

**LRAPA CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
(CAC) Meeting Minutes
VIA ZOOM/In Person**



October 25, 2022

Attending: Jim Daniels, Chair; Kelly Wood, Vice Chair; ZOOM - Paul Metzler, Mysti Frost, Evelina Davidova-Kamis, Jeffrey Carman, Peter Dragovich, Terry Richardson, Chris Cline

Absent: Shane Ruddell, Eric Burdette,

Staff: Steve Dietrich, Travis Knudsen, Debby Wineinger (VIA ZOOM – Max Hueftle)

I. Call to Order/Agenda Review

Chair Jim Daniels called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m.

II. Public Participation-None

III. Board Meeting Overview

Chair Jim Daniels overview on the meeting.

- There was public comment from the Respondent of an enforcement case.
- The employee handbook ethics section was approved to be updated.
- It was agreed to send out a letter of support for Oakridge during the wildfire smoke impacts. Letter will be sent to CAC members after the meeting today.
- Review Dashboard report.
- Oakridge Air presented their quarterly report.
- The Board asked if the committee had suggestions for projects or even more specifically, how we would propose projects. The committee agreed that they meet at the Board's discretion, and there already is a procedure for suggesting projects. **Jim Daniels** thought it was best for the committee to just respond to issues that came up. He also shared the Board's gratitude for the work the committee does.

IV. 2022 Permitted Source Survey – continued discussion:

- **Kelly Wood** – said the committee discussed having a section after each question for additional comments. But the last question in the survey is where it asks for additional comments.
- **Travis Knudsen** – CAC has the freedom to choose how they would like to go about doing the survey. LRAPA staff could send out the email blast, making it clear that the CAC or the volunteer in the CAC will be the one who's collecting the information to put together a report for the Board. Or the initial email blast could come directly from a CAC member. If a CAC member sent out the email, LRAPA would provide the contacts to that person, assuming there is not confidentiality problems with sharing that information. Having an LRAPA email created for a CAC member to send the survey request was determined to be the best approach.
- **Debby Wineinger** – said in the past Lance Giles has setup LRAPA email address to use, that way it does not go directly to someone private email address.
- A subcommittee to take on the review of survey responses was formed. CAC members who volunteered for the subcommittee were Kelly Wood, Jeffrey Carman, and Evelina Davidova-Kamis. And Chris Cline could help if needed. . Kelly Wood volunteered to draft an email introduction for the survey, but requested to see the 2018 email for reference.
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- **Kelly Wood** - noted in the Zoom chat Evelina found the survey from 2018. She would forward it to everyone so they could see what email intro was used in 2018.
- **Jim Daniels** – said regarding the timeline, for the November meeting bring your ideas and suggested questions for the public (Website) survey for everyone to review. The subcommittee should meet in December. He would like to forward the report to the Board in January.

Round Table:

- **Jim Daniels** – said in the Bylaws there is a requirement that the committee chair, submit a report to the Board by sometime in December, reviewing what was done over the last year and propose projects for the future. He thought it would not be too soon to get any thoughts on that, as it also speaks to the Board's question of, if there is anything the CAC wants to be doing. And if they are happy with the process for proposing projects. **Debby Wineinger** said she will send a recap of this year's meeting topics to help him with the report. **Steve Dietrich** said along the same line, you have been introduced briefly to the concept that the board is looking to do work sessions. What may come out of some of those work sessions is some things that get put on the CAC's lists to work on.

- **Kelly Wood** - said she attended (as a representative of the McKenzie Watershed Council / Alliance Board member) an event held by the Upper Willamette Stewardship Network (UWSN) up at the Mount Pisgah Arboretum a couple of weeks ago. It was a gathering of the UWSN staff, board members and partners of the network. At one point, they split the attendees off into small groups and asked them what they foresee for the future of the partnership for the watersheds. Her group mentioned a new concept that she hadn't heard of before, it's called cultural burning. The concept is for local communities to coordinate with tribes and Indigenous people for guidance with controlled burning. Instead of saying good smoke or bad smoke, they're talking about good fire. She thought it was an interesting concept. She thinks there might be an opportunity here with outreach, communication and learning that we can explore as a future topic/information sheet. **Chris Cline** said it is a great concept. That's the history of our area. And that's what those folks did. So it's a really interesting concept.
- **Jim Daniels** - said he heard the Board's comments at the last Board meeting, there was a sense that let it burn for service policy was a factor in Cedar Creek, which he had not heard before. His understanding was that there were several lightning strikes that started the fire. **Chris Cline** said he would tap dance around the initial question from the Board about what happened with that fire and why. **Steve Dietrich** said the letter LRAPA sent last week to federal, state, and local agencies, hit on a couple of things that will commit LRAPA to be more involved with incident command from an air quality nexus. But the letter also points to the fact that there were six weeks of an unbelievable amount of smoke that was inundating to Oakridge/Westfir area and poor air quality way up in the unhealthy levels for days on end. And that there was nothing in place that can automatically be turned on to help people relocate, do something for their indoor air quality. Instead, groups like Good Company and Oakridge Air, were taking it upon themselves to do some of the work that the health department had a hard time doing because of red tape. Getting programs like that ready to go off the shelf when you need them goes a lot farther and is more effective than what we had to deal with in the last eight weeks. That is what the letter alludes to.
- **Paul Metzler** - said Steve Dietrich gave an introduction to the county commissioners. A couple of commissioners brought up quite forcefully the air quality issues around Oakridge, Now the LRAPA Boards puts out this this letter. Is it the sense of the Board overall the air quality should be higher priority than overall forest policy is that the sense overall? **Steve Dietrich** said No, he did not think it is quite that extreme. It is more about having more of a presence or an equal opportunity at the table when you are trying to make decisions about wildfires and smoke impacts on communities. Fires that are in the middle of nowhere, they are allowed to burn a lot longer, versus fires that are right next door to you, the difference is on how people are impacted. That is really what it was getting at. LRAPA's letter tries to do that in the voice of the Board. And Steve signed it as well, to say we need to do a better job of planning for those events in the future.

- **Steve Dietrich** - said with the prescribed burns our inspectors when bad air days asked can you hold off another day or two? And a lot of the time they were able to. He thinks with Rivers to Ridges they were trying to make sure that even if they did burn it was not going to be in a direction toward the city, and they were successful. **Travis Knudsen** said every year Rivers to Ridges, which their group of seventeen different organizations like the city of Eugene, US Forest Service, ODF involved as well. They do ecological burning, trying to burn invasive plants and things and LRAPA issues their burn permits. He described that no ecological burning occurred 2020 and 2021. 2022 was the first year they successfully burned. Coburg Hills being one of them. But they only really accomplished a small number of burns that we had permitted for them. And a big part of that is the conditions that LRAPA sets on this topic is we handle the smoke angle or perspective. And then the Fire Authority manages the fire danger perspective. So, these groups get permission from the firefighters and say, here is all the equipment and staff we are going to have on hand to manage fires, so it does not get out of control. And then LRAPA says here is what we want to do, our permit conditions say, the wind must be blowing in a direction where it takes the smoke away from town as opposed to towards town. This year, which is not a consideration LRAPA has had to make before, but because of the Cedar Creek fire and the air quality impacts we were having locally, it was an added a condition and if the air quality is already bad, we don't like to have prescribed burns to make the air quality worse. So, there were days or instances where the smoke was blowing away from town or the wind would blow smoke away from town. And the air quality in town at the time was fine. They were able to light that burn. Lots of people are interested in prescribed burns. He received a number of calls from people who were interested and concerned, and some of them upset by the fact that there were prescribed burns taking place, which he feels is usual for this topic. The seasons over now that things are wet. Next year, he is sure we will get another burn permit for more prescribed burns.
- **Paul Metzler** asked Chris Cline how big is the window of time for ecological or cultural burns, do they only occur in the late summer? **Chris Cline** said you cannot do it too early in the in the fall, you are running a very real fire risk. It is really a compressed window when you can get it accomplished. It is in the late fall, and it has to be matched up, the humidities have to be correct, it can't be hot and dry enough that it escapes and yet it can't be damp enough that it's ineffective and it won't burn. Another time that is good to do it from a safety standpoint is in the dead of winter, oftentimes we will get a week or two really good hard freezes. Ecologically what they are after are some of the grasses and the invasive species, blackberry, stems and things of that nature will consume readily even in the dead of winter, because they have no light fuel moisture. That is a good time to do it. Because there is no fire threat getting away. But, but when we are in those cold snap conditions, obviously, everything settles and sinks to the valley. So, there are a couple times you can do it late fall, and into winter and each of them those time periods have their own set of issues to be reckoned with. **Steve Dietrich** said unfortunately, Oregon does not get frequent enough snows at the lower elevations where these burns need to occur like other states do. As soon as you have enough snow on the ground, the other states are lighting off all their slash piles. They do it all the time. But it just it does not work out well here in Oregon.

- **Mysti Frost** - wanted to emphasize the involvement of indigenous peoples in land management practices, particularly fire management, they have a lot of understanding of the land and wisdom. They should be allowed to lead on this subject and be at the table for policymaking and practices. She strongly urges LRAPA and other agencies to start reaching out and getting indigenous folks involved with in this conversation, the sooner the better. And she has brought up having in place emergency evacuation policy or whatnot for clean air shelters, for community people to go to. She was saddened to hear about folks in Oakridge. She said it has been two years since the awful fires are 2020. And we are still finding ourselves back with the same issue of folks not knowing where to go or where to find help to escape harsh air quality conditions. She hopes this conversation keeps happening. Air shelter for everybody to go to if they should need it. Where do they get the money to build something like that? What does that look like and who is going to pay for it and staff it? But this problem is not going to go away.
- **Jim Daniels** - asked if people preferred being in-person meetings or does the hybrid meetings work better for them. **Mysti Frost** said in the chat remote works for her. And **Paul Metzler** also said that he likes the hybrid meetings. **Steve Dietrich** mentioned that there is a consideration of providing lunch at the in-person CAC meetings or bring your own bag lunch. **Travis Knudsen** said if we are going to have lunch here for the CAC meetings, Debby Wineinger would need an attendance check, so we know how much food to order.

v. Adjournment

Chair Jim Daniels adjourned the meeting at 12:58 p.m.

(Minutes recorded by Debby Wineinger)