



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

Date: 12/15/2021

Time: 6:30 PM

Location: Zoom

In Attendance

Committee Members: Sheri Wantland (chair), Margaret Hite, Laura Porter, Alison Rhea, Katy Brumbelow, Sam Scheerens

Board Liaison: None

Staff: Bruce Barbarasch, Crystal Durbecq

Guests: None

I. Call to Order 6:36 PM

II. Approval of Minutes: Approval of the minutes for October 2021 was postponed.

III. Check-in

- Sam attended a Metro Parks and Nature Bond trails open house.
- Alison observed beaver activity in Hubert Lee Cain Wetlands Natural Area.
- Marty visited Raleigh Park on an icy day and was surprised to see people swimming in the pool. She wondered whether it was OK to eat the apples from trees growing in the park. The consensus reply was to go ahead and eat them and ignore the worms.
- Laura took a walk along the Fanno Creek Trail near Koll Wetlands, and found the natural beauty cathartic. She also had fun walking the trails in Klooky Creek County Park near Astoria. She expressed hope that THPRD can continue to find new ways to appeal to teenagers and young adults.
- Sheri just returned from Scottsdale Arizona and is adjusting to the abrupt change in climate. She walked on some nice trails in Scottsdale and found that her experience with the committee enhanced her appreciation for them. She also visited Gabriel Park in Portland recently and observed ongoing construction to improve accessibility.
- Bruce observed that high intensity rain events this fall has caused some flooding and downed trees around the district. Response to these incidents has been prompt and effective.

IV. Chair Updates:

Sheri thanked the committee members and staff for all their support and contributions during her tenure as committee chair.

V. New Business

A. Integrated Pest Management

Crystal gave a presentation on the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program at THPRD. IPM seeks to use natural methods of controlling invasive species, to minimize the impact to the environment.

- Best practices include pruning, manual removal, mechanical removal, spot treatment with herbicides, planting native species.
- THPRD works with various volunteer groups and partners with other government agencies and non-governmental organizations.

Crystal and Bruce addressed committee members' questions and concerns:

- Chemicals used on broader areas and near bodies of water – THPRD minimizes the use of herbicides. When they do use them, they choose herbicides that are selective to a particular type of plant where possible. THPRD only uses herbicides that are deemed suitable for aquatic use.
- Control of invasive wildlife – Normally this activity is deferred to other agencies, usually the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. THPRD does trap non-native snapping turtles found in the district. Not much can be done about bullfrogs and nutria because they are so widespread in the region.
- Impact of removing Himalayan blackberry on food and habitat for birds and other wildlife – Blackberries are never removed during nesting season. The best practice followed is to replant with native species that birds and other wildlife prefer.
- Volunteer site adoption – THPRD has a very successful site adoption program.
- Interagency coordination – In the past, THPRD has had occasional interagency meetings with partners to coordinate and share changes to the IPM. That activity was sidetracked by the covid-19 pandemic, but will probably begin again soon. The meetings are internal, but public feedback is always welcome.
- Disposal of removed vegetation – Debris is normally left on site, to be used as mulch. In some cases, it is piled on tarps to prevent re-rooting until the plant matter decomposes.
- Determination of native vs. invasive species – Displacement of other plants is generally more important in decision making than determination of nativity or invasiveness. THPRD generates its invasive list from multiple sources, chiefly the Oregon Noxious Weeds list. The list is updated approximately annually. THPRD is considering updates to its native plants list to account for climate change. Input from local tribes is very limited, but THPRD has a desire to increase outreach in this area.

B. Election of Officers for 2022

Marty Hite was elected committee chair for 2022

Katy Brumbelow was elected recording secretary for 2022

VI. Old Business

A. Committee Accomplishments

Sheri presented a summary of committee accomplishments between July 2020 and December 2021.

VII. Closing

The committee expressed thanks and best wishes to departing members Sheri, Laura, Grace, and James.

Next Meeting will be a Joint Advisory Committee meeting, on 1/19/2022 at 6:00 PM

Meeting adjourned at 7:37 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Sam Scheerens

Recording Secretary pro tempore