



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

**Date: February 19, 2024**

**Time: 6:30 pm**

**Location: Fanno Creek Service Center**

### **In Attendance**

Committee Members: Carl Nelson (chair), Tina Ricks (secretary), Tom Erwin, Matthew Shepherd, Erik Lehr, Alison Davis, Jenny Ruthven, Samantha Tipler, Erich Pacheco

Absent: None

Board Liaison: Barbie Minor

Staff: Bruce Barbarasch, Nature & Trails Manager

Guests: none

### **I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 p.m.

### **II. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes were reviewed. January 2025 minutes were approved as written (small late correction to date and place). Erik moved to approve the minutes, Tom seconded and all approved.

### **III. New Business**

#### **Federal Funding Impacts**

Most of our funding comes from our community. But grant funding for large ticket items can come from federal sources directly. Some may be redistributed through Metro. Some examples are:

- Westside trail
- Beaverton creek trail
- Trail sign grant (via Metro)

One example of a late-changing federal project was a grant proposal for Westside Trail Bridge over US 26. It was turned in, and much of the grant criteria changed with only 48 hour notice.

Mostly grant-related funding is for projects, not people (park district staff).

There is uncertainty on some of these expenditures.

**How much of our funding comes from federal funding?**

Very little. Most is property tax and other sources. We also get grants from private, county, state, Metro, and other sources. For example, the NEWT (Nature Experiences Workforce Training) is for high school age participants, many are traditionally underserved people. If grant funding doesn't keep up, do we keep the program? This is unknown at this time.

Federal money typically goes to construction for buildings and trails.

**Do any of THPRD's policies on DEI change?**

**Barbie:** There is no change. Our values have not changed, there are no changes in our policies. There doesn't appear to be any public feedback on this issue. The board sets policies—we may need to stay ready if there are federal changes.

**Budget**

THPRD runs on a July-June fiscal year. We are halfway through the year. There are budget meetings coming up—recommend people attend if they are interested. The Nature & Trails workgroup will be housed under the Park Maintenance department starting in the next fiscal year. Bruce will lead the Sustainability department. There is budget information available to read <https://www.thprd.org/document/5652/fy-202425-adopted-budget>. Budget review meeting Feb. 27.

The Sustainability department's mid-year budget is on target of past years.

**Letter of Support: Willow Creek Boardwalk Project**

There are some congressionally designated funds available to apply for, to fund reconstruction of the Willow Creek Boardwalk on the west side of the Waterhouse Trail. It needs replacing. It's tight, curvy, incredibly slippery, built by Boy Scouts in the 1980s. Carl will write letters on behalf of the committee in support of this project. We will put our names on the letters. Goal is to make it ADA compliant. Letters of Support were provided to Senators Merkley and Wyden, Congresswoman Salinas, and Congresswoman Bonamici.

**Committee Grants**

We have money put aside for the THPRD advisory committees to use for projects. Investments tend to be different than what the district usually funds—such as experimental or something new and different. They tend to be capital improvements. Our committee doesn't currently have a project going. The committee grants have one pot of money, about \$30K, shared between all committees.

**Project/Discussion Ideas for 2025**

- Bylaw updates
- Functional Plan Updates
- Grant Request Ideas
- Native Plants and Strategies

- Beaver Management Policy
- Field Trips \*
- Climate Plan (Fire Resistance, Drought Resistance, Plant Choice and Strategy, Shade, TreeforAll.org) \*
- Access and Equity for Trails
- Trail Usage
- Interpretive Signage (Nature background, Park and Trail naming background, Historical Naming, QR Codes, DEI, etc.) \*\*
- Trail Gap Project Updates
- Website Updates (staff will be updating website this year and may need feedback)
- Increase Community Trail User Engagement

Discussion of potential interpretive sign project. Signs could include educational, historical, wildlife, multilingual, etc. could all be covered in with interpretive signs. But this is potentially a very large project, and interpretive signs can be \$5000.

Factor 1: What are the major languages being spoken in your area? QR codes can be a better idea than trying to put interpretive signs in multiple languages.

### **Natural Resources Functional Plan**

Last update was 2014. Being updated now. Goal is to have all plans updated by summer 2025. Bruce provided an overview presentation of the current National Resources Functional Plan. (<https://www.thprd.org/pdfs2/document2892.pdf>)

Majority of district holdings are natural areas. Functional Plan shows how decisions get made, and helps resolve conflicts as they occur. Our natural resources functional plan includes education.

The plans don't tell us what to do or how to do it, instead, they help us make good decisions.

### **Trail Functional Plan**

Focused on the trail network (aka big paved trails). Transportation/connectivity-oriented trails. This plan is only getting a light update. (<https://www.thprd.org/pdfs2/document3679.pdf>)

All functional plans will have basically the same structure.

We have a subcommittee (Carl, Tom, Matthew, and Bruce) that is reviewing progress on both functional plans. Other committee members are welcome to join.

**Meeting ended 8:28 p.m.**

**Next meeting is March 19 at 6:30 p.m. at the Fanno Creek Service Center, 6220 SW 112<sup>th</sup> Ave., Beaverton. Meeting will also be available by Microsoft Teams.**

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Ricks

Recording Secretary