

**CITY OF CORVALLIS**  
**MINUTES OF THE CIVIC BEAUTIFICATION AND URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION**  
**DECEMBER 13, 2012**

Attendance

Angelica Rehkugler, Chair  
 Kent Daniels  
 Ross Parkerson  
 Ruby Moon  
 Larry Passmore  
 Becki Goslow  
 Tony Livermore  
 Norm Brown, OSU Liaison  
 Joel Hirsch, City Council Liaison

Staff

Karen Emery, Director  
 Becky Merja, Urban Forester  
 Jude Geist, Parks Supervisor  
 Mark Lindgren, Recorder

Visitors

Pat Breen  
 Josh Pucchini

Absent/Excused

Tim Brewer, Vice Chair  
 Ian Davidson

**SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION**

Agenda Item	Information Only	Held for Further Review	Recommendations
II. Introductions	X		
III. Review of Minutes- November 8, 2012	X		
IV. Visitor Propositions	X		
V. Staff Reports- if questions	X		
VI. 2013-2014 City Council Goal Setting	X		
VII. City Council/ OSU Liaison Reports	X		
VIII. Report on Subcommittees	X		
IX. Break for Holiday Social	X		
X. DVD Viewing of Parks & Rec Dept. History and/or the Moving of the Avery Park Locomotive	X		
XI. Adjournment	X		The next CBUF meeting will be at 8:30 a.m. January 10, 2013, at the Parks and Rec Conference Room.

## **CONTENT OF DISCUSSION**

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Angelica Rehkugler called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.
- II. INTRODUCTIONS.** Rehkugler related that new commissioner Ruby Moon owned a downtown business and helped establish the Jackson Street Youth Shelter. Moon added that she was a master gardener, president of a garden club and established a community garden. Norm Brown said he'd worked at the OSU Landscape Dept. since the early 1980's. Kent Daniels noted that this year was his last on the commission, since he was being term-limited.
- III. REVIEW OF MINUTES.** Ross Parkerson moved and Kent Daniels seconded to approve the November 8, 2012 minutes as presented; motion passed.
- IV. VISITOR PROPOSITIONS.** None.
- V. STAFF REPORTS- IF QUESTIONS.** Emery outlined the Parks and Recreation District Feasibility study. The proposal was to set up a parks and recreation service district separate from the City. The proposal was reviewed by the Council, which asked six major questions to address to determine whether it was a viable solution. The review of the six items will be completed by February. The items under review include setting the district boundary; developing a budget pro forma; how the transfer of assets could work; tax rate options; potential Parks and Recreation Services to remain with the City; and reach out to potential partners.. She said the City is looking for options to deliver Parks and Recreation services and have a sustainable budget. The department had lost seven positions over recent years and there remain few options for cutting spending in the future.

Daniels related that a group of people met last night, composed mostly of people who have had past or current positions with PNARB or Parks in some way. He said the Council had concerns about the district boundary, providing good value, and not impacting the local tax cap. The group is open to others participating and will likely meet again in January. He summarized the group felt the Council should continue to study the idea, and that it requires performing a public survey. He said that districts around the state had proved successful in providing stable services in the face of tough economic times.

Emery added that Springfield's Willamalane District was a good size comparison to Corvallis. Districts are voter-approved by those living within the proposed boundaries. Daniels said a Parks and Recreation District would likely be run by five elected officials; Emery added that it would be similar to the school board, with a single focus. Emery said under law, when a government transfers employees to another government, they are obliged to retain employees at their current salaries for a year. She said a district would not then be competing with other departments for funding. Also, any savings would go to fund the district and help build deferred maintenance funds. Under the City structure, the department pay other departments for services, about \$650,00 a year, such as for administrative, HR, and other services. Comparable districts pay considerably less for services.

Goslow asked if other City departments would want to try the same thing; Emery replied that that was a Council concern, but it hasn't been an issue in other cities. Daniels highlighted other service districts with dedicated funding for fire, water, libraries, and soil and water conservation. Emery related that a "911 District" was also under consideration. Goslow said it seemed like an interesting idea that could provide

sustainability. Daniels said budget projections were for a \$1 million shortfall for the department next year and \$2.5 in another couple years.

Parkerson asked about the downsides of a district; he asked if perhaps citizens would have less understanding of the benefits provided. Daniels agreed it would be a big deal, and would require a citizen-driven effort to get it passed. He said there was already confusion among leaders on who does what. Moon said she'd encountered wide agreement of the value of parks for all, but less so for the pool; where, it was felt, users should pay. Rehkugler encouraged concerned commissioners to attend the Council meeting; Emery said the City Council will probably next review the proposal at their meeting on the third Monday in February.

Forester Merja reported that cherry street trees on both sides of an area of Hayes Avenue were removed yesterday. She said there were no complaints and there were several calls from neighbors who wanted their own cherry street trees removed. The replacement trees will be available for replanting around late December. She said this project would provide a good learning experience as well as a template for future neighborhood tree stewardship projects.

Merja highlighted the Heritage Tree project information in the packet, with a kickoff early January, with a stakeholder group being assembled. She is preparing for a "small tree structural pruning effort"; there was a huge increase in such pruning starting last year, along with tree removals.

Liaison Hirsch said he and other neighbors were willing to help with watering of new street tree plantings.

Moon asked how long removals were posted; Merja outlined the removal process, saying that they were generally posted at least two weeks in advance, but it depended on the situation, and there is an appeal process. In the case of Hayes Avenue removals, letters went out to all the affected neighbors; and volunteer and neighbor Tom Cook met with all of them. She explained that in this pilot project, the project was originally conceived as only cutting trees on one side on the street and so neighbors on the other side of the street were not notified. Just before the removals were scheduled to take place, they were postponed while neighbors on the other side of the street were fully notified and given a chance to weigh in and get used to the idea.

Larry Passmore highlighted trees that required protection in a construction area on Short Street.

Parks Supervisor Jude Geist highlighted the Heritage Tree program development timeline. A group of seven participants for the stakeholders group are lined up, and a couple more are being sought. Meetings will be set up for early in 2013.

Daniels read out a memo from Griffith to CBUF and the Arts and Culture Commission (ACC) on the new group "Friends of Parks and Recreation", which is intended to support programs and facilities operations, and provide financial support. Initial board members are Phil Hayes, Jenny Meisel, Betty Griffiths, Kent Daniels, and Charlie Fisher. The group's establishment had been planned by the Parks, Natural Areas and Recreation Board (PNARB) for several years. The Friends group has filed to become a 501c3, has an EIN, is setting up a website and a brochure, and is seeking additional board members and fundraising. He said that volunteers for key tasks are needed.

Hirsch asked whether the group supported the proposed district; Daniels replied that they did, with some caveats. Daniels said Friends groups like this are generally intended to provide additional funding, noting that "Friends of the Libraries" group was similar. Merja said the Friends group could apply for grants that the City may not. Daniels cautioned that Friends groups generally can only provide supplemental funding,

much less than what is needed to address projected shortfalls. It is separate from the department; Emery is a non-voting, ex officio member.

Moon asked about liability coverage; Merja replied that the department's volunteer program provided coverage, and volunteers sign a liability waiver.

#### **VI. 2013-2014 CITY COUNCIL GOAL SETTING.**

Rehkugler highlighted the information in the packet. The Council goal setting session is January 14, 2013. Council Liaison Joel Hirsch suggested putting forward the Heritage Tree Program, or a bigger picture goal. Goslow said if the Council doesn't want the district, then it needs to consider finding adequate funding. Hirsch said policing levels are about the same as they have been since 1992, before the university expanded, and some are proposing adding a dozen more officers. He said even just bringing an idea to the Council to be part of its conversation and its general awareness was positive. Goslow said it would be helpful for Councilors to look at adopting several areas to clean up within their own wards; Hirsch suggested that she present during Visitor Propositions. Rehkugler suggested presenting a goal on the Heritage Tree Program; Hirsch replied that it could perhaps be part of a larger goal, such as livability. Parkerson said the Heritage Tree Program has been planned for years and suggested Liaison Hirsch bring it to the Council's attention. Hirsch said Council meetings are general the first and third Mondays at 6 p.m.

Rehkugler asked members to attend the January 6 meeting with her to present on the Heritage Tree Program during Visitor Propositions. She said in addition, it would be great to get Councilors in a van to tour the city; Passmore agreed, saying that it would be helpful in pointing out problems. Hirsch said that in many areas, there are neighborhood associations that can help take on these things; Merja added that Planner Sarah Johnson at Community Development would have a list of them. Hirsch added that it would be helpful to have pictures.

#### **VII. CITY COUNCIL/OSU LIAISON REPORTS.**

OSU Liaison Norm Brown said there would be a lot of activity regarding trees impacted by new construction, including at 26<sup>th</sup> Street and North Jefferson (between Fairbanks and Sackett Halls). A couple dozen trees, including 16 coastal redwoods, a couple sequoias, and others, will be cut. Parkerson expressed concern about losing campus open space and cutting mature trees, and said it was happening throughout the campus. Brown said that it was important to include open space in long-term campus planning. Daniels noted OSU has a long-range plan that was approved by the Planning Commission and adopted by the Council, and the use was approved long ago. Brown noted that a new long-range campus plan will be developed in 2014 and he suggested it was a good opportunity to get involved. Brown said a leaning cedar will be removed at Gilkey Hall, as well as a declining maple at Park Terrace, at 25<sup>th</sup> Street.

Liaison Hirsch highlighted two newly elected Council members.

#### **VIII. REPORT ON SUBCOMMITTEES.**

Goslow related that she and staffer America McMillan toured 30-40 areas within the city and planted some bulbs. There will be some work near Baskin Robbins and she has developed a beautification map of clean-up areas. There are new Fall Beautification Award signs. She highlighted a G-T article on Wilson School students doing clean-up work. Tony Livermore said Goslow's work in inventorying beautification sites was critical to the effort.

#### **IX. BREAK FOR HOLIDAY SOCIAL.**

**X. GROUP DID NOT HAVE TIME TO VIEW DVD OF PARKS AND RECREATION HISTORY AND/OR LIONS CLUB MOVING A VERY LOCOMOTIVE.**

**XI. ADJOURNMENT:** The regular meeting adjourned at 9:50 A.M.