

BUTTE FALLS COMMUNITY FOREST PROJECT
Project Team Meeting #2
August 10, 2020, 2:00 – 5:00 PM

Meeting Minutes (written by Jennah Stillman)

Project Team Members Present:

Alan Dobney (*Southern Oregon Railway Society*), Colleen Padilla (*SORED*), Jamie Trammell (*Southern Oregon University*), Shane Jimerfield (*Lomokatsi Restoration Project*), Terry Fairbanks (*Southern Oregon Forest Restoration Collaborative*), Bob Hackett (*Travel Southern Oregon*), Marta Tarantsey (*Business Oregon*), Art Anderson (*ODOT*), Dave Erickson (*Lone Rock Timber*), Representative Pam Marsh, Susan Bethers (*Oregon State Parks*), Kathy Bryon (*Gordon Elwood Foundation*), Tim Vrendenburg (*Cow Creek Umpqua Tribe*), Phil Long (*Butte Falls School District*)

Conveners:

Mayor Linda Spencer (*City of Butte Falls*) and Bill Thorndike (*Medford Fabrication*)

Facilitation and Project Team:

Keith Tymchuk (*Oregon Solutions*), Karmen Fore (*Oregon Solutions*), Jennah Stillman (*Oregon Solutions*), Alex Campbell (*Regional Solutions*), and Kristin Kovalik (*Trust for Public Land*)

1. Welcome, Agenda Overview and Introductions

The co-conveners, Mayor Linda Spencer and Bill Thorndike welcomed everyone to the meeting and Oregon Solutions project manager, Keith Tymchuk, overviewed the agenda. Keith provided a brief summary of the first project team meeting held on July 9th and noted that since then, the Oregon Solutions team had been conducting individual follow-up with all project team members to gather additional input and answer any questions.

The key feedback themes that emerged from the conversations thus far included, but were not limited to:

- Widespread interest in and support for the town of Butte Falls, the Community Forest project and desire for it to succeed
- Questions regarding initial funding for the general land acquisition (\$700,000 is still needed) and supplementary for the various development projects to implement once the land is acquired
- The desire for a timeline/high level project master plan, with short and long term goals identified
- Challenges of the remote work environment and impacts from COVID-19
- Sustainability of the project efforts, to be maintained through the future

Mayor Linda Spencer shared that the feedback she had received from the community members thus far was in line with the above themes, but primarily focused on the sustainability of efforts, the forest management component and fire resilience plan.

2. Project Team Path Forward

All team members introduced themselves and shared thoughts on where they feel they, or their organization, can add capacity to support and contribute resources to the various components of this project and help the community achieve their vision of creating a community forest.

Review of Community Forest Commission and Vision - *Mayor Linda Spencer*

Since the project team met last, the structure of the Butte Falls community committees' governance and organization progressed into institutionalizing the Butte Falls Community Forest Commission. With a goal of building community along with building the forest, the Commission is composed of the following entities: Forest Management, Parks and Recreation, Economic Development, Residential Development, Special Projects (currently- Historic Railroad), Education and Research, Marketing and Communication. Serving as an advisory body to the Town Council of Butte Falls, the Commission will oversee the management of the community committees and communication with the town. The Commission chairs will manage the high-level plan for the Community Forest. To be a Commission chair, one must reside or own property within the geographic area of the fire district (with the exception of the Special Projects).

Mayor Linda Spencer noted that there are forthcoming considerations that fall within the scope of the Commission to be addressed which include, but are not limited to:

- The need to develop an all-lands planning approach for parks and recreation, including the falls and cemetery. The first priority will be creating a trail plan, which is not yet in place.
- Uncertainty of residential development. Given that the town does not currently have space for residential development, there are approximately 17 acres within the proposed land acquisition that could potentially be used for residential development. This land is appraised at \$80,000-\$90,000, but cannot be included in the purchase work of Trust for Public Land. Thus, a strategy for this land funding should be developed in advance. This could be an opportunity for an innovative developer who might be interested in helping acquire this land to creatively design and establish later on as residences.
- The Butte Falls Charter School's hands-on learning program is currently experiencing significant challenges due to COVID-19 impacts and distance learning requirements.
- There is currently little to no marketing or communications expertise in the town and will need outside assistance down the road.

Oregon Solutions Project Team Subcommittees

The group discussed recommendations for how to structure project team subcommittees in order to best support communication and collaboration between subcommittees and the Community Forest Commission. It was noted that it will be helpful for each subcommittee to have at least one member of the Butte Falls community participating, in order to remain connected and aligned in efforts. The

subcommittees determined to best encompass the expertise of the project team members and support the project vision are:

- Community forest management and restoration
- Education and research
- Community economic health and process
- Recreation
- Funding

Action: Following today's meeting, the project team members will share which top two committees they feel their knowledge base, skills, and interest would be best fit. The Oregon Solutions team and conveners will then work to divide the group accordingly into their first and/or second option, then assist with scheduling, striving to have subcommittees meet in September.

Action: The Community Forest Commission will solidify the council structure, confirm the Commission chairs and create a list of prioritized action items and share those with the Oregon Solutions subcommittees. The Commission will be up and running in September.

Ground Rules, Declaration of Cooperation, and Purpose Statement

The group discussed two sets of proposed ground rules and determined that following today's meeting, the members will share their preferred option and based on the consensus of input, the subsequent set of ground rules will be operationalized moving forward.

Karmen Fore then reviewed two Declaration of Cooperation (DOC) examples from Oregon Solutions projects, and shared that the purpose of generating this forthcoming document is to memorialize the project team's coming together, accounting for actions that occurred during project team work, and to transcribe commitments from the team, which documents the efforts and resources contributed. The importance of establishing a DOC in advance is helpful in demonstrating cohesive, organized support for a project at the state and federal levels. After the Oregon Solutions project component is completed, the group will be re-convened to ensure that the commitments made in the DOC are upheld and working.

To frame the work of this project team and to include in the preface of a DOC, it is intended to have an organizing purpose statement. A draft purpose statement was then shared, discussed and revised by the group during the meeting. The following statement received group support:

To create the Butte Falls Community Forest. This team will work to support 1) community forest management and restoration, 2) education and research, 3) community economic health and process, 4) recreation and 5) funding. It is expected that the creation of an Oregon Solutions Team for this project will help make efficient use of available resources, accelerate the pace of the project, overcome potential impediments early on, raise awareness of the project on a statewide level and bring effective partners to the table.

Action: Project team members not present at the meeting will have the opportunity to provide additional input and suggested edits on the draft purpose statement.

Next Steps

Mayor Linda Spencer shared that from her perspective, there is a need for the project team to assist with the planning efforts, identifying where resources are (grant writing and technical expertise) and contributing guidance from previous project work experience to take an all-lands approach to developmental opportunities. This project is not just for Butte Falls but can serve as an example of how a small rural community can prosper.

In closing, Keith reviewed the follow-up actions needed, including the voting on ground rules, edits to the purpose statement, and the selection of subcommittees. The entire project team will aim to meet again in October or November.

The meeting adjourned at 4:59pm.