



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

Date: 7/21/2021

Time: 6:00 PM

Location: Tualatin Hills Athletic Center

In Attendance

Committee Members: Margaret Hite, Laura Porter, Sam Scheerens, Sheri Wantland (chair), James Wright,

Board Liaison: None.

Staff: Bruce Barbarasch

Guests: None.

- I. Call to Order** 7:23pm – After joint meeting.
- II. Approval of Minutes:** Minutes were approved with no objections at 7:24
- III. Chair Updates:** Chair requested input on the content of the chair update.

IV. New Business

1. Hanna Doernhofer a community engagement park ranger visited us to update our group on her position. One of the goals at THPRD is to foster connections with community members and the parks that they live next to. Her job is to foster long term connections between the park system and the local community. She uses several programs to advance that aim. The nature experience and work force training program provides paid naturalist internships for members of the Latinx community to promote more Latinx entry into the field. THPRD has found that the Latinx community is particularly underrepresented in the area. The program currently has six students. The student count has grown steadily each year. The service-learning program gives students the opportunity to volunteer in local parks working on nature projects to complete community service work hours and learn about the reasons those projects are important in the broader context of our local environment. This program tries to target youth who, for financial reasons would not otherwise have access to these kinds of programs.

The Paseos Verde (green strolls) program works in conjunction with Clean Water Services to bring Spanish speaking families into the parks. There are a number of volunteer community science programs that both, gather data for the parks, and allows the community to be engaged in interesting community science projects. There is a turtle survey running currently that has been very exciting. Hanna also, works within the parks adoption program to encourage long term community group engagement. Finally, she administers the park steward program having volunteers do interpretive work within the park system.

2. Bruce gave the group an update on the trail system inventory. Trails must be safe but not necessarily meet design standards. About 14 miles of inventory have been completed. 85% of the trails are in fair or better condition. During the inventory the question of how to prioritize non safety-sensitive design repairs came up. Bruce asked for feedback on what criteria would be the best to use

when deciding which trails to bring to standard. The criteria categories were: widen, adjust slope, remove from wetland, equity, cost of upgrade, and utility.

Laura would like to see trails more welcoming in areas with less equity. Widening trails with potential for lots of multiuse access was a priority for Marty. Sam preferred utility. Sheri echoed Laura and would like to see priorities in poorer communities put first. James would defer to the professional expertise of the park staff to prioritize the utility of each trail to get the most bang for the buck.

The group agreed that letting the park experts decide which improvements would hold the most impact was the best course for the district.

V. Closing

Next Meeting will be held on 9/22 at 6:30pm.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM

Respectfully submitted,
James Wright

Recording Secretary