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

Date: March 15, 2023
Time: 6:30 pm
Location: Fanno Creek Service Center

In Attendance
Committee Members: Heather AbuSneineh, Margaret Hite (acting chair), Shirley Hoffmann (secretary), Vidyanand Kulkarni, Brittany Leffel, Carl Nelson, Tina Ricks
Absent: Erik Lehr, Carla Fennell

Board Liaison: Tya Ping

Staff: Bruce Barbarasch, Nature & Trails Manager

Guests: None

I.   Call to Order The meeting commenced at 6:30 pm.

II.   Approval of Minutes Approved without comment at 6:35 pm.

III.   Old Business None

IV.   New Business
After a personal sharing of what we are excited about this spring, Bruce explained the advisory grant purpose and procedures. Grants should try out a new idea or provide support for something that isn't already in the THPRD budget. There is generally around $10-30,000 available per year but Bruce will let us know the specific amount available this year. He provided examples of previous grants, such as feasibility studies, equipment, events, or partnerships. Grant funds must be spent by the end of THPRD's fiscal year (which is July 1-June 30).

Key points:
-Best to keep the grant simple (one-off, avoid complex coordination issues)
-Avoid requiring a lot of THPRD staff time as they are already overstretched
-The grant application form will help think through the ramifications of the proposal
-Approval requires the joint advisory committee's endorsement

Crystal Durbecq, manager of THPRD natural areas outside of corridors, including the nature parks, presented the work of her team on the habitat inventory assessment they are in process of conducting. The last inventory was conducted from 2016-2018. It is a broader survey of THPRD's 130 natural areas, looking at what types of habitat each natural area has (i.e. wetland, forest type) and a general look at species diversity, vegetation cover and native vs non-native species. The previous survey noted 75% of surveyed sites had good native plant cover as outlined in THPRD's guidelines. The current effort (5 year follow-up) will survey the same sites plus some additional ones. The NTAC will receive links to maps of the individual sites surveyed

Commented [BB1]: I think this was requested, but we don't have this online.

in 2016-2018. This general survey has less detail, therefore more specific surveys relating to vegetation may need to be done (i.e. ash tree survey, possible changes due to climate change).

The NTAC brainstormed possible ideas for an advisory grant. Ideas included:

1. Wayfinding signage for trail gaps (identify locations and priorities)
2. Education/recreation programming at laundromats (ex: nature mobile)
3. Treekeepers- events- in park signage- identification/pop up arboretum
4. Storybook trail- "story walk" with pages from a book along a trail
a. Poetry walk in forest
5. Park passport- rubbings or stamps along parks/trails- turn in book to get prize
a. "Summer reading" style program where activities lead to prize
b. Junior ranger program with booklet from National Park Service
6. Park scavenger hunt to get more community engagement (could be adults)
7. Adventure lab – app- like geocaching. Has a subject and people use to learn about topic like plants
8. Trail walk challenge- adult focused
9. Seasonal guide to flowers in bloom
10. Park benches/resting areas
11. Ask trail maintenance staff what is needed
12. Stormwater drainage, STEM learning on the trail, outdoor learning spaces that are designed envisioned by the community to integrate the natural world in their learning plans. May appeal to homeschool or other families

Homework for the Committee: review the brainstorm list and prioritize 1-2 top ideas before the next meeting so that the committee can determine a proposal for this year.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.

V.   Other None

VI.   Next Meeting will be held on

April 26
6pm Joint Advisory meeting
7 pm NATC

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Hoffmann
Recording Secretary