

Oregon Heritage Tree Committee

Meeting Minutes

Zoom Meeting, Friday, January 15, 2021

Committee Participants: Chair Kristin Ramstad; Vice-Chair Samantha Wolf; Nancy Appling-Salucci; Scott Brown; Charlotte Lehan; Molly McKnight; Arne Nyberg; Nate Pedersen; Al Tocchini; David Hedberg; Jennifer Karps; Craig Leech; Ed Washington

Staff Participants: Annie von Domitz; Jessica Carbone

Call to Order/ Introductions: Ramstad called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. Self-introductions were made.

Approval of the Minutes: Ramstad proposed correcting “abor day” to “arbor day”. *Nyberg made a motion to approve the November 20, 2020 minutes as corrected. Appling seconded the motion. Leech and Washington abstained. The motion carried.*

Heritage Tree Nominations:

- a. **Williamson-Abbot Ponderosa:** Pedersen presented a revised nomination for this tree that focuses on the story of the expedition to survey possible railway routes to connect the Pacific Ocean with the Mississippi River. The ensuing Williamson-Abbot Expedition spent five months surveying in 1855, exploring northern California, the Klamath Basin, Central Oregon, the Cascade Range, and the Willamette Valley. The expedition included several members who would later achieve fame, notoriety, and even infamy in both Oregon and the nation. In early September the Williamson-Abbot Expedition explored the area westward from Trout Creek. On September 4th, the company paused while Abbot went to The Dalles to get supplies. The remaining company set up camp for several weeks where this tree is located. This was just one of several major government-sponsored surveys that lead to a deeper understanding of the natural history of the Western Region and eventually to the development of railroad lines. The committee asked staff to attempt to reach out to tribes regarding the text. Lehan recognized Pedersen’s great work in creating the revised nomination.

Nyberg moved to approve the Williamson-Abbot Ponderosa nomination. Tocchini seconded. Brown abstained. The motion carried.

- b. **Lincoln City Sitka nomination update:** Von Domitz informed the committee that the approval of the tree’s nomination by the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians was received. The committee discussed the tree’s significance in the local community. Hedberg said this is a remnant of an old growth, pre-contact forest and the name given to the tree helps us understand that there was a forest here that indigenous people managed before European - Americans arrived. Ramstad said that this tree is very large and completely accessible to the public.

Lehan made a motion to approve the Lincoln City Sitka nomination. Brown seconded. The motion passed.

- c. **Smith Farm Walnut update:** Von Domitz shared the additional research done by a volunteer researcher at the Coos Historical Society. The committee discussed the tree's significance as a river traffic highway marker. Since the tree is situated very close to the highway Ramstad asked if the county needed to be contacted.

Tocchini made a motion to table the nomination until the county could be contacted to see if there are any plans for the tree's removal. Leech seconded. The motion carried.

- d. **Jordan Family American Elm:** Von Domitz shared a nomination for an American elm in Enterprise, Oregon. The tree was planted in 1906, by the original owner L.E. Jordan. The Jordan family was one of the first to buy land in Wallowa County. L.E. Jordan was the mayor and a judge from 1924 to 1934. L.E. Jordan's son, Leonard Beck Jordan became Governor of Idaho and later a Senator for Congress in the 1950s. The tree sits on property across the street from a school and the owners are excited to share the tree with its students. By looking at pictures of the tree, committee members questioned if it was a Siberian elm instead of an American elm as stated. Ramstad said that cities tend to want to remove these trees. Siberian elms are problematic trees that break apart easily. The committee discussed the tree's significance. The committee requested more information that would connect the tree to Wallowa County or the City of Enterprise history.

Pedersen made a motion to table the nomination until the nominators can clarify the species of the tree, tie the tree to a larger story of either county or state significance, and explain why the family was prominent in the city., Hedberg second. Lehan abstained. The motion carried.

Old Business

- a. **Plaque text Review:** Staff will send out a simplified version of the plaque text without the other tree details, at the request of the committee. Any revisions or suggestions should be completed by April 16 2020.
- b. **Award Nominations:** Wolf is working hard on community outreach spreading the word about the awards. There has been a very positive response and she expects multiple nominations to be submitted.

Updates & Reports/New Business

- a. **Heritage Tree Program Criteria Update:** Von Domitz thanked the subcommittee members for their great work and discussions around criteria for Heritage Tree applications. The sub-committee will continue working on the draft language. She hopes to have more to share at the next meeting.
- b. **TIC/Council Report:** Washington said the Council is doing well financially. Only two rest areas had damage from the wildfires this summer, and it was minimal.
- c. **Pending Nomination for the PSU Beech Tree:** Hedberg shared his research on the tree and the history it shares with PSU and the surrounding neighborhood. It was planted in the early 1890s by

industrialists in the iron industry. It is a connection to changes in housing, urban growth, redevelopment, and urban renewal. This tree tells many stories. Washington will be working with a PSU representative to complete a formal application.

d. Reports from Members:

- **Tocchini:** He said that he has spent time volunteering in the Santiam Canyon after the fires. The local chapter of the American Foresters is discussing planting trees.
- **Pederson:** He will be following up on a Hackberry tree in Pendleton that he became aware of.
- **McKnight:** She is still working to connect with local community members in Pendleton about a potential heritage tree in Roy Raley Park.
- **Hedberg:** Two months ago, he went to Talent and filmed the planting of two of the Hiroshima survivor trees. Talent was a city heavily damaged by wildfire. Hideko Tamura Snider, a survivor of the Hiroshima bombing, was there. He will be doing a movie about peace and what it means to them.
- **Wolf:** Oregon Community Trees (OCF) is still working out the logistics of how the annual conference will take place.
- **Appling:** The local wildfire cleanup is painful and slow. She participated in the restoration of the Bear Creek Greenway. They reseeded with helicopters and drones, then put down a layer of straw to hold the seed in during the rain. There are plans to plant natives in the future.
- **Leech:** Oregon State Parks suffered major losses in State Parks due to this summer wildfires. The process of reforestation will be ongoing for years to come.

2021 Meeting Schedule

April 30, 2021 - Zoom

July 9, 2021- TBD

October 2021

Adjourn at 3:09p.m.