

Gresham Butte Neighborhood Association

Minutes – Regular Meeting

April 9, 2025 7:00 p.m.

Kyoudou Center at the Gresham Japanese Garden, 219 S. Main Avenue

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://greshamoregon.zoom.us/j/89793076662?pwd=O9kZpLqyKzgynFeLzqUEhynBEAKnwo.1>

Meeting ID: 897 9307 6662 Passcode: kY9hwD3VaH

One tap mobile. +12532158782,,89793076662#,,,,*1461953462# US (Tacoma) ---

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I. Welcome and Establish Quorum

Quorum was established with 10 members present in person or via Zoom. In order to transact business with a quorum present, we adjusted the sequence of agenda items.

II. Grants

Jim Buck related discussions he is having with City staff like Mike Wallace and Astrid Dragoy about wildfire risk, the green spaces, blackberry cane eradication, and matching grants. Separately from a grant, the City seems willing to lend GBNA power tools for volunteer use in brush clearing. Sue Protz mentioned that the City has been using herbicide recurrently over five years to reduce the blackberries in some areas. Spraying has been pretty effective, and the City has come back in some places to spot-spray re-emerging blackberry plants. Mike Wallace thinks recurrent blackberry cane cutting is worthwhile, and helps successor plants like ferns and trees shade out the blackberries. Sue Protz suggested a grant to hire workers to cut out blackberry plants. Jim Buck said the City has confirmed that they have revenue sources, e.g. from recycling, for matching grants. PGE has also contributed funds in consideration of work around towers along Johnson Creek. Mary Jeanne Oliva asked about focusing on the Wildland Urban Interface and protecting homes. Could we engage licensed tree maintenance firms with the ability to limb-up trees there? The City has not had to provide staff to work with volunteers on our grant projects. We could ask for grant money for personal protective equipment for volunteers.

Sue Protz moved: "GBNA would like a grant to provide supplies and refreshments for a volunteer based group to go up on Gresham Butte and clear out the blackberries and other understory, to include personal protective equipment."

Mary Jeanne Oliva seconded the motion. Discussion: Also consider the rental of a chipper and truck. Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

Another matter for a grant could be a mailer educating the 2,000 plus households in the GBNA about wildfire resilience. Directly say: Where you live has been identified as a Wildland Urban Interface. If all the neighbors take mitigation steps, it will be more effective than if only those of us attending the meetings do. Sue Protz can get estimates for printing and mailing costs. The mailer could be 8.5x11

tri-fold or 11x17 quad-fold. If postage is too expensive, we might have volunteers hand-deliver the flyers. 2,000 is a lot to hand-deliver, so we might have to focus on tracts that are most at wildfire risk.

If we submitted two grant applications, we'd probably get only one, so putting the brush clearing and education in one application seems wise. The maker and seconder of the motion approved adding language about the educational flyer.

The motion as amended was passed by acclamation at 7:46 p.m.

Follow-up discussion concerned publicizing our grant-funded achievements as shown on our grant completion report for work on the Japanese Garden and Kyoudou Center. Phone attendees on Zoom were unable to see the screen-share. Two members attending by Zoom departed and quorum was lost about 7:50 p.m.

II. Approval of November 13, 2024 Meeting Minutes

<https://www.greshamoregon.gov/link/06ae87b40f0b4c068a30386a2796c1d3.aspx>

A quorum no longer being present, approval of these minutes was deferred.

III. Public Comment

John Bildsoe, Vice President of the Neighborhood Coalition and Land Use Director for the Northwest Neighborhood Association, spoke of his experience as a fire fighter and about wildfire resilience measures. Water system issues on Gresham Butte should be in the questions you ask the fire department. Evacuation is another issue. Zoom participation and audio systems are an issue for you and Northwest. There may be money from the Cable Access Commission that could be applied to this problem. Mayor Stovall could be helpful on this. The Kyoudou Center has business-class Internet/WiFi, paid for by the City. So adding another participant in the room here, say a smartphone, could be tried for more audio and video coverage.

IV. Wildfire Risk Reduction

We should investigate becoming part of "Firewise Communities".

On March 7th we wrote the Gresham Fire Department and asked for them to participate here tonight. They considered it and recently said that they will appear here at our May 14th meeting. Questions discussed with them preliminarily include water resources, hydrant water line provisioning, water pumping, backup power for water pumping, hydrant inspection and servicing, and evacuation routes. The City's GIS system shows the placement of fire hydrants in our Neighborhood; they are 300 to 500 feet apart, which is standard. As a Neighborhood Association we could divvy up the task of looking at hydrant spacing on GIS. We should ask what are the City's resources? Can they "draft" water out of hot tubs, streams, etc.? Where is fire-fighting water stored for our neighborhood? What about road congestion during a fire with evacuation competing with fire equipment. Which trucks will be able to get up on the Butte? If we cut brush and limbs and they fall to the ground, how long are they part of the fuel load before they decay? Stephen Estes shared sample 1/8" galvanized mesh for ember protection. Discussion of possible grant to the City for an electric fire truck, a smaller vehicle which could get up on roads in our neighborhood. What we put in our educational mailer will depend partly on what we hear from the Fire Department at our meeting May 14th. The Gresham Fire Department has spoken to the GBNA in

years past about wildfire risk, but did not lay out a plan other than inter-agency cooperation.

V. Reports

Treasurer: We currently have \$1,392.85 in our account and that there has been no recent activity.

Land Use Director: We just received an application to extend an existing cell tower vertically 20 feet in the Hogan Butte Nature Park (to be renamed for former mayor Bemis).

VI. Topics for Upcoming Meetings

Meet with the Gresham Fire Department.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned about 8:42 p.m. However, the City provided Zoom meeting terminated itself at 8:30 p.m.

GBNA:

Contact us by email– board@greshambutte.org

Visit our website – www.greshambutte.org

Our City resources– <https://www.greshamoregon.gov/community-and-neighborhood-engagement/neighborhood-associations/gresham-butte-neighborhood-association/>