

## Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission

November 18, 2015

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Agenda Item: 11a

Information

Topic: Cooperative Association Workshop Summary

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### **Purpose**

The purpose of the OPRD Cooperative Association Workshop was to reconnect with the Co-ops or Friends groups, during a time of transition within the agency, with an emphasis on the organizational structure of the OPRD Co-op Association program. It gave us the opportunity to look at the past – what is the enabling legislation that defines these partnerships and are we consistent with interpreting this legislation; present – what are our missions and are they properly aligned; and the future – how do we better communicate our needs and fill in the gaps in order to move forward and become stronger partners.

### **Highlights**

- Thirty-six participants attended the workshop, twenty-one being members of Co-op Associations and fifteen OPRD staff. Of the fourteen active Friends groups, all but one group was represented, and this was due to illness. Four Friends groups did not have members in attendance, but their respective park manager/contact did attend;
- Groups met OPRD Director Lisa Sumption, who presented our path to the future;
- Small group brainstorming activity identified the strengths and weaknesses of the Cooperative Association program as it pertains to the enabling legislation;
- Presentation of Strategic Initiatives developed by OPRD managers; and
- A case study by the Friends of Historic Champoeg provided some insight into their recent time of transition and struggles they faced trying to maintain their identity. Participants received questions relating to the case study for review with their groups to help with future planning.

### **Areas to work on**

The strengths and weaknesses activity and workshop evaluation provided some common concerns and questions. The following are some of the areas where improvement can be made to ensure a healthy and successful partnership.

- Enabling legislation:
  - Ensure this is known and understood by co-op members and OPRD staff;
  - Review and clarify gray areas; and
  - Identify if a need exists to change this legislation.

- OPRD support of co-ops:
  - Ensure commitment to and understanding of program at the park level for proper support.
- Communication:
  - Identify ways to strengthen between triangle of agency, co-ops, and associated parks.
- Reporting:
  - Review and identify needs for updating current reporting mechanisms (Annual, 5-Year Agreements and Fiscal).

**Next steps**

- Bevin Clapper, Quality Assurance Coordinator, to meet with all Cooperative Associations during winter 2015-2016 to:
  - Gather and document best practices
  - Look for opportunities to increase coordination and support between agency and groups
  - Recommend program improvements
  - Provide summary report by end of June 2016.
- Review enabling legislation and determine if needs exist to propose changes to statutes, rules, policies;
- Identify training needs for OPRD staff and Cooperative Associations to address gaps in program; and
- Begin updating the Cooperative Association Manual to reflect changes as appropriate.

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