



Clackamas County Forest Advisory Board  
Meeting Minutes  
April 23, 2024  
6:00pm

Development Services Building  
150 Beaver Creek Road, Room 401  
Oregon City, OR 97045

Members Present: Bill Street, Dan Green, Brent Keller, Molly McKnight  
Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Sarah Eckman, Chris Dannenbring, Andrew Dobmeier, Lisa Harman  
Commissioner Shull did not attend meeting.

Citizen Guests: Mark Rasmussen, Mark Willhite, Steve Wilent

**I. Call To Order**

Meeting called to order by Brent Keller at 6:10pm.

**II. Citizen Input**

Mark Willhite said he was present to listen in to discussion. Noted he'd served on the FAB prior for about 20 years and was interested in the discussions.

Steve Wilent joined the meeting to inquire if there was discussion taking place at the County about selling the 3,000 acres of forestlands managed by the County. Steve noted he's heard a great deal of discussion on how paying for the courthouse has strained the county's budget and wondered if the County was considering selling the lands to help pay for the courthouse. Sarah Eckman responded indicating the Commissioners are not actively discussing the sale of forestlands right now. There are constraints on how much revenue is generated by these properties due to the accelerated harvest and loss due to fire and this is being looked at. Andrew has been managing the lands well, and we are looking at options to potentially grow the portfolio but are running into some barriers. The goal would be to have 10,000 acres. Recently we've been discussing how to bring some of the State lands into County management.

**III. Business**

Review Minutes June 20, 2023

Dan moved to approve the minutes from June 20, 2023, joint meeting of the Parks and Forest Boards held at Barton Park. Bill seconded and the motion carried.

FAB Applicant Interviews- Chris opened discussion explaining an open position was created by the resignation of Jim Rice. Chris introduced Mark Rasmussen as the one applicant for the open position, noting the board has 7 positions but has maintained only 5 members over the last several years. Mark spoke to the board about his background in Forestry and the areas in which he thinks he could contribute to the board. Brent has known Mark for some time through their careers as professional foresters and further elaborated on Mark's experience. Mark's background and areas of expertise include work throughout the Pacific NW and California in long-term forest management planning, forest policy, economics and valuation, as well as expert witness work. Mark has experience working with federal, state, Tribal and private forest owners and managers and served as a consultant to Oregon's Council of Forest Trust Land Counties for over 20 years. Bill made a motion to refer Mark for appointment to the FAB. The motion was seconded by Molly and was carried by the board. Dan provided some additional background information for Mark regarding the establishment of the forest program and the FAB. Chris added background on how advisory boards function within the County's structure. Chris will

move the paperwork process forward to the Commissioners to appoint Mark.

Applications for Dan Green and Molly McKnight were also received through this recruitment process and Brent and Bill voted to refer Dan and Molly to serve additional terms. This was done via email on April 24, as it was overlooked at the meeting.

Division Management Updates – Sarah Eckman – Over the last few years there have been shifts in the lines of business within the management structure at the County. We've realized there is a large body of work with both Parks and Forestry. We made the decision to shift management of the Forest program away from Tom Riggs so he can concentrate on a parks system-wide plan. Sarah has taken on supervising Forestry and will now be attending the FAB meetings instead of Tom. Molly asked whether Forestry will continue to help with financial support of Parks? Sarah indicated the financial arrangements have not changed. Dan asked where the golf course is within the financial picture? Sarah said the golf course is neither part of Parks or Forestry but rather falls alongside Parks in that structure.

Discussion took place about the history of the Forestry program paying off the golf course bonded debt service, and how the promise of increased net proceeds from the golf course after the debt was paid off did not happen as the staff and boards were told it would by management at that time. Sarah noted there is a large capital irrigation project that is priority for the golf course, but once the project is complete it should free up additional funds to be transferred to support Parks. Sarah also noted management has established a base annual transfer from Stone Creek to County Parks of \$225,000. Molly added for the future she hopes management would not simply approve requests made for maintenance expenses by the golf course management team, but rather negotiate what's needed for the course within the context of Parks needs so a higher amount of money is held back from ongoing maintenance so it can be transferred to Parks. Sarah indicated a little over a year ago a consultant was hired to provide a comprehensive analysis of the condition of the golf course and establish a baseline amount that should be dedicated to ongoing capital infrastructure needs at the course. Sarah recalled that amount was around \$300,000 per year. Chris asked if that consultant report had ever been approved to be shared with the Parks and Forestry boards because the Parks' board had asked to see the information in the past. Sarah said she would follow-up on the status as she didn't think the report had been shared yet.

Brent and Dan provided additional context for Mark about the accelerated harvest activities and the intent to create this larger transfer from Stone Creek to Parks after the golf course debt was paid. Molly noted county management looks at the Forest program's revenues with a critical eye right now, but doesn't have the background on why the program is in the situation they are in. Brent added the annual cut was reduced from 1.4MBF to 1MBF because of the accelerated harvest and with the reduced cut Forestry isn't able to generate the revenues at the levels they had in prior years.

Sarah wrapped the discussion by bringing it back to the new reporting structure for Forestry. Discussion took place about the shifts in management and the fold into Dept. of Transportation & Development a couple years ago. Board members asked for an organization chart for context. Chris will provide that.

Wild Trout Timber Sale Andrew reported Stella Jones purchased the first two units of this sale. They have put in a road to access the unit and they will start cutting in June. It will take 6-8 weeks to complete. The sale price was approximately \$1.2M. The contract allows for three years to harvest the two units within the sale. Due to recent changes in the OR Forest Practices Act to widen stream buffers we will not be able to harvest some of the trees included in the original harvest plan.

Salvage Updates – Andrew reported Barton Park trees have some round headed wood borers killing cedar trees. We also have some root rot issues at Barton. Borers at Feyrer are really bad. We have salvaged 4 loads of logs, a load of fir and a mixed load of hemlock. It was about 16,000BF and we

received approx. \$14,800 for the trees. Dan asked about the tree health issues bringing in the bugs and whether we can remediate the issue. Andrew said we have not been proactive in the Parks as we need to be. There's been a bit of a struggle on how to manage trees within the parks. Andrew has been discussing ways to deal with this with Sarah. Metzler is at a higher elevation so there is less damage there. Forestry stands have less damage than parks due to higher elevations/colder temps. Some of the issue lies with the warmer winters not killing the bugs. Utilizing an insecticide may be worthwhile in the parks to help eradicate the bugs.

Forestry Program Updates - Andrew reported stocking, stream & stand survey work was done by 2 summer interns last year. The interns helped with pre-commercial thinning (PCT) contract work to make sure the whole stands were covered, and we completed 41.5 acres. The interns brushed 3.2 miles of roads. One intern also planted trees during the winter in the Barton Park old gravel quarry which is being rehabilitated as part of the Barton Park masterplan. We've been reforesting areas that will not be used actively for recreation. Trees around the pond were caged to protect the trees from beavers and nutria. We planted Doug fir, cedar, ponderosa pine, Jeffrey pine, white oak, blue elderberry, coastal redwoods, and valley pine. We sprayed for blackberries in Family Camp and Barton. Barton also has scotch broom, tansy, and poison hemlock. We will spray for 3 years to knock it back. There was also some knotweed sprayed at Barton. Franco Reforestation is doing all the spray work, and they have done a good job. This summer we are harvesting Wild Trout units 1 and 2, and doing the prep work for Wild Trout unit 3. We will PCT an additional 129 acres, and are trying to salvage cedar in the Hillockburn unit, but it is not economical to hire a logger to do the work. We will roadside spray scotch broom and blackberries, and are installing a gate at a junction on Gawley Creek Rd. going into Family Camp to prevent dumping and timber theft.

Lisa provided a demo of the Forestry program's new County GIS mapping program that will track all the timber on our Parks and Forestry lands. The program is still in the developmental stage and Lisa has inventory data to load. The program will eventually show real-time maps with layers that will include all the properties, timber stands, roads and streams, and pre and post-fire aerial maps. Staff will be able to click on each stand individually to see information including acreage, age, tree species, average height, average volume, etc. This will allow the Forester and staff to track historical harvest, and weed data. This will be a real-time tool to manage all the data in one place and help project harvest levels moving forward. Stream buffers can be added and updated as legislation changes. This will also be used to help with maps when we need them to give to contractors who are doing work on our lands. Some discussion took place about the number of acres lost in the 2020 Wildfires; it was approx. 329 acres. Hillockburn, Family Camp, Clackamas Quarry, Hoopes Rd. and Elwood all lost trees.

Forestry Strategic Planning – Sarah Eckman – We have been discussing options on how to grow our timber acres. Mark Rasmussen wanted to know what advantage would the County have over commercial companies in purchasing land. Dan responded that properties come up for sale when the economy is bad, and the County can sometimes get land at a time when others are constrained for money. We have received Weyerhaeuser and Port Blakeley trades. The advantage is that we are not as market driven since we are a government agency. Bill Street wanted to know if the Forestry program could possibly be terminated. Sarah said that exact conversation has not happened, but other things such as the wildfires have impacted revenues so it has brought a skeptical eye to the program in general. We have recognized there will be fewer harvests, and we are trying to see if there is a way to maximize what we have and increase holdings. We have explored getting state trust lands back (7100 acres of state trust lands). All counties must set 50% of land for habitat conservation, and the rest must be managed with new Forestry practice rules. With the new plan they promised we would get more money, which doesn't pencil out. Clackamas County sent a letter expressing displeasure with the changes. Bill Street made the point that if Forestry land is sold, then revenue would decrease to zero in support of County Parks. Short-term thinking doesn't provide for long-term funding needs.

State Lands and Legislative Updates – Sarah Eckman/Andrew Dobmeier – AOCC Cooperating Agency Status Request to BLM – The last time the resource management plans were created Clackamas County was not allowed to participate. A letter was sent from Clackamas County to request cooperating status, and BLM has not formally responded to the 2 requests. Clackamas County wants AOCC to be its designated representative so we can participate in the next resource management plan. Andrew said they may be looking to lock up 50% of the land, which would decrease County revenue. Molly mentioned the Feds have changed some rule that prioritizes conservation over revenue generation, and wanted to know if this new rule included ONC lands. It was not made clear. Molly offered to do some research on the latest ruling and get more information back to the FAB. Mark offered to reach out to his colleagues who are still involved in the OR Trust lands and see if there has been any progress on other counties efforts to take back the State lands.

**IV. Good of the Order**

Chris Dannenbring – Next meetings will be on August 7<sup>th</sup> (field) and November 13<sup>th</sup>

**V.** Meeting was adjourned at 8:14pm.