

**HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
April 2, 2013**

Present

Councilor Mike Beilstein, Chair  
Councilor Penny York  
Councilor Bruce Sorte

Staff

Jim Patterson, City Manager  
Karen Emery, Parks and Recreation Director  
Jude Geist, Parks Operations Supervisor  
Carrie Mullens, City Manager's Office

**SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION**

	<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Information Only</u>	<u>Held for Further Review</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>
I.	Heritage Tree Program			Adopt the Heritage Tree Program as amended
II.	Other Business • Youth Mental Health		May 7	

Chair Beilstein called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

**CONTENT OF DISCUSSION**

I. Heritage Tree Program (Attachment)

Mr. Geist reported that development of a Heritage Tree Program (HTP) on public and private land was a Citizens Advisory Commission on Civic Beautification and Urban Forestry (CBUF) goal and priority project for Fiscal Year 2012-2013. Representatives from the City, Benton County, Oregon State University (OSU), and citizens formed a stakeholder committee under the guidance of CBUF. Three stakeholder meetings were held with opportunity for public comment at each meeting. The stakeholders discussed voluntary versus regulatory programs and ultimately decided on a voluntary program that will encourage education and allow citizens to choose to protect their trees.

Mr. Geist said the purpose of HTP is to protect and maintain a link to the past by recognizing significant trees that contribute to the distinct and unique character of the community. Adding a tree or collection of trees to the HTP requires a nomination form to be reviewed and considered by the Heritage Tree Review Committee (HTRC). Written notification is required to remove a tree or collection of trees from the HTP. Nominating trees on private property requires a signature or separate written consent from the property owner. Nominating trees on public land requires approval from the organization. Criteria categories include specimen,

historic, landmark, and collection. HTRC will meet once per year to review nominations and information submitted by an arborist. Designations will be announced during the Arbor Week Celebration and/or National Preservation Month.

Mr. Geist added that HTP is a County-wide program with a limited number of trees designated each year. Limiting the annual designation will keep HTP notable and ongoing. Public outreach and education is included in the program and may consist of a brochure identifying HTP trees, information on the City and County Web sites, and other educational programs. The OSU Director of Campus Operations has signed off on the program and the Benton County Commissioners are considering adoption of the HTP, following a positive recommendation from the Benton County Natural Areas and Parks Advisory Board.

Councilor Sorte cautioned staff that voluntary campaigns can result in regulatory measures following pressure from some citizens. He suggested a language change under "Removing Heritage Tree Designation":

If **a the current** property owner / or managing agency chooses to have the Heritage Tree designation removed from a tree, written notification submitted to the Heritage Tree Review Committee is all that is required.

Councilors Sorte and York, respectively, moved and seconded to amend the Heritage Tree Program language under Removing Heritage Tree Designation to read: "If the current property owner or managing agency chooses...." The motion passed unanimously.

In response to Chair Beilstein's inquiry, Mr. Geist said 28 heritage tree programs in the mid-valley and Oregon were researched. Regulatory programs in other communities had very few designated trees.

Ms. Emery added that the State also has a voluntary program. She noted that a representative from the Albany HTP spoke to stakeholders about the pros and cons of their voluntary program.

Councilor Sorte said the Albany program is only voluntary for privately owned trees. The City can designate heritage trees which would require additional notice to citizens to remove a tree. Chair Beilstein responded that the Natural Features Chapter of the Land Development Code speaks to significant trees and the regulatory control of those trees. HTP designation is separate and different. Ms. Emery agreed with Chair Beilstein.

In response to Councilor York's inquiries, Mr. Geist said nomination forms would be collected by the Parks and Recreation Department until December 31 of each year.

An arborist will inspect nominated trees and the review committee will select trees to be designated as part of the HTP. The number of annually designated trees has been left vague so the committee can use its own judgement. For example, if the limit was eight trees and nine exceptional trees were nominated, the committee would have the flexibility to designate all nine trees. If 30 trees were nominated, the committee could choose the best nine or ten. Staff believes more nominations will be submitted during the first few years of the program. Limiting the number of designations honors the significance of a heritage tree and provides support for additional education and promotion of the program.

Chair Beilstein noted that the program has not yet been adopted which means the review committee will not consider any trees until 2014. He would prefer a more near-term impact.

Mr. Geist said HTRC intends to recognize a select few trees this fall to initiate the program. Staff has already received inquiries about nominating trees.

In response to Chair Beilstein's inquiries, Mr. Geist explained that the collection criteria is defined as notable grove, avenue, or other planting. The Elm trees on the lower OSU campus could be considered under this criteria.

In response to Councilor Sorte's suggestion, Mr. Geist said the stakeholder committee discussed expanding the language in the future to offer assistance for designated trees, such as pruning.

Ms. Emery confirmed for Councilor Sorte that the designated trees will become part of the tree walk.

In response to Chair Beilstein's inquiries, Ms. Emery said, as a CBUF goal, the HTP will be treated similar to CBUF's Corvallis Beauty Grows Here program. The HTRC includes representatives from CBUF and the Parks, Natural Areas, and Recreation Board. Mr. Geist added that designated trees will be identified on the City's Web site and in a brochure. Tree plaques are also being considered.

The Committee unanimously recommends Council adopt the Heritage Tree Program as amended.

#### IV. Other Business

Staff confirmed for Councilor York that the Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Cities Campaign is on the Human Services Committee (HSC) pending list.

Councilor York commented about several items related to human services, health, and safety that were mentioned or discussed at the latest Council meeting:

- Gun violence intervention (proposal submitted by the Benton County District Attorney),
- Youth mental health,
- Gun safety,
- School safety,
- Tobacco issues, and
- Homelessness.

Councilor York announced that she will facilitate a discussion about youth mental health on April 24. The discussion, hosted by Corvallis School District 509J (509J), is in collaboration with local schools, governments, health care providers, and non-profits. Participants will share related issues and identify resources to form a coalition to address youth mental health issues.

Councilor York inquired whether any of the issues discussed at Council can be reviewed and discussed by HSC or if a referral from Council is required.

Councilor Beilstein said these types of issues eventually come to HSC if needed. Some issues can be handled immediately by Council, e.g., the District Attorney's proposal, and other items need a more thorough review by a standing committee before Council takes action. He is satisfied with the way items are currently brought forward.

Councilor Sorte said previous Mayors obtained Council consensus to refer items to standing committees. He noted that some issues mentioned by Councilor York are being dealt with, such as tobacco and homelessness. He recently encouraged One Million Moms to inquire whether the District Attorney's office was interested in being the focal point of a regional forum to discuss gun violence. Eventually, HSC may need to work on gun violence issues. He supports a conversation with Council and/or the Mayor about HSC's desire to discuss gun violence to identify steps that can be addressed in a reasonable amount of time.

Chair Beilstein said HSC can discuss an issue during a scheduled meeting. The difficulty is whether staff should be involved and if HSC can produce something useful without staff input. A free-flowing discussion could produce a series of actions to be considered by Council without staff support except for minute recording. He said he is not sure this is an efficient method, although he neither supports or opposes HSC generating its own work.

Councilor Sorte said identifying an important issue that HSC wants to discuss can be shared with Council during the HSC report. At the least, any discussion

anticipated by HSC should be placed on an agenda so it is noticed to the public. He does not believe Council needs to pre-approve every HSC discussion.

Councilor York said there are many issues in the community significant to the City. She believes the youth mental health discussion will result in a list of related issues/gaps and the resources organizations may have available to address the issues. She suggested giving a report from the meeting to HSC during the first meeting in May, or inviting 509J Board Chair Schuster to give the report. The item would be noted on the HSC agenda. HSC could review the lists and the discussion could include whether the issues impact City government, if the City has anything to contribute, and/or if HSC wants to schedule additional discussions.

Chair Beilstein added that HSC could also recommend appropriate action to be taken by the full Council.

Mr. Patterson inquired whether it would work as well to have Ms. Schuster present her report to the full Council. The HSC Chair could then solicit information from Council as to direction and referral of specific items to HSC. This would provide an opportunity for more people to hear the report and it may be more efficient than hearing a report at HSC, making a report to Council, and then asking Council for direction. The fact that HSC wants to be more proactive in terms of taking on issues as opposed to waiting for assignments should be communicated to the full Council. If the objective is to change the current process of how standing committees function, the discussion should include all three standing committees.

Chair Beilstein said he is interested in HSC taking a proactive role and not waiting for staff to draft an agenda. The Public Process and Participation (PPP) goal is related to communication and could include more fully utilizing Government Comment Corner by making it available in other public locations to increase communication between constituents, Council, and City staff. The goal could also include empowering neighborhood associations. He would support HSC dedicating time to acquire input about this goal, hold additional discussions, and draft recommendations for full Council consideration.

Councilor York opined that Council needs to discuss the PPP goal to determine next steps.

Councilor Sorte said he supports Council reviewing the goals to determine which standing committee will work on each goal. It is currently not clear who is tracking and providing regular reports back to Council. He believes the PPP goal, and perhaps the housing goal, should be assigned to HSC. Typically, HSC items are mushy and do not lend easily to initiatives. The homeless issue could be resolved if all community churches participated by providing homeless assistance on a

rotating basis for one full week each. He reiterated that some issues can be taken straight to Council without further work by staff or discussion by a standing committee. Some human service issues, such as gun violence, do not initially play well at a Council meeting and might be better dealt with in discussions at the standing committee level, which is more relaxed and does not include television broadcasting. He opined that it is appropriate to inform Council that HSC has placed an item on the HSC agenda.

Mr. Patterson said it would be helpful if Council had a discussion about standing committee expectations. It may be time to review current practice, especially with new Councilors and a new City Manager. Current and past structure includes a staff generated agenda, with Council referring items when necessary. He understands Councilor York's concern about moving important issues forward for further discussion and said it would be good for Council to have an agreement or understanding about how all of the standing committees function. Mr. Patterson added that the Council functions as a body of nine people and standing committees function as part of the body in an advisory role. Standing committees can operate in other ways, but it should be defined by the full Council. This will allow staff and Council to operate in a smooth and efficient manner.

Councilor York opined that this is an appropriate way to start thinking about the PPP goal. She supports including a review of the Council's boards, commissions, and committees within the PPP goal. She feels strongly that the City and Council should be operating strongly and efficiently before discussing how the community should be dealing with housing, homeless, and other issues. She supports a Council discussion about standing committee roles to gain a common understanding and/or identify other options.

Councilor Sorte said it was made clear during the Council work session [March 11] that standing committees do not discuss or deliberate items without first informing the public, and that topics could be introduced during a meeting, but additional work should wait until the full Council has an opportunity to consider the item.

Councilor York responded that she considered that discussion to be about permission rather than the role of standing committees in relation to Council's work.

Councilor Sorte said the ordinance is specific about standing committee topics and vague on process.

Councilor York stated preference to inviting Ms. Schuster to a HSC meeting to report on the youth mental health discussion. She opined that there is no need for Ms. Schuster to make a report to the full Council since she will only be reporting on a discussion held within the community.

Councilor Sorte agreed with Councilor York and said it may be more comfortable for Ms. Schuster to respond to inquiries with a smaller group of people and without television broadcasting.

Councilor York confirmed for Chair Beilstein that the report from Ms. Schuster would be included on the May 7 HSC agenda.

Councilor Sorte noted that this discussion will be reported on during the next Council meeting and Council will learn at that time that this has been added to the HSC agenda.

Mr. Patterson opined that once the youth mental health report is added to the HSC agenda, many citizens will plan to attend.

Councilor York confirmed that she has no issue with Ms. Schuster reporting to the full Council instead of HSC, if that is Council's preference.

Councilor Sorte clarified that the intention is for HSC to move forward unless Council wants the report and discussion at the Council level.

Mr. Patterson and HSC members agreed that violence and gun violence will be a part of the youth mental health discussion.

Mr. Patterson reiterated that HSC members are wanting to do something different than how items have previously come forward to standing committees and that conversation needs to be held with the full Council to provide clarity.

Chair Beilstein announced that the April 16 HSC meeting was canceled since no items will be ready for discussion.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 pm.

The next Human Services Committee meeting is scheduled for 2:00 pm on Tuesday, May 7 in the Madison Avenue Meeting Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Beilstein, Chair