

**MINUTES FOR SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING  
ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
August 19, 2019  
The Grove, 1195 E. Main Street**

Present: Commissioners Gardiner (Chair), Landt (Vice Chair), Bell, Lewis; Director Black; Recreation Superintendent Dials; Parks Superintendent Oxendine; Manager VanWyhe; Assistant Sullivan

Absent: City Council Liaison Mayor Stromberg; Commissioner Heller

**CALL TO ORDER**

Gardiner called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

None

**ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Gardiner stated item 2 on the agenda will be informational only for the meeting. Action will be taken at a future meeting.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Request to Access Parks Property for Wildland Monitoring with Drones (Action)**

Black reviewed the staff report included in the [meeting packet](#) and introduced Chris Chambers, Wildfire Division Chief and David Shepard, Chief from Ashland Fire and Rescue (AFR) to present on the drone program, which seeks to detect fires and illegal camping on wildlands. Temporary approval was granted to monitor APRC managed land after Ashland Fire and Rescue. Approval by the Commission will allow these activities to continue.

Chambers gave a PowerPoint presentation on the wildlands drone monitoring program ([see Attachment I](#)). Highlights and discussion on the presentation included the following points:

- Chambers displayed examples of camping on the Lithia Hillside
- Siskiyou Mountain Park is not currently proposed as a patrolled area
- Drones are being launched from the Acid Castle property, which allows for line of sight of patrolled areas
- Monitoring is limited to 400 ft above the launch point
- Monitoring takes place earlier in the morning to allow for temperature differential from body heat and the landscape
- 4 camps to date have been identified during the 1-month period monitoring has occurred
- Camps are reported to Ashland Police to address the situation
- AFR has not received any noise complaints to date
- Designed flights paths are programmed into the drone
- Properties AFR is requesting flyovers are Burnson, Lawrence & Acid Castles properties
- Park properties that AFR is not requesting flyovers for include Lithia Hillside, Hald/Strawberry, Westwood & Siskiyou Mountain Park. Drone areas are not authorized to fly over people. These properties have a significant amount of foot traffic raising concerns about including these properties in the monitoring program. AFR is relying on public reports to monitor these properties
- Black stated the program is designed to take a measured approach on a set budget. The Commission could grant permission for regular flyovers of the Burnson, Lawrence & Acid Castles properties and also allow AFR to explore suspicious circumstances on other properties as needed
- AFR is launching drones from Acid Castle to monitor City owned property as well as APRC managed properties
- Because of potential invasion of privacy issues, Landt stated that limiting regular monitoring to Burnson, Lawrence & Acid Castles properties only is prudent. Permission to patrol other APRC properties on an emergency basis should be sufficient

- Black stated that if an emergency arises, AFR should be allowed to take necessary monitoring actions and keep APRC informed
- RVCOG is contracted to provide the drone and pilot
- USFS relies on ODF detection cameras to identify fires on property adjacent to park managed lands and also do flyovers with helicopters when there is lightning activity
- The drone monitoring program is active during fire season due to budget and weather restraints

Landt stated an intention to make a motion that would require a review of the program to identify possible issues or unintended consequences. Upon review, the program could be authorized with permanent or extended approval.

**Motion:** Landt moved to approve Ashland Fire and Rescue, using air drones, to monitor Burnson, Lawrence and Acid Castles properties to detect fires, use of fire, and illegal camping in accordance with the City of Ashland approved aerial drone detection program during the fire season. In addition, similar use for other APRC properties for emergencies. The APRC Director or designee shall be notified of emergency use. The approval is through October 2020 and then requires a review. Seconded by Bell.

**Discussion:** Gardiner requested a written update prior to the October 2020 review. Chambers stated Council has requested a report at the end of the current fire season and that will be forwarded to the Commission as well. Landt clarified that AFR would be required to present to the Commission after October 2020 to extend approval of the program. Chambers agreed.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes

## 2. Request to Access Parks Property for Creek Restoration (Action)

Black introduced Eugene Wier from The Freshwater Trust (TFT) and Kaylea Kathol from the City of Ashland Public Works Department and reviewed the staff report included in the [meeting packet](#). Public Works is seeking an exemption from the Integrated Pest Management Policy (IPM) to use herbicide on park managed properties adjacent to Bear Creek for a Water Quality Trading Program. The IPM already includes a number of exemptions, allowing use of herbicides. The Commission has the authority to grant additional exemptions. Staff is recommending that the exemption be granted. APRC staff and some Commissioners were taken on a tour of properties where TFT has successfully engaged in riparian restoration efforts. Black stated that this item will be brought back to the Commission on August 26, 2019 for possible action.

Kathol reviewed the Public Works report included in the [meeting packet](#). Discussion on this item included the following points:

- Warm effluent from the City of Ashland waste water treatment plant is being discharged into Ashland Creek and is seeking compliance with the Clean Water Act through a Water Quality Trading Program
- One solution would be the construction of cooling towers, which would have significant costs and energy use, which is not desired. Public Works is seeking compliance through riparian restoration which would cool the water and provide environmental benefits to the community
- The trading area, which has been accepted by DEQ, extends from the waste water treatment plant to mile 4 on Bear Creek (Pine Street in Talent)
- Public works would like to direct restoration efforts to city owned land as much as possible. It is possible to meet the Water Quality Trade Program requirement fully on private land, but the City and APRC would benefit from restoration on publicly owned land
- Wier estimates 1 to 1 ½ miles of restoration would need to be accomplished to meet the Water Quality Trade Program requirements
- Bell stated a concern that people in the community will object to the use of glyphosate
- Wier clarified that TFT uses glyphosate minimally and carefully and is justifiable when restoring native plant communities and improving stream health. TFT uses glyphosate to remove weeds listed on ODA noxious weeds list only when there are no other viable methods for removal at the landscape level. When using glyphosate, TFT uses less than industry standards and applies the chemical at the lowest rate possible to remain effective.
- Black reiterated staff believes this is a prudent use for an exemption to the IPM in order to achieve the environmental benefits associated with riparian restoration. Beyond this project, TFT has proposed a pilot project on the Evergreen property to use control methods other than chemicals. Wier added that there is not enough information on these techniques to complete a compliance grade performance standard
- Wier stated the primary need for herbicide is for the initial site treatment in the first 1-3 years. After the initial site treatment, it is used rarely as needed
- Oxendine and VanWyhe reiterated staff support for the project
- Lewis stated that riparian restoration on APRC properties is a superior solution when compared to building cooling towers at the waste water treatment plane, which is the other stated alternative to meet compliance with the Clean Water Act

- Landt stated the IPM policy, which states herbicide can be used as a last resort, was created before the No Herbicide Policy, which does not include this language. Using the term “last resort” seems to imply that specific exemptions are not required to use herbicides, which is not the case.
  - Black clarified that the request is seeking a specific exemption for the use of herbicide, which follows the precedent of earlier exemptions under the IPM
  - Landt stated the No Herbicide Policy adopted after the IPM, overrides the IPM and does not include “last resort” language. Landt suggested the IPM Policy should be modified to include language from the No herbicides Policy
  - Staff was unaware of No Herbicide Policy referenced and will look into it
- Landt stated that in addition to following City Ordinances regarding herbicide signing requirements, the requirements in APRC policies should be followed by TFT
- Gardiner reported on-site visits comparing TFT restored properties and properties that have had mechanical treatments only and stated TFT restoration efforts provide superior results
- Landt requested the property maps in the meeting packet display the specific areas that will be treated rather than the entire property
- Wier explained that the shrub layer outlined in the plan is done to create an environment that is truly reflective of a native riparian area
- TFT has been doing restoration projects for 30 years and has found that fully restored areas are able to keep non-native invasive species from fully taking over the area
- Landt requested that the caption in figure 2. be altered to state “...restoration could be...” rather than stating restoration “...will be...”
- Ashland Creek Park is not included in the project because it is already shaded and has a narrow channel. Bear Creek better meets the scope and requirements of the project
- Public Works would like approval for all properties identified in Figure 2. Not all properties would be included in this specific project, but could potentially be included in a future restoration project

Commissioners requested staff to notice the item with the word herbicide included in the agenda for public transparency and directed the item to be brought back to the Commission at the next Regular Meeting if Public Works and TFT are able to alter their request to include the points raised by Commissioners.

Gardiner closed this item and moved onto item number 3. After item number 3 concluded, Bell requested a return to item number 2. A discussion ensued about how to word this item on the agenda when it is brought to the Commission again.

### **3. Recreation Division Advisory Committee (RDAC) Formation (Informational)**

Dials reviewed the staff report and draft application form included in the [meeting packet](#) and asked the Commission for feedback. Dial's report included the following points.

- The performance audit completed in 2016 included the following recommendations, which set the stage for the formation of this committee:
  - Establish an in-house task force process to explore and develop program alternatives and strategies to increase participation from currently underserved groups in the community
  - Establish a process to create greater opportunities for participant and resident input in recreation programs to increase the overall effectiveness of and support for departmental programs and services
- The structure of this committee is molded after the current ASAC committee
- The purpose would be to advise the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commissioners on matters related to the Recreation Divisions programs and services and to coordinate with the Recreation Superintendent and APRC Director on matters related to the general operations, quality, promotions, diversity, equity and inclusion practices and programming
- The make-up of the committee is similar to ASAC: The total membership of program representatives and community partner representatives should be no more than seven (7) members, total. There should be a diverse combination of program related members (participants, instructors, volunteers), and community partner members (business, non-profit, community advocates) of the RDAC. In addition, there should be two (2) APRC Commissioners for a total of nine (9) Members.
- Once approved, the application process could be open for 6 weeks
- A list of applicants could be brought back to the Commission in October and moving forward with committee work in November depending on the timeline of approval

Discussion on this item included the following points:

- Landt suggested including a range in numbers for committee member representatives in order to achieve the stated goal of diverse representation. Landt suggested using the ASAC language for the Committee Make-up section
- Dials envisions this committee as a working group
- Recreation Staff has begun to identify groups to reach out to recruit members

Dials will make the suggested changes and will bring it to the next Regular Meeting

#### **ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS/STAFF**

Landt will provide photos to staff to display at the next Regular Meeting for ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS/STAFF

#### **UPCOMING MEETING DATES**

4. Pool Ad-Hoc Committee – September 4, 2019
  - Ashland Senior Center, 1699 Homes Ave—3:30 p.m.
5. Ashland Senior Advisory Committee – October 14, 2019
  - Ashland Senior Center, 1699 Homes Ave—3:30 p.m.
6. Current Parks, Conservation, and Maintenance Subcommittee—Aug 19, 2019 (held earlier in the day)
  - Lithia Cabin, 340 S Pioneer St.—12:00 p.m.
7. APRC Regular Meeting—August 26, 2019
  - Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main St., Ashland—7:00 p.m.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION (pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(e))**

Executive Session began at 7:31 p.m. Executive Session was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted  
Sean Sullivan  
Office Assistant II