

SMILE General Public Meeting minutes

January 3, 2018

SMILE Station

Main Website

www.SellwoodMoreland.org

Procedural

www.SMILErecords.org

OFFICERS PRESENT: Joel Leib, President; Gail Hoffnagle, Vice President; Pat Hainley, Treasurer; Eric Norberg, Secretary

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Kevin Palmer; Bob Burkholder; Kim Borcharding; Elaine O'Keefe; Brian Bawol; Miriam Erb

President Joel Leib called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m., and began by asking those present to introduce themselves, around the room. Leib observed that a quorum was present, and asked that the SMILE members present review the minutes of the December 6 General Meeting. A spelling error was noted, after which "approval as amended" was moved, seconded, and passed without objection.

First on the agenda was Ronda Fast, of the Portland Bureau of Environmental Services, on hand to present to SMILE on the long-planned Oaks Bottom Habitat Enhancement, which will finally take place this summer. The Army Corps of Engineers is involved, helping to make the plans a reality. Jim Adams, Project Manager for the Corps, was present and explained that since the 1980's the Army Corps of Engineers has been involved in ecosystem restoration in partnership with local authorities, as it was in the upgrade recently of Westmoreland Park's habitat, and the restoration of Crystal Springs Creek in the Reed neighborhood, Westmoreland, and Sellwood. The federal government will pay 65% of the costs of the project, and the City of Portland will pay 35% of the costs. The designing of the project is completed, and major construction will start in June and complete sometime in October. K&E Excavation and LKE Construction Company are the co-contractors chosen to help execute the work.

The City of Portland is also actively involved in this project, and Sean Bristoff is Project Manager for the city, and he was also at the meeting. He explained where the work will be done, and why. The railroad culvert, which replaced an ancient trestle on the western berm of Oaks Bottom, since its construction has blocked river circulation into and out of Oaks Bottom Lagoon. That culvert will be replaced with a box culvert, which will allow such circulation, and will allow passage to salmon and wildlife. A water control structure near the culvert is falling apart and will be removed, and the channel will be lowered to allow river circulation into the lagoon. Only a small section of the wildlife refuge will be involved. Eighty acres will be opened to salmon for spawning; some water will remain in the pond year 'round, after the work is completed – even in hot and dry summers. In answer to a question, Bristoff said the work this summer might also help control the invasive Purple Loosestrife blooms in the lagoon, but that is not its purpose and that is not a certainty. The beetle introduced into Oaks Bottom that feeds on Purple Loosestrife is the best solution for that problem, he commented. Further question-and-answer dialogue with the audience

followed, mainly on details of how the project will be implemented and how wildlife will be protected during construction.

Because of this project, the Springwater Trail through Oaks Bottom will be closed from July 1 through October 31 (as will Dick Samuels railroad). The 19th Avenue bicycle greenway in Sellwood and Westmoreland was developed by the city partly to provide an alternate route for Springwater Trail users during the months of closure, but it will remain permanently as a greenway through the neighborhood after the construction in Oaks Bottom is completed.

Brian Bawol appeared next, to speak for the SMILE Crime Committee, since R. Corless, its Chair, could not be present. He presented brief notes prepared by the Chair, updating SMILE on the activities of the committee, for which he is Board Liaison.

Nancy Walsh arose next to report that the first public budget meeting of the year for the Portland Parks Department will be held at 10301 N.E. Glisan on the following Monday, 6-8 p.m., and a SMILE contingent will be there – since, as seems to happen every year, the Mayoral mandate for a budget reduction has led to the proposal of shutting down several Parks services, as usual including the Sellwood Community Center. Nancy and Gail Hoffnagle will be among the SMILE contingent at the meeting. More meetings will follow.

There was a brief discussion of the annual Southeast Uplift communications funds disbursement, and the need for the SMILE Board to approve an official proposal for the use of the funds before they can be disbursed.

Pat Hainley then moved the meeting be adjourned, and Gail Hoffnagle seconded the motion, which passed with evident unanimity at 8:46 p.m.