below all parks; it must be done via a bore by the end of November.

Merja reported that at noon on Monday April 16, at the downtown fire station meeting room, the Council will observe the Arbor Day celebration. Former CBUF member Mike Riddle will present the award. She said that we will thank researchers that assembled the ecosystems services report. She asked members to wear CBUF shirts and hats.

V. CITY COUNCIL/OSU LIAISON REPORTS.

Rehkugler noted there needed to be discussion of changing meeting times, since several members have a conflict. Brewer said 10 a.m. to noon is better. Livermore asked for later in the morning, closer to nine. Bregar said classes start at 8:15 a.m.; he can get here by 8:15 a.m. but has to be back for the next class, so 8:15 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. is best; perhaps 8:30 a.m. is better. All three agreed that 8:30 a.m. was better. She noted that Passmore and Daniels had departed.

Parkerson moved to change regular meeting times to 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. on the second Thursdays of the month; Bregar seconded; motion passed. Emery added that that time is easier for staff.

VI. REPORT ON SUBCOMMITTEES

Rehkugler highlighted a front page G-T article on the CBUF cleanup project. Merja related she met with the DCA design review committee on the March 31 project; they were very happy with the help of CBUF and Volunteer Coordinator McGettigan. Joan Wessell arranged coffee and cookies for volunteers. Gaia and Tim Brewer donated trucks to help move debris. She asked for more such help on the Sunday, April 29 event, around Monroe and Jackson. She said the Doxology Church will provide a large number of volunteers; CBUF can help move volunteers go forward.

Goslow said it went really well, with 25 volunteers working in snow and rain. She suggested doing it in one event rather than two next year. She said McGettigan used flags to divide the two teams. She suggested working inward out. She suggested using a blower to tidy up the staging area afterwards, and doing mulching all at once. Merja noted that using Sunday does not conflict with Farmers Market.

John Hinkle related the Neighborhood Forester Committee did a site visit, to get a feel for the neighborhood. Tom Cook wrote a draft letter, which was edited, and the letter will be mailed out, to be followed up with visits to homeowners. They will formalize a tree list and come up with a formal plan for what trees will be planted where. The timeline remains the same.

Rehkugler highlighted attending the OSU dedication of the Trysting Tree, a Gray Poplar, which was a cutting from the old tree. She met a representative from the State Heritage Tree Program who offered her help. She clarified the tree was part of the State Heritage Tree program; she wasn't sure how to deal with overlapping when Corvallis begins its own program. Merja highlighted a heritage Black Walnut on the way to Philomath off 4th Street.

Merja highlighted the next cleanup event at 9 a.m. on April 29, meeting at Jackson Street plaza at 1st and Jackson. She said that the DCA must get commitments from property owners to water before anything is planted in tree wells.

Rehkugler highlighted the May 6 Spring Garden Festival. The next meeting will include work on Beautification Awards. Rochefort said an ROTC volunteer group could help. Rochefort said there is a little money to buy plantings.

VII. BREAK INTO SUBCOMMITTEES. Subcommittees did not meet.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT: The regular meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.