

WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
SISTERS CITY COUNCIL
520 E. CASCADE AVENUE
JANUARY 22, 2009

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lon Kellstrom Mayor
Bill Merrill Councilor President
Pat Thompson Councilor
Jerry Bogart Councilor

ABSENT:

Sharlene Weed Councilor

GUESTS:

Mathias Perle Upper Deschutes Watershed Council Project Manager
Joanne Richter Watershed Professional Network Project Manager

STAFF PRESENT:

Eric Porter Comm. Dev. Director
Lisa Young Finance Director
Brad Grimm Public Works Director
Laura Lehman Associate Planner
Kathy Nelson City Recorder

ABSENT:

Eileen Stein City Manager

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Kellstrom at 6:30 p.m.

A. Whychus Creek Restoration Plan Update

Community Development Director Porter stated the effort to develop a Whychus Creek Restoration Plan began more than a year ago. He stated the Upper Deschutes Watershed Council (UDWC) is the lead agency for the plan that includes a four mile stretch of Whychus Creek. He stated the intent is to identify a plan for bank restoration and the necessary tasks to put the plan into motion. He introduced Mathias Perle of the UDWC.

Mathias Perle, UDWC Project Manager gave councilors an overview on the history and mission of the UDWC. He stated the UDWC is an environmental non-profit organization founded in 1996. He stated the UDWC's work focuses on the upper Deschutes River and covers approximately two million acres and 1,800 miles of creeks and rivers. He stated the center of UDWC's mission are stream habitat restoration and assessment, education and monitoring. He stated the organization's Board of Directors is comprised of members from a broad range of interests with regard to the Deschutes River and that staff is comprised of four members with expertise in biology, ecology, hydrology, and water quality.

Mr. Perle stated the work being performed on Whychus Creek is just a small portion of the many projects that are on-going for the UDWC. He stated this four mile project begins at Brooks Scanlon Road, runs through Sisters and extends two miles outside the urban growth boundary downstream. He stated this portion of Whychus Creek presents a four part problem; 1) bank erosion, caused by 2) the natural dynamics of the creek, 3) development patterns that have put properties at risk and 4) past "fixes" that have made the problems worse.

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Mr. Perle stated the reason to do something now is because numerous homeowners residing along Whychus Creek have requested assistance from the City, Watershed Council, Department of Fish and Wildlife and other agencies. He stated there is also an improved understanding of how past “fixes” have caused more problems and with the reintroduction of steelhead into the creek there are new regulatory requirements and expanded funding opportunities. He stated the approach being utilized for the creek is to plan holistically while applying the latest technology and approaches. He stated the plan will also promote “fixes” that will balance erosion and deposition, facilitate vegetative growth and improve the overall health of the stream and property that is adjacent to the creek. He stated the project team is looking ahead to develop solutions to avoid further erosion problems and anticipate how the floodplain may migrate over time. He provided an overview of the timeline that has been followed to develop the restoration plan including meetings, surveys and other actions that have occurred thus far. He stated that once the plan is adopted and specific solutions have been identified, applying for funding and grants will follow.

Councilor Thompson asked whether the development of the plan is funded solely by grants. **Mr. Perle** stated that a majority of the funding has come from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) with the City also contributing. **Councilor Thompson** asked how much the City has contributed financially to the plan. **Mr. Perle** stated OWEB provided a grant of approximately \$80,000 and the City contributed \$30,000 for funding the plan and to offset the cost of the UDWC participation. **Councilor Thompson** asked what the cost will be for the entire project. **Mr. Perle** explained that the Watershed Council is not looking at the plan as a whole since it includes four miles of projects but will instead prioritize the projects and complete them over time. He stated it is impossible to put a fixed cost on the total project at this time.

Joanne Richter, Water Professional Network Project Manager stated there are 52 identified actions for the project at this time. She stated the plan should be seen as something that will take ten to 20 years to implement with ongoing reassessment as projects are completed. **Mr. Perle** stated that OWEB is a large funder for many of the UDWC projects and since OWEB has a vested interest to see the plan come to fruition it will almost certainly assist with the implementation of the plan along with other funding sources. He stated that having several funding sources participate is instrumental in successful funding overall. **Councilor Merrill** added that other funding avenues are available as a result of the reintroduction of steelhead.

There was discussion on how a failure of the Carver Lake moraine dam could significantly increase water flow through Whychus Creek and the entire region. **Mr. Perle** stated that while a failure of the Carver Lake dam is a consideration, the restoration plan can’t attempt to anticipate all possibilities.

Mayor Kellstrom thanked Mr. Perle and Ms. Richter for their presentation.

B. City Manager Update

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As Manager Stein was not in attendance there was no update.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Nelson, City Recorder

Lon Kellstrom, Mayor