

Polk County Forestland Classification Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes

October 4, 2012

11:00 – 4:00 pm

Oregon Department of Forestry, Dallas Office

Meeting called to order by Terry Lamers (Chair) at 9:05 p.m. on October 4, 2012, Oregon Department of Forestry, Dallas Unit, 825 Oak Villa Rd., Dallas, OR

Members in attendance: Bill Hahn, Terry Lamers, Tom Parsons, Frank Pender, Jeff Classen and Brad Withrow-Robinson.

Quorum present.

Guests: Ted Erdmann - Assistant District Forester, Oregon Department of Forestry, West Oregon District, Philomath Unit
 Jason Rayburn - Wildland Fire Supervisor, Oregon Department of Forestry, West Oregon District, Dallas Unit

Agenda

9:00-12:00

1. Review minutes of May 11, 2011 meeting and approve.
2. Jeff update on implementation of forest patrol assessment after classification work became final.
3. Discuss forestland classification on lots annexed into the city limits south of Dallas.
4. Web Page – should we do anything different with it?
5. Discuss classification work for remainder of Polk County. Provide update on how Benton County has handled this.

12:00-1:00 Break for Lunch

1:00

6. Review forestland classification on tax lots that landowners have requested.
 - Humphries
 - Kilfoil
 - Thole
 - Schroder
 - Ely

1. Minutes of May 11, 2011 meeting handed out by Jeff for review. Minutes approved unanimously with small changes.

2. Jeff reported on progress: The committee's Final Order was filed at the Polk County Clerk office May 31, 2011. After that filing About 1200 properties added to list (?) and about 160 were dropped from the list. ODF worked with Assessor to simplify process for Assessor's office by making small adjustments to follow property lines. Acknowledged that it was a lot of work on the part of the Assessor's office. Additional funding was requested (of the ODF) but rejected.

Letters sent to landowners in February notifying them of changes. About 150 people called with questions or complaints, most fielded by Jeff or Jason. Nine people asked to make an appeal of the assessment to the Board of Forestry. One pursued it as far as one meeting with the Board, but was declined.

There is time on today's schedule for 5 landowners requesting review by the committee.

3. Jeff handed out photo of area newly annexed by City of Dallas on its south side. Committee discussed request to drop assessment of those lots now within the city. Most members felt that was not justified until some infrastructure was developed that would reduce the risk of fire. It was noted that there are several undeveloped parcels on the NW edge of the city that are not assessed, although similarly undeveloped. This was done in good faith at the time since we were informed that development was imminent. It was agreed this needs to be revisited at the next committee meeting if development has not occurred to consider assessing those parcels.

4. Jeff the committee for guidance in revising the web page. Undeterred by the fact that none had looked at it in a year, the committee gave plenty. The committee was then asked to look at the site and give constructive suggestions to Jeff within 2 weeks.

5. Ted Erdmann gave an overview of the process to classify lands outside the existing protection district boundaries, as the Committee was charged to do. All lands were classified in two meeting sessions, producing a draft classification. Any implementation of the draft classifications would require adjustment of the boundary. This is anticipated, but will likely be done in a coordinated manner across all counties in the district, but only after all counties have completed the process, likely another several years.

The Committee would take a similar approach to a draft classification of the rest of the County, and estimates it would take 3-4 meetings to complete this work in Polk County and would like to get this over with. The challenge will be outlying areas, contiguous to themselves, but not contiguous to the existing boundary (e.g. Eola Hills). Jeff will investigate whether this is an option/if there is precedent in other areas (Central and Eastern Oregon) ahead of the first meeting, which he will try to schedule in January.

6. Before breaking for lunch, Jeff handed out close-up and area maps for each of the five landowners that requested Committee reviews.

Adjourn for lunch. 12:00-1:00

After lunch met with Mark and Roxanne Humphries. Jeff explained the process they were in, and they spent about 20 minutes talking with the committee and expressing their concern about the classification of their land, and the awkward process including shifting definitions. The building surcharge was particularly frustrating for them.

The Committee reviewed the Humphries situation and considered their request. Frank moved that the Humphries property remain classified as forest land, as determined earlier. The motion was seconded by Tom and approved unanimously.

The Committee then reviewed each of the other properties under consideration (Kilfoil, Thole, Schroder and Ely). Bill moved that the four properties remain classified as forest land, as determined earlier. The motion was seconded by Frank and approved unanimously.

The meeting was recessed at 2:30pm.