



Travel Information Council
1500 Liberty St. SE, Suite 150
Salem, OR 97302

MINUTES
Oregon Heritage Tree Committee
Friday, January 20, 2023
Hybrid Meeting

Committee Participants: Chair Craig Leech; Vice-Chair David Hedberg; Nancy Appling-Salucci; Scott Brown (virtual); Jennifer Karps (virtual); Molly McKnight; Arne Nyberg; Kristin Ramstad; Richard Riggs; Al Tocchini; Ed Washington (virtual); Samantha Wolf

Excused: Charlotte Lehan

TIC Staff Participating: Beth Dehn, Jessica Carbone

Call to Order/ Introductions: Leech called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. Self-introductions were made.

Approval of Minutes: Multiple typos and grammatical corrections were suggested by committee members to the October 14, 2022 minutes. *Ramstad made a motion to approve the October 14, 2022 minutes as amended. Nyberg seconded the motion. 12-0 vote.*

Heritage Tree Nominations:

- a. **Cottage Grove Incense Cedar Update:** Appling shared her concern about referring to Indian Mary. Hedberg said in his discussion with David Lewis that there is some evidence to suggest that Indian Mary is buried at this cemetery, but further research needs to be done to make certain. If that was possible, Dr. David Lewis believes the tribes would be very interested in telling this story. Tocchini said that during his and Hedberg's visit to the site, they were not sure which of two large cedars was the tree nominated, but neither tree met Champion tree for size. McKnight said that the stories that could be told about this location should be directed by Dr. Lewis and Confederated Tribes of the Grande Ronde. The committee discussed their capacity to effectively tell this story and if the trees can be tied to the story rather than the cemetery itself. The committee asked Dehn to reach out to the nominators for additional information, such as the verification of which tree is being nominated, the age of the tree, and a way to tie the tree to the site. This could be done possibly through photographs. Kristen asked Dehn to inform the nominators that even with this requested information, additional work will be needed to investigate the Native American history. *Tocchini made a motion to table the nomination while further research is requested to connect Indian Mary and the land associated with her claim to the trees in the cemetery. Appling seconded. 12-0 Vote.*

Annual Awards Update: Dehn said that the awards are open and there is one nomination so far. Dehn said there may be another nomination coming from the Portland Heritage Tree committee. Ramstad said she had spoken about the awards with her Tree City contacts and sent a reminder yesterday. There are no current nominations for the Maynard Drawson award. A meeting will need to be scheduled in early March to vote on any received nominations. The committee then discussed possible HERO nominations.

- a. Form Awards Review Subcommittee: The committee decided not to form a subcommittee. All nominations will be emailed to the entire committee.
- b. Select Vote Date: Dehn will organize a date for the meeting by email.

Heritage Tree Analysis Discussion: The committee discussed Jim Gersbach's analysis of the trees in the program and how that compares with the program's charter. Leech then discussed where the responsibility lies for the bulk of the work for these nominations. Leech concluded that it needs to be an equal partnership between the committee and the nominator. McKnight said that it depends a lot on finding a local partner that is as passionate about the nomination as the committee members. Leech asked the committee to look at the information provided by analysis and consider if this information shows a need to adjust the charter. Leech then discussed Gersbach's recommendation to accept younger trees. Leech said that the program has never had a problem with younger trees. His only concerns are their ability to live long enough to become established. If the tree does die, who bears the responsibility of replacing that tree or does it get replaced? McKnight said that a tree's designation can also encourage better care of the tree. In reference to 2 a. of Gersbach's analysis, Appling suggested working with Mike Oxendine about the trees that survived the historic 2020 fires. The committee discussed possible organizations and groups that they could reach out to for passionate partners in tree nominations and means to spread the word about the program. Appling suggested two possible nominations, a tree associated with Mrs. Collier, the first female botanist in the country, and the female design team of Elizabeth Lord and Edith Schryver. Deepwood estates in Salem may have three possible trees from their original design. Karpis suggested Stacy Allison, the first white woman to summit Everest, learned to climb on Doug Fir on the OSU campus. Tocchini suggested a possible grove at the old Fairview training center. McKnight suggested Pioneer Cemetery block 14. The location is said to be the site of unmarked Chinese graves. There are possible plans for the Chinese Benevolent Association to recognize block 14. Leech proposed the committee craft a letter to send out to diverse communities asking them if they know of any significant trees in their communities. In reply to 3. b. of Gersbach's analysis discussion Appling said she would reach out to a contact whose family lived in an American Japanese internment camp. Hedberg suggested reaching out to the family who owns Kiyokawa Family Orchards. Due to time constraints, the analysis discussion will continue at the next meeting.

Old Business:

- a. **West Yaquina Sitka Spruce:** Dehn thanked Ramstad, Hedberg, and Appling for their work on the plaque text. Dehn is working with the Yakona Nature Preserve to set a date for the dedication.
- b. **Plaque Revisions Update:** Dehn said that she has finally been able to review the text revisions completed by the committee in 2021 on all of the plaque texts in the program. A few plaques were identified for changes: The Giant Spruce of Cape Perpetua and the Octopus Tree. Dehn asked for volunteers to work with her on the text. After revisions, Dehn will ask The Confederated Tribe of the Siletz for their opinion on both texts. Hedberg and Ramstad volunteered to work on the text.

Updates & Reports/New Business

a. **TIC/Council Report:** Riggs said that the Council had adopted a mission, vision, and values statement as part of the Strategic Plan at the last Council meeting in December.

b. **Reports from Members:**

- **McKnight:** Nothing to report. She is hoping to scout out potential heritage trees, focusing on the blaze trees used to mark Old Oregon Skyline Trail, which predates the Pacific Coast Trail, next summer.
- **Tocchini:** Tocchini has three additional plaque blanks for the award programs.
- **Hedberg:** Hedberg is doing an interpretation at a historic site in Clark County, Washington around some heritage trees there. Hedberg is also working with the Vanport Place Marking project. This group is doing an archaeological survey of a couple structures at Vanport. They are a group that is installing plaques and sculptures around Delta Park to commemorate the history of the site. They may be a good potential partner to work with to find a heritage tree on the site.
- **Brown:** Brown said there was a microburst at La Pine State Park over the summer that took down some really big ponderosa trees, but The Big Tree is safe. Brown said that they are going to use some of the trees that blew down as part of the nature playground that has been in the planning stages for a couple of years.
- **Wolf:** Wolf said Oregon Community Tree's awards are currently open for nomination. More information can be found on the OCT's website. The 2023 Urban and Community Forestry Conference is being held on the first day of June and will be covering the topic of forest pests.
- **Appling:** Appling said she was able to do two well-attended speaking engagements about the program using the updated powerpoint presentation.
- **Ramstad:** Ramstad said the Oregon Department of Forestry has a new Community Forestry Assistance Forester and her name is Brittany Oxford. Brittany has started and will continue to do lots of outreach to the community, as well as, promoting the Heritage Tree Program. Ramstad informed the committee that the Ewing Young Oak had a disintegration issue. People from Bartlett Tree Service went to look at the tree and offered some actions. The committee then discussed possible funding options for the care of the trees in the program. One of the last Peace Trees will be given to Oregon State prisons as part of their healing garden. After concerns were raised on the possible growth height of the tree, it was decided to plant the tree outside of the prison grounds. The dedication ceremony will take place in the healing garden while the tree is still crated.
- **Leech:** Leech said he will be visiting the Octopus tree soon.

2023 Meeting/Events Schedule

April (TBD), July 14, 2023, October 13, 2023

Adjourn at 3:05 p.m.