



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

Date: May 21, 2025

Time: 6:30-8:30pm

Location: Fanno Creek Service Center

In Attendance

Committee Members: Carl Nelson (chair), Tina Ricks (secretary), Tom Erwin, Erik Lehr, Alison Davis, Jenny Ruthven, Samantha Tipler

Absent: Erich Pacheco, Matthew Shepherd

Board Liaison: none

Staff: Bruce Barbarasch, Nature & Trails Manager
Nicole Paulsen, Planning Supervisor

Guests: none

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from March 2025 were reviewed. No April minutes due to joint advisory meeting. Alison Davis moved to approve the March minutes. Tom Erwin seconded. All approved the minutes as written.

III. New Business

A cougar was sighted near the REI near Center Street Park, and then at a house by Commonwealth Lake. It is probably an adolescent, looking for habitat. Bruce guesses that it came down Johnson Creek to Commonwealth Lake, probably from the West Hills.

Bruce is transitioning (slowly) into planning activities, and Greg Creager is going to slowly transition into being our staff liaison. This will happen over several months.

A. Advisory Committee Guideline Review

Paper copies of the Advisory Committee Guidelines were passed out for review by the committee. If committee members have questions or comments, pass them along to Bruce Barbarasch by the end of May. The latest Advisory Committee Bylaws were also provided for comparison. See attachments.

B. Interpretive Signage Project

Bruce has a long-term assignment is to establish an art program for the district and establish guidelines. Right now, the park district has about 40 pieces of public art. Includes silk batiks hanging at the nature center, stone outdoor statues, metal statues, functional art that is like a bike rack that looks like a fish. There are a few murals. We don't have a consistent vision for art. We need some guidelines, process for curating, paying (or not paying) artists. We also need a process to take art out of commission when it is worn out. We'd like to figure out a percentage for art in new projects.

We have an overall signage plan for the district for informational signs. We don't have a plan for interpretive signs.

Question for the committee: Read the sections (see attachments) of the documents Bruce sent. There are highlighted sections in the papers. These are studies of the effectiveness of signage. Ten things that are effective in rules-based signs. These documents are interesting and worth a read. Signs need ongoing maintenance. They break, they get graffiti, they need ongoing care. We'd like to define the types of signs, types of information, what needs more information, what doesn't.

Homework for next meeting: read the literature review and think about what kinds of signs we want and may be missing and what the priority of signage should be.

C. Trail Planning Presentation from Nicole Paulsen, THPRD Planning Supervisor

She gave a presentation on trails. Who, what, where, when, why, how. (see Attachments)

Who builds trails? THPRD, cities, county, and developers (according to our specifications). Working with developers happens more often in the new areas (North Bethany, Cooper Mountain, and South Cooper Mountain). Sometimes trails are created by developers, as part of an offset of a portion of their system development charges. We develop relationships with developers. Developing parks and trails is advantageous for them and it helps sell homes for them. They're spending money themselves instead of paying system development charges.

What kinds of trails? Regional, community, combined trail/sidewalk, trail adjacent to roads/sidewalks, trails in greenways. (Paths in parks are not considered part of the trail system).

When do we build trails? We have trail criteria listed in the Trails Functional Plan to look at access to nature, funding, grant opportunities, and the capital improvement project list. Sometimes when there is an opportunity from a partner (like Washington County), we join projects. An example is the Waterhouse Trail curb cuts and signage.

Where do we build trails? Generally, within our district, but we also attempt to make connections to other districts like Hillsboro and Tigard. Current development is underway at North Bethany, South Cooper Mountain, Beaverton Creek Trail, and Fanno Creek Trail Crossing.

Future development includes Westside Trail sections 14-18, Westside Trail Bridge Crossing, Cooper Mountain, and Bonny Slope West.

Why do we build trails? Recreation, physical health, mental health, transportation, and access to nature.

How we build trails. We have plans for Regional, Community, and Combined trails. We follow federal accessibility standards where we can. We use the ADAG standards, with guidance for outdoor recreation. Cost is roughly \$4.2 million per mile. Boardwalks, stairs, retaining walls, and other structures make the costs go up. Permits, consultants, staff, mitigation, etc.

There are trails on the planning maps (for example, Bronson Creek) that don't currently exist, but need to be defined for future projects. There are a lot of factors that go into decisions about what is developed and what remains natural.

Below are links for more information regarding the trail projects discussed:

Waterhouse Trail Laidlaw Rd

<https://www.washingtoncountyor.gov/lut/projects/laidlaw-road-and-waterhouse-trail>

Waterhouse Trail Crossings

<https://www.washingtoncountyor.gov/lut/projects/waterhouse-trail-crossings>

Westside Trail Bridge <https://www.thprd.org/parks-in-progress/westside-trail-bridge/>

D. Field Trips and Summer Meetings

We talked about the meeting schedule for the summer. There is high interest in doing some field trips. The committee brainstormed possible sites and come up with Bronson Creek and Tualatin Hills Nature Center. We will not have an official meeting in July but instead plan on doing a field trip Bronson Creek on July 16 instead. The August meeting will be at the Tualatin Hills Nature Park which will be a field trip followed by a hybrid meeting. Remember the September meeting will be a Joint meeting. We will determine the details at the next meeting

Meeting ended 8:26 p.m.

Next meeting is June 18 at 6:30 p.m. at the Fanno Creek Service Center, 6220 SW 112th Ave., Beaverton. Meeting will also be available by Microsoft Teams.

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Ricks
Recording Secretary

Attachments:

- THPRD Advisory Committee Bylaws_ENGLISH.docx
- THDPR Advisory Committee Guidelines_draft1.docx
- Trail signs Etiquette study 2024.pdf
- Colorado repeat visitor interpretive sign study.pdf
- N&T Trail Updates 20250521.pdf