

**ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
AUGUST 14, 2024**

Present: Deb Merchant, Damilola Olajubutu, Jackson Rheuben, Michael Hughes, Jason Schindler, Kanchan Ojha

Excused: Sydney Tamplin

Staff: Sean McGuire, Maura Kwiatkowski; Board of Commissioners Office; Petra Schuetz, Community Development; Linda McGirl, Information Technology

Guests: Kenneth Larson, Kevin Kenaga, Janet O. [surname not provided]; Community Members

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Merchant called the meeting to order at 4:03 PM and introductions were made.

Schindler invited committee members to share the sustainability practices on which they are focusing. Responses included biking to work, not consuming red meat, not purchasing items in unsustainable packaging, avoid single-use plastic bags, composting, and dumpster diving. The icebreaker for the September meeting will be led by Rheuben.

2. Approval of the July 10, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Merchant made a motion to approve the July 10, 2024 meeting minutes; which was seconded by Hughes. The minutes were unanimously approved.

3. Update on the Conditional Use Permit Process

Schuetz reported the Conditional Use Permit Application provided by Republic Services submitted on June 16, 2024.

4. Sustainable Materials Management Plan

McGuire provided an update on the Sustainable Materials Management Plan (SMMP), which was borne from the Benton County Talks Trash (BCTT) recommendations. End of life for the Coffin Butte Landfill is between 2037 and 2039. McGuire and others are talking with all western counties; still need to meet with Linn and Lane Counties. Outreach to the state and innovators will follow county meetings. It will be important to look regionally and systemically to gain an understanding of how materials and waste are shifting throughout the region.

5. Shifting from Google Drive to Microsoft Teams

McGill provided an overview of Microsoft Teams as a tool for the committee to collaborate. Teams provides more security and control for the county, so the decision has been made to move away from Google Drive as the committee's collaborative and information storage application. McGill recommended the committee discuss how they would like to use Teams functionality for document storage and information posts. Merchant asked members to log into Teams to confirm they can navigate the application and access files. Any issues can be sent to Merchant to address at the next committee meeting.

6. Getting Back to ENRAC Business

Merchant mentioned the revolving fund conversation. To what degree can the county create a fund with sufficient impact to make a meaningful difference? McGuire advised that the previous discussion was with the county's former Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Rick Crager, who has since been appointed Assistant County Administrator. Debbie Sessions is the Interim CFO, and McGuire has been briefing Sessions. Crager was confident there is opportunity to create a fund in the \$50,000 to \$75,000 range. McGuire would need to reach back out to Seeds for the Sol President Julie Williams about how the funds would be used and where. The initial intent of ENRAC members was to look out into rural communities. One idea was to be far more focused; identify a specific area and hone in. For example, Alsea could use help. What would that mean? McGuire indicated the county could reach out to Alsea and/or other rural communities to learn about their needs. Planning for the county's next biennium budget cycle will begin this fall, which is when the funding request would be developed. McGuire will discuss with Crager and Sessions whether the fund as envisioned is still viable.

7. Benton County Updates

McGuire thanked Hughes for connecting with Brian Lee regarding the Corvallis Carbon Offset Fund (CCOF). McGuire spoke with Berit Kling at Pacific Power regarding the totality of the amount that would be needed. Unfortunately, there is not a great deal that CCOF can contribute. Hughes would like to look at county carbon beyond electricity, including natural gas and gasoline/diesel. McGuire agreed it is about more than electricity. He does the county government organization inventory, and his Corvallis counterpart does the city's inventory. An inventory for the county as a whole has not yet been done. McGuire offered to provide ENRAC members with the 2022 greenhouse gas inventory and review with committee at the September meeting, if desired. Merchant requested McGuire proceed as offered. McGuire will also load the information to Teams and include a link in the September meeting agenda.

Zoning: McGuire will check with Community Development regarding zoning & solar panels and will update ENRAC members at the September meeting. The county is in very early discussions regarding the update to the comprehensive plan.

Developing mailers, using social media, etc. what are the constraints on getting the information out? Merchant suggested there is a need to identify what the community is interested in rather than creating information that is not particularly useful. McGuire indicated he would begin work on a strategy that would be shared with ENRAC members for review and comment.

McGuire reported the county is moving forward on the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Coordinator vacancy. The role and title will likely differ from what it has been in the past. The county is looking for a change agent, with a goal is of embedding EDI in county daily operations.

McGuire asked whether the committee had an interest in an in-person meeting in September. The meeting could also be hybrid. McGuire will look into logistics and review with the committee.

Hughes reported attending the Beyond Toxics virtual public meeting on August 13. This group is opposed to any landfill expansion. Schindler expressed interest in hearing about future Beyond Toxics meetings, and Hughes advised another meeting will be held in the next month or so.

Rheuben had a question posed to him recently: if there currently was no landfill and Republic Services wanted to apply for a landfill permit, would it be approved? Merchant agreed the question is important to consider and was glad ENRAC will have more time to delve more deeply into the issues.

Merchant called to members' attention the letter from various elected Oregon leaders to the US Environmental Protection Agency calling for an investigation of Coffin Butte Landfill concerns. A copy of the letter is posted in Teams.

8. Future Meetings, Wrap-up, and Next Steps

The next ENRAC meeting is September 11, 2024, at 4 PM.

9. Adjournment

Chair Merchant adjourned the meeting at 5:28 PM.