



King County
Rural Forest Commission

Minutes - King County Rural Forest Commission Meeting Thursday, January 10, 2013, Preston Community Center

Commissioners present: John Chaney (Chair), forest landowner; Rex Thompson, forester; Ron P. Baum, forest landowner; Doug McClelland, Washington Department of Natural Resources; Daryl Harper, forest landowner; Dick Ryon, North Bend resident; Cindy Spiry, Snoqualmie Tribe; Brandy Reed, King Conservation District; and Julie Stangell, Hancock Timber

Staff: Julia Larson, Department of Natural Resources and Parks; Kathy Creahan, Water and Land Resources Division; and Linda Vane, Commission Liaison

Guests: Dave Townsend, Washington Farm Forestry Association; Donna Brathovde, Ravensdale resident; and Mike Brathovde, Ravensdale resident

Chair John Chaney called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m.

Minutes: Motion 1- 113 That the minutes of the November 8, 2012 meeting be approved with corrections. The motion passed unanimously.

Election of Officers for 2013

The Commission elected John Chaney to the position of Chair and Dick Ryon to Vice Chair. At-large Executive Committee members will be Cindy Spiry and Rex Thompson with Julie Stangell and Doug McClelland serving as alternates.

Staff and Agency Reports and Announcement

King Conservation Report— Brandy Reed reported that the King County Council has approved a new rates and charges-based fee structure that averages \$5.14 per parcel annually in 2013-14. Charges assessed on a particular property will vary depending on the services provided, she said. In 2013, the KCD will offer no new programs and the marine shorelines technical assistance will be eliminated, said Brandy. The KCD will continue to provide agricultural technical assistance and most of its usual programs for urban and rural residents of the district, she said. The KCD and King County will convene a task force this year to make recommendations for future KCD programming and to make sure the resources for providing those services are available, said Brandy. A discussion of the task force ensued. The Commission encouraged the KCD to include someone who is knowledgeable about family forests and forestry on the task force.

King County Forestry Program— Kathy Creahan reported on the 2013 budget and the Forestry Program's activities for the coming year. She said that through 2014 the Forestry Program would provide a half-time forester to the Park Division's Forest Stewardship Program. They will also continue the Firewise program, Rural Forest Commission staffing, and economic development activities such as forestry technical assistance, WSU Extension trainings for forest landowners, and Puget Sound Grown local wood products promotions.

2012 Comprehensive Plan & Code Changes— Linda Vane reported that the Council approved the County's growth management Comprehensive Plan Update on December 3, 2012. She said that

nearly all of the Commission's policy recommendations were adopted. Linda also said that Council would consider the Commission-endorsed code changes related to forestry in a few weeks. She added that the 2012 Comprehensive Plan does include some policy changes related to the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program, which were not among the topics that Commission discussed during the update process. After discussion, the Commission determined that they would like to know more about the Transfer of Development Rights Program given the program's value for conserving the forest land base.

Action: The Executive Committee will take on the TDR Program as a study topic.

Community Service Areas– Julia Larson, Community Service Area (CSA) Manager, reported that the County has held its first round of annual community meetings in the rural area. Currently staff are developing demographic and economic profiles of each CSA for use in community planning, according to Julia.

Commission Administration – Linda reminded the Commission that the annual financial disclosure process would begin soon. She also stated that some of the Commission members are eligible for another term. They can expect to receive a letter of appointment from the County Executive in the near future. Next, she encouraged the Commission to visit the County's website to review public disclosure and public records retention guidelines.

Lastly, Linda described the County's performance measures program as it relates to the Rural Forest Commission and distributed copies of the Commission's annual report. All King County programs establish annual objectives and identify the tasks they expect to accomplish each year. Employees report on their performance in achieving these objectives as a way of being accountable to the public, said Linda. She said that the County's advisory Boards and Commissions also report on their accomplishments in this way. Simply attending a meeting is not an accomplishment, explained Linda. In 2012, the Rural Forest Commission reported 30 separate completed deliverables such as reports, letters of comments, policy proposals, and the like, according to Linda.

Briefing on the King County Strategic Plan: Implementation and measuring performance

Linda Vane, Commission Liaison

This item was postponed to a future meeting.

2013 RDC Work Plan – prioritizing emerging issues

John Chaney, RFC Chair

John facilitated a work session to develop a Commission work program based on the list brainstormed at the November meeting. John instructed the Commission to consider whether issues are within the Commission's scope, if they are high priority, and if they are regulatory, budget/policy or programmatic issues. The following were identified as the highest priority topics and will be among the first topics chosen for discussion at future meetings (not in any special order):

1. The owners of parcels 5 acres or less in size are underserved. The cumulative acreage in small woodlots is huge, with environmental and economic significance. Many small lot forest

owners do not know how to manage rural properties. They need education in noxious weed control, illegal structures, etc. The Commission believes that the King Conservation District could play a role in serving this population.

2. The Commission would like to work with the Permitting Department and the Department of Natural Resources and Parks to create a set of standards for use in a streamlined soft surface trail permit process.
3. Invite the Permitting Department to discuss the County's recently adopted changes to its Shoreline Master Program that streamline regulations for forest practices.
4. Ensure that the County's Forestry Program and the Parks Division's Forest Stewardship Program continue to be supported in the KC Budget.
5. Outreach to the Washington Farm Forestry Association and Washington Forest Protection Association.

Other issues of concern listed by the Commission include rural economic development, public use of trails on private land, the role of the regional trails system for educating the public about forests, the need for outreach about traditional uses of native plants and history of the area, such as location of traditional trade routes.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Next meeting

The commissioners confirmed that they would continue to meet on the second Thursday of every other month. The next meeting will be held on March 14, 2013, at the Preston Community Center.

Staff Liaison: Linda Vane, at 206-296-8042 or linda.vane@kingcounty.gov