

Columbia River Gorge Commission
Meeting Minutes
April 14, 2009-10:00 am
A complete record of this meeting is available on compact disc

Location: Rock Creek Recreation Center, 710 SW Rock Creek Drive, Stevenson, Washington

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Harold Abbe
Judy Davis
Sara Grigsby
Dan Harkenrider (10:00-11:35 am)
Walt Loehrke
Lonny Macy
Carl McNew (10:15 am)
Jim Middaugh (10:00 am-3:05 pm)
Joe Palena
Barbara Roberts
Joyce Reinig
Honna Sheffield

MEMBERS ABSENT

STAFF PRESENT

Jill Arens, Executive Director
Tom Ascher, Planner
Michele Dailey, GIS Coordinator/Spatial Analyst
Brian Litt, Planning Manager
Jeff Litwak, Counsel
Kathy Obayashi-Bartsch, Specialist

AUDIENCE PRESENT

Baker, Nathan. Friends of the Columbia Gorge (FOCG)
Baker, Sue. United States Forest Service
Berger, Dave. Lyle, WA
Davenport, Jessica. Skamania County Planning
Graves, David. Columbia River Intertribal Fishing Commission (CRITFC)
Hinatsu, Stan. United States Forest Service
Leipper, Bob. Troutdale, OR
Repar, Mary. Stevenson, WA
Thiemann, Phyllis. Columbia River Gorge Visitors Association (CRGVA)
Thompson Sara. CRITFC
Walker, Eric. Hood River County Planning

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White, Dennis. Husom, WA
Williams, Chuck. The Dalles, OR

Others were present during the day.

Call to Order

Chair Reinig called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

Approval of Minutes-March 10, 2009

Chair Reinig asked the Commission to review the draft minutes. Commissioner Middaugh requested an addition to the Other Business section reflecting his suggestion for a Commission discussion on the definition of "minor" as it relates to urban area boundary revisions. Commissioner Sheffield made a motion to adopt the minutes as drafted with the requested addition. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and approved unanimously.

Public Comment

Dave Berger of Lyle, WA provided photos of encroachment problems on the Klickitat River (see attachment A).

Mary Repar of Stevenson, WA provided comments about the need for protecting the diversity of the Scenic Area and the impact of climate change (see attachment B).

Opportunity for Treaty Tribe Nations to address Commission

As part of the consultation process treaty tribe members may speak about any issue on the agenda or any other matter. There were no Tribal members present.

Wild and Scenic River briefing

Commissioner Harkenrider provided an update on Wild and Scenic Rivers. He introduced Forest Service staff, Stan Hinatsu and Sue Baker.

Stan Hinatsu and Sue Baker provided a presentation (see attachment C1-C2) including the legislative history, Forest Service management and oversight responsibilities with respect to development and Management Plan responsibilities. They discussed the Klickitat River's designation as a Recreational River and the White Salmon River as a Scenic River.

The Commission asked clarifying questions. Commissioner Harkenrider said the Forest Service does not have the regulatory authority except on federal lands but tries to influence development standards primarily through the county.

Public Comment

Dennis White of Husom, WA expressed his opinion that the Management Plan has not been enforced and implemented.

Chuck Williams of The Dalles, OR provided testimony about the efforts to preserve the scenic qualities of the White Salmon River (see attachment D).

Mary Repar of Stevenson, WA said she believes there is a lack of enforcement in the National Scenic Area and for Wild and Scenic Rivers.

Dave Berger of Lyle, WA asked for an update on Forest Service work, specifically water quality monitoring. Ms. Baker said water quality monitoring was conducted for the White Salmon River and found very little change in conditions.

Commissioner Harkenrider said some of the negative perceptions are understandable but there are additional factors that are not obvious to the public. He said the Forest Service has been working with Klickitat County to manage the area and the county has been increasingly more supportive as they recognize the value of the scenic and recreational quality of the area.

The Commission thanked Ms. Baker and Mr. Hinatsu for the presentation.

Break 11:20-11:35

Hood River Ordinance

The Gorge Commission conducted a hearing to determine consistency of amendments to Hood River County's Scenic Area Ordinance with the Management Plan. Tom Ascher, Planner provided a summary of the amendments which incorporate provisions of plan amendments and revisions to the Management Plan made to address a correction to commercial events on farms, commercial uses in historic buildings, boarding of horses and the Management Plan consolidation amendments.

Commissioner Middaugh asked the Hood River County representative to comment on the public comment received.

Eric Walker, Hood River County Principal Planner said they received limited public testimony and there were general questions about the horse boarding ordinance.

Public Comment

Nathan Baker of Friends of the Columbia Gorge said they submitted comments to the county. He said because there is litigation regarding commercial uses of historic buildings, this section of the ordinance may need to be revised in the future.

There was no additional discussion.

Commissioner Sheffield made a motion to find portions of Hood River County Article 75 which were amended as consistent and make a tentative finding of consistency for those portions of the ordinances affecting the Special Management Areas, and submit

those portions to the Secretary of Agriculture for concurrence. Commissioner McNew seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Harold Abbe-aye

Judy Davis-aye

Sara Grigsby-aye

Walt Loehrke-aye

Lonny Macy-aye

Carl McNew-aye

Jim Middaugh-aye

Joe Palena-aye

Barbara Roberts-aye

Joyce Reinig-aye

Honna Sheffield-aye

Lunch 11:45 am-1:30 p.m.

Jill Arens, Executive Director said staff is engaged in many work activities that the Commission and the public may not be aware of. She introduced Michele Dailey, GIS Coordinator/Spatial Analyst.

Information/Knowledge Management

Michele Dailey, GIS Coordinator reviewed her background and work. She provided a summary of how the agency is implementing information/knowledge management principles as part of its Continual Process Improvements (see attachment E). She reviewed the items that are being worked on and the potential benefits associated with this work.

The Commission thanked Ms. Dailey for the presentation.

NSA Manager's Report

There was no NSA Manager's Report.

Executive Committee Report

Commissioner Abbe provided an update on the Committee's work. The Committee discussed the work plan in light of reduced funding and limited staff as Oregon requested reduction plans of up to 30%. He said they zeroed out the work plan and determined what work items are required or are priority items. The Executive Director selected staff positions with appropriate skills to match that work. He said in Washington the Senate and the House released their versions of the budget. The Conference Committee will meet and create a Joint Committee version. We hope for a matching level from Oregon.

The Committee also discussed possible cost savings such as reducing the number of meetings or consolidating meetings if possible.

Director's Report (see attachment F)

Jill Arens, Executive Director provided an update on the budget process including the following:

April 16th- the Oregon budget outline will be released and a team of legislators will travel throughout the state for public input.

May- late April/early May, Washington budget will be released

May 15th- Oregon economic forecast will be released

June- early/mid June-Oregon budget will be released

Arens said staff is focused on completing the following items before the end of the fiscal year:

Vital Signs Indicators Status Report 2009- scheduled for a May release

Washington Small Agency Technology grant for development of a Vital Signs Indicators Project website

Efficiency Improvements such as process oriented Commission minutes

Urban Area Boundary Revision work

Agency performance measures- scheduled a final draft in May for potential adoption in June

Customer service survey was recently completed for 2008

Chair Reinig said the Executive Committee discussed a long-term funding strategy and the need to develop better relationships with Congressional representatives and approach possible federal funding. Arens said she and others have discussed the budget situation with legislators and at the staff level to ensure they understand that a reduction in one state has a double impact of the agency.

Arens said at the May meeting, there will be a work session from Oregon and Washington agencies regarding growth management issues. The Commission is a resource to bring other agencies together such as the Washington and Oregon transportation agencies which had never met before the February Commission meeting.

She said Grand Ronde Tribe has been working in Washington DC for inclusion as a recognized tribe in the Scenic Area. She said this will be a topic at the Commission's June meeting, the Government to Government Summit in Toppenish, Washington.

She has been working with the MercyCorps, which will host the Chinese delegation in May. The Commission and Forest Service will conduct a panel discussion for the group at the Discovery Center. She said a cultural exchange hosted by Lyle, WA residents and the Tribes will follow the panel event on May 15th. The River Peoples Cultural Exchange is open to the public.

She said there was some concern raised regarding rulemaking notices. There is a specific process which was properly and legally followed. She said in the future, rulemaking notices will be sent to the e-mail agenda list as a courtesy.

She said there has been no update from the Hood River School District regarding their application for an Urban Area Boundary revision.

Rules Committee Report

Rules Committee Chair, Judy Davis provided a summary of the Committee's work on Urban Area Boundary rules, which includes discussion of ideas to define "minor revision".

Other Business

Commissioner Abbe said he met with the Governor's representative for southwest Washington to discuss appointment of a Washington Commissioner to replace Jane Jacobsen. Commissioner Roberts said she also met a Washington State representative to encourage the appointment of a Washington Commissioner.

Arens provided more information about the upcoming Government to Government Summit which will include discussion of the following items:

Significance and meaning of treaties to the Tribes

Grand Ronde Tribe

Urban area boundary revision

Cultural Advisory Committee

Columbia Basin Fish Accords

Break 2:40-3:15 pm

Climate Change 101

David Graves and Sara Thompson of the Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) provided a summary of the agency's work on climate change (see attachment G).

The Commission asked clarifying questions about CRITFC's research, policy work and the impact on fisheries. The Commission thanked Mr. Graves and Ms. Thompson for the presentation.

Adjourn

Chair Reinig adjourned the meeting at 4:05 p.m.

KOB

Approved on 5-12-09