

South Santiam Watershed Council
Meeting Minutes
January 17, 2017

Present: Lee Peterman, Nancy Gilmore, Katie Kohl, Diane Kaldahl, Norm Kaldahl, Lance Gatchell, Nancy MacHugh, Tyler Pedersen, Megan Zarzycki, Ken Crouse, Angela Clegg, Rory Nichols, Sharon Kanareff

Meeting started at 3 pm with welcome and introductions. Meeting was held at Lebanon Public Library community meeting room.

Sharon Kanareff was the featured speaker. Sharon has been the coordinator of the South Santiam All Lands Collaborative (SSALC) since March 2015. She is resigning in order to move to Ohio to care for her father. She gave an update on activities / projects SSALC has worked on in the last year.

There are three main projects of focus for SSALC: Cascadia cave acquisition, livability initiative and forest and watershed collaborations/community forest corridor. Cascadia cave is a significant cultural resource site east of Sweet Home. The site is currently in private ownership and closed to the public. The USFS does take small groups on tours to the site. The end goal is to transfer the property from the current owner to a new owner. A major concern is the long term management of the site, which due to the cultural significance of the site, would require specific and specialized management. There has been limited action on this in the recent fiscal year. The city of Sweet Home was one of 4 cities nationwide to participate in the federal livability initiative. The purpose is to help communities understand and improve upon the unique natural assets of the local community thereby improving livability of the area. The community identified transportation options, affordable housing, employment, business opportunities and community character as key livability factors. An outgrowth of the livability initiative was the creation of the rural Linn economic development group and improvement of the east Linn county museum located in Sweet Home. Proposed actions are to improve the look and functionality of the museum, which is located at the major intersection and entry point to Sweet Home. A trail connecting the senior center to Sankey Park is also proposed for enhancement. The Forest collaboration is occurring in conjunction with the USFS. SSALC has facilitated public involvement to the Trout Creek planning area and will follow up throughout the planning process. The purpose is to incorporate public involvement in the planning process. In addition, a 12 mile long community forest corridor was proposed to connect the city of Sweet Home to the adjacent national forest lands. Some initial trail areas have been identified, although this is a very long range goal.

The November 2016 meeting minutes were approved. There was no December 2016 meeting due to the holiday.

The financials (balance sheet and P&L) for the fiscal year through end of December 2016 were approved.

Results of the self-evaluation completed in fall of 2016 were handed out to the group. All board members received copies of the self-evaluation, although not everyone filled it out. The purpose of the self-evaluation is to help identify the strengths and weaknesses of the council. The most important aspects from the self-evaluation identified these key areas to focus on: overarching strategy, board composition and commitment, community presence and standing, staff, board involvement and participation in fund raising, and buildings and office space. The results of the self-evaluation will be used in the upcoming strategic planning process.

The SSWC will create a strategic plan with the help of Allison Handler of solid Ground Consulting. The Meyer Memorial Trust is funding this process. The strategic planning will occur on two separate days during spring 2017. The first session will be on Saturday March 4 from 8am to 12pm at the Lebanon Public Library. Eric will be meeting the consultant in the coming weeks to help prepare for the first session. Meeting materials will be sent out prior to the planning session. The strategic plan will help guide the Council in the next several years. It is hoped that all board members can attend.

Tyler Pedersen gave a projects update. Several projects are underway. The Thomas Creek / Crabtree Creek project is funded by OWEB and is leveraged with funds from FSA via the CREP program. The project is in earlier stages of implementation due to staff changes at federal agencies that participate in the CREP process. It is hoped that final planting plans and site layout will be completed in January 2017. The Crabtree phase 1 project (OWEB funded) has had 2 landowners drop out. They cited not wanting to participate in the CREP program as part of the reason. We are trying to recruit additional landowners in the area to participate in a project. The challenging part is that with the loss of the 2 landowners, also comes the loss of CREP match for the grant. This may reduce the amount of money the council can spend from the grant, unless additional match is found. The Crabtree phase 2 project also has had a landowner drop out because they are selling the property. This also reduces expected match for the grant and again, if additional match cannot be secured the amount of the project will be reduced. We are currently identifying additional landowners that may participate in restoration. The Scott Creek grant is still being evaluated by OWEB for funding. Other projects have been identified as potential grant applications in 2017 such as Hospital slough farm crossings.

Joe Deardorff (not present) has been working with Rosario to treat invasive weeds at Springbank farm near Lebanon. Joe will be overseeing inter-planting at several sites on crabtree and Hamilton creek.

Angela Clegg gave an education update. Outdoor school 2017 is in planning and funding mode. The event is scheduled to take place in the end of March. We have been receiving donations for paying for the event, local schools will contribute student fees, there is great match in the form of volunteer commitment and a grant to the Sweet Home Community Foundation will be sent in the coming weeks. Any unpaid portion of the

event will be paid from SSWC general fund. There have been some YWC school meetings and students getting ready for spring activities.

The next Council meeting is Tuesday, Feb 21 from 3 - 5 pm at the Dos Arbolitos restaurant. The education committee will meet before. The meeting will just be an operations meeting with no speaker. The next speaker will be at the March meeting.