



# **Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District Nature & Trails Advisory Committee Minutes**

**Date: August 16, 2023**

**Time: 6:30 pm**

**Location: Fanno Creek Service Center**

## **In Attendance**

Committee Members: Heather AbuSneineh, Shirley Hoffmann (secretary), Brittany Leffel, Erik Lehr (chair), Carl Nelson, Tina Ricks

Absent: Margaret Hite, Vidyanand Kulkarni, Carla Fennel

Board Liaison: Absent

Staff: Bruce Barbarasch, Nature & Trails Manager

Guests: none

## **I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm.

## **II. Approval of Minutes**

Chair Erik called for review and approval of the June meeting minutes. Carl moved to approve. Tina seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved. June minutes did not require approval as the meeting did not have a quorum.

## **IV. Old Business**

Bruce provided several updates on THPRD activities:

2023 Summer Camps have had very good participation. As well as more kids attending, the district was able to hire more staff. The NTAC will receive an overview of the education program at the September meeting.

THPRD staffer Greg Creager has been promoted to the Nature & Trails supervisor and will be taking over several administrative duties from Bruce. He will be working more with the NTAC going forward.

In September, THPRD will begin to recruit new advisory committee members for next year. About half of the current committee will finish their two-year terms. If any current NTAC members wish to continue on the committee, they must re-apply and go through the selection process.

Bruce provided a quick update on the emerald ash borer and the actions THPRD is taking to monitor and prepare for the pest. First steps include the field mapping of ash tree areas in the district, determining how borer populations will be monitored, and planning what to do when borers are found in the district. So far, no borers have been found outside of Forest Grove where they were first detected, however they are notoriously difficult to trap and monitor.

--A question was raised about efforts to control invasive bullfrogs. Bruce explained that management includes scooping tadpoles and people can fish for bullfrogs without a permit. The best that can be done is to manage bullfrog populations; it's too late to fully eliminate them.

--A question was asked about various traps found around the parks. Some may be for Japanese beetles, however the Oregon Department of Agriculture has a variety of traps in the parks for several pests.

THPRD has purchased the land north of Commonwealth Lake and has been doing turtle surveys. There are native turtles in the area however, trapping has only garnered red eared sliders which are non-native. Non natives are collected and turned over to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

A question was raised about the extreme heat and the impact on trees and plants. Staff are working on climate adaptations as heat events increase. They are considering some new species from further south (i.e., planting more heat tolerant white alders instead of red alders) as well as planting natives in different environments that will help them survive higher heat in the summer. They are also adjusting planting times and tree maintenance to help with heat stress.

#### **V. New Business**

Bruce also introduced a first draft of a climate change strategy developed with input from various stakeholder groups and two consultants. The strategy has two sections-one on mitigation (reducing greenhouse gas) and one on adaptation (changes to adapt to a hotter, more variable climate). There are 10 focus areas. Each focus area explains the rationale and objectives and lays out somewhat broad strategies to meet those objectives. It's been kept general to allow staff to take ownership of each area and account for changes in the future. Staff in charge of each area will annually review their operational plans under the strategy and adjust as necessary.

--Committee suggestion: include the THPRD trail network as transport (cycle, walk) and promote trails as an alternative to using vehicles.

Bruce asked for further review and send him any further comments by October when THPRD will present the strategy to the THPRD Board. (Board meetings are now public and can be attended in person or virtually).

#### **VI. Other**

Shelly Oylear, the Washington County Pedestrian and Bike Coordinator will present her work at the next meeting in September.

The NTAC will select a trail gap signage project at the September meeting. Each member who researched a site will provide a 5-minute summary of findings. Review the reports on the Google folder before the meeting.

#### **VII. Next Meeting will be held on September 20, 2023, 6:30 pm at the Fanno Creek Service Center and virtually.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Hoffmann

Recording Secretary