

Parks Advisory Committee
April 10, 2006

Members Present: Emily Schue, Catherine Koehn, Merle Bottge, Damien Gilbert, Marie Kennedy, and Johnny Medlin

Members Absent: Steve Davis

Staff Present: Todd Winter and Christine Johnson

Guests Present: Chris Orsinger and Jason Blazar, Friends of Buford Park and Pete Burrell with the Friends of the Mt. Pisgah Arboretum

Damien Gilbert, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

I. Announcements/Agenda Modifications

Winter started with introductions and welcomed Marie Kennedy as the newest Committee member and Marie told everyone a little bit about herself. There were no announcements and an agenda modification – two items added under Division Managers Report .

II. Approval of Minutes – February 13, 2006 Parks Advisory Committee Meetings

Gilbert asked that the minutes from the February 13, 2006 meeting be approved. Bottge moved that the minutes be approved. Schue seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous in favor.

III. Public Comment (Maximum of 20 Minutes)

There was no public comment at this time.

IV. Friends of Buford Park – Habitat Management Plan & False Brome Report

Chris Orsinger, Executive Director of the Friends for Buford Park and Mt. Pisgah, introduced Jason Blazar, Stewardship Coordinator for FBP, and Peter Burrell, Executive Director for the Mt. Pisgah Arboretum. Chris Orsinger began by briefly going over the Habitat Management Plan that was mailed to the Committee prior to this meeting. The plan included a project goal, staffing, process overview and funding. The process overview included three overlapping steps. Step one was preliminary work that would begin about July of this year and would include applying for grants, review of the HBRA master plan, compilation and review of existing data sources, creation of a GIS database of HBRA, and coordinating with project partners and special interest groups. Step two includes inventory and assessment and would begin the spring of 2007 and will include field surveys and mapping, and report generation on habitat quality and impact assessments. Step three – plan development would begin approximately July of 2007 and include public education and input, compilation of the information gathered, drafting the HMP and then adopting the plan. The rest of the handout was a cost estimate for the first year of the process, which was about \$77,500.

Medlin asked how the plan would be adopted. Orsinger said that he thought it would come back to this Committee before going on to the Board of County Commissioners or however the County feels the process needs to be. Medlin also asked about funding and how would this project qualify for SDC funds. Winter answered this question by saying the issue was discussed

but in the end it was decided to remove reference of SDC's from the plan document. Orsinger suggested forming some type of task force to help with issues that come up during the plans development as well as discuss management options. At this point, Orsinger turned the discussion over to Jason Blazar. Blazar stated that his idea for a task force would be that Todd Winter would Chair the task force, which would meet monthly to review the progress of the habitat management planning as it proceeds.

Winter added that the stakeholders that could be on the task force would include representatives from the Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, the equestrian community, EPA, Dept. of Forestry, Dept. of Agriculture, the State Weed Board, neighboring property owners, Mt. Pisgah Arboretum, Watershed Councils, Army Corps of Engineers, State Parks, etc. Orsinger hoped that the final plan would include a list of recommended projects that he can then use as a fund-raising tool. Bottge asked if they felt that the phrase "low intensity recreational use" would create a difficulty. Discussion followed regarding whether or not to remove "low intensity" from that phrase, what is the definition of "low intensity", using consistency in the language of the plan as well as incorporating language from the HBRA Master Plan, particularly major elements from the Master Plan, and how current recreational activities would be impacted by the management strategies in the plan. Koehn felt that language regarding wildlife should also be included.

Motion: Bottge moved that this Committee endorse the FBP proposal to develop a HBRA Habitat Management Plan to determine management strategies and actions to conserve and enhance HBRA habitat values while accommodating appropriate recreation use. Medlin seconded the motion.

Peter Burrell wished to add that the Mt. Pisgah Arboretum Board of Directors as well as staff applauds the efforts and vision of Parks Division and this Committee in realizing the importance of the HMP and they really support the project and look forward to being a partner in the process.

The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

False Brome Report: Winter began by saying that the False Brome problem has moved into almost an emergency situation. Winter and Orsinger plan to meet one-on-one with the Commissioners to give them a brief outline of the severity of the problem. Orsinger referred to the map on the back of the False Brome handout, showing where False Brome, a highly invasive grass, has started to take over – choking out the natural under story habitat. The map is not a complete picture however, only a start. Orsinger said that volunteers have been doing manual seed removal and hand weeding followed by native revegetation. This is only a containment effort, which is okay for smaller areas, but with the extent of the infestation that we have, they are going to have to look at the use of herbicides if we want to protect the natural resources that are at stake –the botanical diversity of the under story.

In 2006 the plan is to continue to survey and map HBRA's False Brome infestation, test mowing options as well as continue manual removal, and work to develop an effective False Brome control method. They also hope to get permission to use herbicides as a last resort tool. Winter said that the County is developing a "last resort policy," for review by the Board in the next week or so, outlining the use of herbicides along County road right-of-ways. Parks, if approved, may adopt portions of the policy. Blazar went over the process of mapping and determining the rate that False Brome is spreading. They will continue to experiment with different eradication options, with the help of EnCap, even as the HMP is in the development state. Orsinger will come back to the next meeting to give an update on the South Meadow Project.

V. **Division Manager's Report – Todd Winter, Division Manager**

- **Updated Committee Membership List and Updated Park Inventory List – Christine Johnson:** Christine distributed an updated membership list, with current addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses. When Celia Barry completed the park inventory for the new master plan, they used GIS technology to more accurately figure acreages, so Christine updated the park inventory list to reflect more accurate acreage figures.
- **PAC Spring Tour – Possible tour stops:** Winter thought that we would head south and look at Blue Mt., Baker Bay, Dorena Bridge, Lasells Stewart, Wildwood Falls and the Vaughn Recreation Area. We will lock down a date for the tour at the next meeting.
- **OHV/Blue Mt. Park Concept – Update:** Winter met with some members from the Junction City Jeepers OHV Club about two weeks ago for an on-site visit to Blue Mt. The Club felt that the site would be a good location for development for OHV use. Winter asked them to put together some ideas of what they would like to see in an OHV site.
- **Wigwam Property Proposal:** Winter said that there is between 30 and 90 acres, which include two float ponds, just across the river from Jasper Park, that a developer wants to donate to Parks. After checking into the property further, it was discovered that the property was on the DEQ's list of toxic sites. Winter got back with the owner/developer and let him know that if the site was cleaned up per DEQ requirements, we would be very much interested in the property. Winter will keep this Committee informed if and when we have more information.
- **Oregon State Parks Commission Meeting:** On Thursday, April 13, 2006 at 9:00 a.m., the Oregon State Parks Commission will be meeting in Prineville and one of the agenda items is whether or not to approve the purchase of the Glenada property in the amount of \$819,000. Winter will be in attendance to provide information and answer questions.
- **McKenzie River Cooperative Maintenance Partnership – Update:** The yearly meeting of the Partners will be held tomorrow at 10:00 a.m. Winter said that they would discuss any maintenance issues or concerns, changes that have occurred, such as replacing garbage cans with dumpsters, and a break down of the current maintenance costs for Parks to maintain all the sites. We also just renewed the three-year contract with the Partners.

VI. **Good of the Order/Concerns of the Committee**

Bottge asked for an update on the new Parks Master Plan. Winter said that Celia Barry has been temporarily pulled from this project to cover other jobs, but we are about 60% done with the project. The portions of the plan that are complete are now on-line for anyone's review. Bottge felt that the Master Plan should be complete before we start addressing issues of an OHV Park and the new campground at Armitage.

Bottge asked when summer staffing starts. Winter said that we are currently reviewing applications for three-month positions that will start in late May and continue to early September. Will not have any six-month seasonals this season due to budget constraints from last year's dam repair. Hope to be back to normal next season though.

Bottge asked how the new reservation system is doing. Winter stated that for the first three months, we took in over \$33,000 for both camping and picnic reservations – definitely ahead of previous years.

VII. **Adjournment:**

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:50 p.m.

Submitted by Christine Johnson, Secretary