

Minutes, Interfaith EarthKeepers Hybrid Meeting

August 14, 2024

Attendees: Dennis R, Cynthia B, Keith, Ron H, Mark L, Carl B, Sue C, Jerry S, Britni C

Moderator: Dennis Minutes: Britni

Continuing Business

1. Eugene City Council and Sustainability Commission: Council and Commission are on summer break. Council didn't take significant action before break. The Sustainability Commission has been tabling at neighborhood association events. Eugene residents may invite them to attend a neighborhood event. They have a presentation on updates including CAP 2.0 that they plan to bring to fall association meetings.

2. OCERA ([Oregon Coalition for an Environmental Rights Amendment](#)): The petition has received 4,500 out of 14,000 the signatures needed. The [Lane County Watershed Bill of Rights](#) was also mentioned.

3. Divest Oregon: There are no new updates at this time. Their next meeting is scheduled for September 17th at 2pm on Zoom. Complete this [online form](#) to receive email updates.

4. Earthkeepers Email list: There is a larger group of people who don't attend meetings who still want to know what the group is up to. Two main purposes of the email list include communication to get things done and monthly meeting announcements and minutes. There are about fifteen people on the working group list. It was suggested that we send an email to the full list to see if everyone who is receiving emails still wants to receive them; this would be an opportunity to unsubscribe. It was also suggested that if people don't want to be on the list they will let us know. The group decided on the latter option, to leave the list alone. The group also determined that it is not necessary to have minutes approved. Dennis will send the email list to Britni, who will send them out to the email list.

New Business

1. Upcoming Events:

350 Eugene is having another *Get Out The Vote!* postcard writing party on Thursday, September 19th from 6-9pm (location TBD).

The Unitarian Universalist Church is planning for a Climate Revival. Dennis will share more later.

Eugene Friends Meeting is having a celebration for their Trout Friendly Landscapes project on Sept 29th at 12:30pm. Earthkeepers are invited; Cynthia will send out more information. There will be a table with pollinator information.

First Congregational Church is having a Plastics Round Up recycling event on Oct 19th from 10am-12pm in the lower parking lot. They will collect all plastics labeled 2, 4, and 5 as well as block styrofoam and metal lids. Labels do not have to be removed from the plastic but they should be squeaky clean. Please sort plastics into the different number categories before dropping them off. They find it helpful to circle the triangular recycling symbol with a sharpie and then write the number next to the symbol. Address: 1050 E. 23rd, Eugene, OR (parking lot on the corner of 24th and Harris St.)

Unitarian Universalist Church in Eugene is having a used book and puzzle sale on Sept 28th. More information will be shared at the next Earthkeepers meeting.

The next Turtle Flats volunteer event is tentatively planned for Saturday November 9th (Mark needs to confirm with Jared).

2. Election Initiatives: Mechanisms by which elections happen are becoming increasingly important. Three conservative Lane County Commissioners have put forward an initiative to amend the Lane County Charter, which would result in mid-cycle redistricting and ultimately gerrymandering. This will be on the November ballot. The Register Guard presented this as a citizens proposal; however, it was written by one of the largest law firms in town. It could increase the likelihood that smaller populations of conservative areas have a larger voice in the county. Two of the commissioners were installed by the timber industry, so this could also give a larger voice to that industry. Sue shared that Red Emerson of Sierra Pacific bought Seneca. He owns huge tracts of forest in California, Oregon, and Washington, and he is worth 3.4 billion. He is planning to build the largest lumber processing plant in the region.

It was suggested that we include a space on the EK website for action items. Ron is already including stories about action efforts on the home page. Carl is interested in taking this on, and Ron will show him how to do it.

Ron was previously concerned about posting partisan issues as a faith based group. However, he realized that the Republican party is more representative of corporate interests and the Democratic party is the one that accepts climate science. This has been coming up a lot in congregations. The law says that churches can endorse a position on an issue, not a candidate or party. It was determined that EKs should stay on that side of the line. However, it is acceptable to share objective, educational articles that compare candidates' policies and positions.

Educational Discussion - Becoming Earth: How Our Planet Came to Life by Ferris Jaber

Most participants have not received the book yet. Jerry shared fascinating information from the book, including the fact that one teaspoon of soil contains more microbes than the number of people on earth, the Arctic was once nearly tropical, and an elephant's footprint can maintain 5 gallons of water in an area that is usually dry. Dennis shared that rocks created conditions that made the earth habitable.

Next Meeting: September 11, 2024 at 12:00-1:30pm (online and in person at First Congregational Church) **We welcome the opportunity to meet elsewhere. This may help to broaden the group.*

Moderator: Mark

Minutes: Britni

Education Session: Read the Introduction and Chapter 1 of Becoming Earth: How Our Planet Came to Life by Ferris Jaber