

**MINUTES FOR REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING  
ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION**

December 9, 2020

**Electronic Meeting – 6:30 p.m.**

**Present:** Commissioners Gardiner (Chair), Landt (Vice-Chair), Lewis, Heller; Director Black; Finance Director Purcell; Recreation Superintendent Dials; Senior Services Superintendent Glatt, Supervisor Minica, Analyst Kiewel, Assistant Sullivan; City of Ashland Project Manager Kathol

**Absent:** City Council Liaison Mayor Stromberg; Commissioner Bell

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Black requested the for the Commissioners to change the Alameda Fire Restoration Report from information to action to entertain a request from the Freshwater Trust a waiver to use herbicides on blackberries and other invasive weeds in the burn area of Ashland Ponds. This is in anticipation of a future request to do riparian restoration in this area. Black stated the request is being made because the window for application is closing.

**Motion:** Heller moved Lewis moved to change the Alameda Fire Restoration Report agenda item from information. Lewis Seconded.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

APRC Regular Meeting – November 18, 2020

**Motion:** Landt moved to approve the Minutes from December 9, 2020 with the following change: Strike the word “not” in the fourth bullet under the Discussion section of the Drone Wildfire Monitoring Review/Final Approval agenda item. Heller Seconded.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes

**III. PUBLIC FORUM**

**Cassie Preskenis of Ashland** spoke as a white ally in support of holding space for the Say Their Names installation organizers and black community members . Preskenis called for a moment of silence in honor of Aidan Ellison who recently killed in Ashland, OR and then noted that community members are participating in a police forum on this subject that is happening at the same time as this meeting. Preskenis stated the original installation of Say Their Names was put up in June by a number of community members, including Joanne Feinberg, and was then taken down by unknown person(s) on August 22<sup>nd</sup>. The community then organically recreated a new version of the installation. Preskenis and others have put a call out to the community to take down and weatherize the installation days before Aidan Ellison was killed. Preskenis stated there are black community members who are discussing the possibility of installing a permanent art installation at this location that would be a declaration of the City of Ashland’s commitment to black lives and safety for the black community or a potential memorial is Aidan Ellison. There is a desire to commission a black artist and the community is looking into raising funds. Preskenis quoted Kayla Wade, the founder of SOEquity as saying, “The black community has been connecting and grieving and determining what we need. It is paramount that the Ashland officials are ready to listen when we do take the mic”.

**Joanne Feinberg of Ashland** attended in support of the project and the comments made by Preskenis.

Gardiner thanked the speakers and asked them to reach out to Director Black when the time is right to continue the conversation.

**IV. CONSENT AGENDA**

**1. Subcommittee Minutes Acknowledgment**

- **Bee City USA Subcommittee – January 8, 2020**
- **Oak Knoll Golf Course Subcommittee – January 28, 2020**

**Motion:** Landt moved to acknowledge the Consent Agenda. Lewis Seconded.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes

## **V. DIRECTORS REPORT**

Black reported on the following topics:

### **Cost Recovery**

- Multiple staff members, lead by Superintendent Dials, are meeting on a regular basis to put together a cost recovery analysis for every service that is provided by APRC
- A larger group of APRC staff members will be participating in a beneficiary of service exercise tomorrow
- The project is set to be completed in June. Updates will be provided to Commissioners throughout the process

### **Nutley Property - Status of Cottage**

- Three years ago, the property owner adjacent to APRC property on the corner of Granite and Nutley approached APRC to lease a portion of the property to temporarily locate the historic cottage, where the Raggedy Anne and Andy books were written, while a new home their new home was under construction
- The plan was for the cottage to then be permanently relocated back onto the private property behind the newly constructed house
- The Cottage is in the process of being moved by December 13 and will be available again as accessible public land within Lithia Park

### **Japanese Garden**

- APRC staff is in the process of removing and setting aside the existing boulders to be used later on in the project
- Trees that had been identified for removal have been removed and the tree protection plan has been implemented
- Demolition and site preparation is expected to be finished in the first part of January. Grading for the new garden design plan will begin shortly after that
- APRC staff is taking on this initial work. It is expected that Toru Tanaka and the subcontractor will begin in January

### **Pool Design**

- The draft pool replacement report and plan were presented to the public last night
- Questions about the plan were discovered at the meeting. Staff will work with the design team to address these questions prior to bringing the plan to the Commissioners for further discussion at the February Study Session

## **VI. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Gardiner restated that item number 3 under new business has been changed from information to action

## **VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

## **VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Riparian Restoration Lease Agreements (Action)**

Black introduced Kaylea Kathol, City of Ashland project Manager. Kathol reviewed the [staff report](#) including the following points:

- The lease agreement will allow for riparian restoration work on Riverwalk, Mace Property and newly donated land adjacent to Kestral Park. The restoration work will be carried out by The Fresh Water Trust
- The Commissioners approved this restoration work in August 2019
- Background on this project includes:
  - The City discharges effluent into Bear Creek that is treated, but it is warm and outside of compliance with the Clean Water Act
  - Restoration of native riparian forests provide a long-term source of shade and cooling components and provides measurable shade benefits
  - These shade benefits will provide credits for compliance with the Clean Water Act
- The Freshwater Trust would need to be provided with a 21-year lease of the land to carry out restoration activities. Kathol is requesting the Parks Commission approve the lease agreement with The Freshwater Trust

Discussion:

- Kathol clarified site prep will begin this winter and introduced Eugene Weir of The Freshwater Trust to provide additional information

- Black displayed a map of the properties that would be included in the lease agreement that was included on [page 31 of the staff report](#)
- Weir stated site prep will include mowing blackberries in late spring, allowing them to regrow over the summer and will then spot apply herbicide in the late fall of 2021. Planting will occur shortly after
- Wier clarified that herbicides will not be used during summer months. Blackberries will be treated with a minimal application during late September through late December
- Black clarified that approval has already been granted by the Parks Commissioners for limited herbicide use on these properties and that approving the lease is a formal step in carrying already approved restoration work

**Motion:** Landt moved to approve the lease as presented in writing and verbally at this meeting. Seconded by Heller

**Vote:** The vote was all yes.

The motion included in the staff report referenced in the above motion states:

*I move to approve the execution of a 21-year Riparian Land Lease with The Freshwater Trust for the purpose of implementing the Water Quality Temperature Trading Program on tax lots 391E04DA-3000, 391E04DB-400, and 391E04DB-2000.*

Landt stated that this program will not only shade the creek it will provide a healthy riparian zone resulting in a reduction in blackberries which will also reduce wildfire danger.

## 2. Budget Report – FY20 / Q1FY21 (Action)

Black stated that budget reports are provided quarterly to keep Commissioners up to date. The City of Ashland Finance Director, Melanie Purcell is present and will make a presentation on updates to financial policies following Kiewel's budget report. Kiewel reviewed the [staff report](#) included in the meeting packet and provided a [presentation slides](#).

- Cost saving measures were presented to the Commissioners in the Spring of 2020 and implemented to address projected revenue losses of \$372,000 in FY20 due to COVID-19 restrictions
- Adopted Expenses for FY20 were \$6,964,277; Actual Expenses incurred were \$6,407,902
  - FY20 came in under budget by \$557,857 due to a decrease in expenses
- Recreation revenue for FY20 was budgeted at \$908,100; Actual revenue \$617,844
  - The loss of \$290,186 was better than what was projected when COVID restrictions were put in place. This was largely due to the golf course outperforming projections since the course was able to open with COVID precautions in place
- General Fund FY20
  - Total Revenue: \$6,639,448
  - Total Expenses: \$6,407,902
  - Beginning Fund Balance: \$ 842,877 (intentional carry over from previous year to balance the FY20/21 budget)
  - Fund Balance: \$1,074,423
    - Black stated the Fund Balance of \$1 million+ is being transferred into the current fiscal year and is critical for balancing the budget for the rest biennium. The FY21 budget cannot be balanced without using these carry over funds.
- CIP Fund (Food 7 Beverage Revenue)
  - FY20/FY21 Budget was \$756,900 for each year; Projections due to COVID for FY20 were \$432,655 (\$294,245 less than budgeted)
  - Actual F&B revenue came in higher than projected at \$664,577
  - The FY21 F&B revenue projection is \$465,204
- Operating expenses for expenditures for October should be 33.33% (target). Actual General Fund expenditures are at 26.9% (below target)
- Revenue through October for FY21 are at 16.4% of budget
- The General Fund Balance for FY21 (through October) is \$427,265
- Staff is projecting that this Fund Balance at the end of FY21 will be a little under \$100,000

- Black stated the year end projection of \$100,000 shows that the cuts made earlier in the year were necessary and staff will be watching all budget lines closely. Black see the \$100,000 as a small buffer to deal with unforeseen expenses

Black requested that Finance Director Purcell present prior to the Commission acting on the budget report. Purcell gave a [presentation](#) on the City of Ashland financial policy updates.

- Purcell began as City of Ashland Finance Director in September 2020
- The APRC audit will go to Council on December 15, 2020. No issues were identified
- Council has been presented with and adopted [updated financial policies](#) on December 1, 2020. These will be reviewed on an on-going basis and adopted when necessary
- Purcell stated the policy update that effects the Parks Commission most closely though not substantively in the sense of operating authority is removing the component unit designation
  - This update was made as a result of reviewing the requirement under the Government Accounting Standards Board with the auditors, Purcell and auditors could not define the Parks Commission as it is structured under the Charter as a component unit
  - Recognizing that APRC financial information is important, Purcell stated this information will be reported under the city-wide structure. Purcell stated, in other words instead of the City of Ashland having a separate audit from APRC, the APRC information will be rolled into the City of Ashland audit
  - Costs to APRC will be reduced since there is only one audit and book that needs to be created
  - Purcell reiterated that this change does not substantively alter the management structure or operations of APRC
- Purcell stated the following:
  - There is a need to increase to Fund Balances for all City Funds
  - Capital Planning and issuing any debt will need to be projected out at least 15 years, traditionally Capital Plans are projected 6 years out
  - There is a concern with the Insurance Fund because it is upside down and that better risk planning is needed city-wide
- Purcell stated the intention of regularly attending Commission meetings in the future

Discussion:

- Purcell clarified the city adopted a reserve fund policy, which does not play into the Parks operations. The City had established a reserve fund for emergencies, major capital projects and other initiatives. That fund has been depleted and needs to be rebuilt. There have been conversations about selling properties and assets as well as reducing long term liabilities to build the fund back up
- Purcell clarified the change that effects APRC in connection with the audit reporting will not take effect until the end of FY21
- Purcell stated the rationale behind not being able to define the Parks Commission as a component unit is because the Parks Commission does not have taxing or debt authority
- Purcell confirmed the change in audit reporting will not change governance and the Commissioners retain control and management of all APRC funds

**Motion:** Landt moved to acknowledge the financial report. Heller Seconded.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes

### 3. Almeda Fire Restoration Report (~~information~~)(action)

Gardiner stated that a vote was taken at the beginning of the meeting to change this item from information to action.

Black introduced Supervisor Minica and stated Eugene Weir from the Freshwater Trust will be making a request that was not included in the staff report. Minica gave a [presentation](#) about the impacts and restoration opportunities on the Ashland Ponds property.

- Images of Ashland Ponds prior to the Almeda Fire were displayed. Minica noted that the photos displayed show blackberries surrounding the pond that are now mowed on a regular basis.
- A photo of the rim of the pond that was burned in the Almeda Fire was displayed that shows blackberry shoots returning post fire
- Ashland Ponds still contains hazard trees and is currently closed until hazards can be addressed
- Immediately after the fire, APRC staff participated in putting out hotspots and removing hazard trees along the greenway
- Jackson County has dispersed seed along Bear Creek and contracted with Lomakatsi to cover the seed with straw and install wattles

- Minica is working with the Inter-Tribal Ecosystem Restoration Network through Lomakatsi who would like to be involved with the restoration efforts on APRC properties along Bear Creek
- Lomakatsi may be able to provide funds and a workforce to carry out restoration efforts on APRC properties
- Minica will be working on a restoration proposal with Lomakatsi and will present it to Commissioners for approval once complete

Eugene Wier, on behalf of the Freshwater Trust and other groups working with Jackson County on restoration activities requested the use of herbicide on the Ashland Ponds property. The following items were discussed:

- The treatment procedures on the Ashland Ponds properties would be the same as what the Commissioners approved on the other APRC properties The Freshwater Trust is carrying out restoration work
- The treatment will be focused on blackberry crowns that have begun to resprout in the burn area
- The treatment being proposed for the Ashland Ponds property has been completed on all other burned properties along Bear Creek except for the Ashland Pond property. Funding has been provided by Jackson Soil and Water
- The treatment could reduce blackberry proliferation by 60/70%
- Weir requested the Commissioners grant a waiver to use herbicides on the Ashland Pond Property

Discussion:

- Wier clarified the waiver would only include areas burned in the Almeda Fire
- Landt stated the property where is the fire started in not on the Ashland Ponds property and that if approved the waiver should be granted for Park lands in the vicinity of Ashland Ponds that was burned in the fire
- Wier stated the City of Ashland will be providing authorization to use herbicides on their properties in the area
- Wier is asking for a three-year waiver, which is what has been approved on other APRC lands in the area where pre-fire restoration work has been planned
  - Wier added that since this is an emergency request, he supports a smaller window, such as four month, of use and could come back to a future meeting to seek a longer-term waiver to allow for more public notice and input
- Landt stated unease with providing a waiver because the use of herbicides has been controversial in the past but understands there is a tight window for application. Landt stated the allowed time should be between now and the next Regular Meeting so if additional time is needed for treatments it can be noticed properly to allow for public input
- Heller stated support for allowing a three-month waiver
- Wier stated a waiver through the next Regular Meeting is reasonable and will allow the work to move forward

**Motion:** Landt moved to allow emergency use of herbicides on all areas managed by APRC on Ashland Creek that were burned by the Almeda Fire with the following conditions: 1) the use period would be between now and January 5; 2) limited to blackberries and japanese knotweed; 3) there would be warning signs posted before application. Lewis Seconded.

**Discussion:** Black stated the next Regular Meeting is on January 13. Wier requested the timeframe to be extended up to the next Regular Meeting to account for unexpected weather. Heller provided a friendly amendment to extend the waiver to January 13. Landt and Heller agreed to the friendly amendment.

Wier stated a concern with being able to sign the area prior to application. Landt clarified that signs would need to be posted at the time applicators arrive in two locations since the areas are currently closed to the public. Wier stated that this condition can be met.

**Amended Motion:** Landt moved to allow emergency use of herbicides on all areas managed by APRC on Ashland Creek that were burned by the Almeda Fire with the following conditions: 1) the use period would be between now and January 13; 2) limited to blackberries and japanese knotweed; 3) there would be warning signs posted before application. Seconded by Lewis.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes.

#### 4. 2021 APRC Meeting Schedule (Action)

Sullivan reviewed the background in the [staff report](#) and provided an updated staff recommendation. Sullivan stated that subsequent to posting the packet for this meeting, he was made aware of Council Chambers becoming available on the first and second Wednesday of the month at 5:30 p.m. This would allow a 6:00 p.m. start for Study Session and the Regular Business Meetings when in person meetings resume. Staff

therefore recommends a start time 6:00 p.m. for the Study Session and Regular Business Meetings on the same dates identified in the staff report.

**Motion:** Landt moved to approve the 2021 meeting schedule as presented and modified by staff. Lewis Seconded.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes.

**IX. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS/STAFF**

Commissioners and Black thanked Heller for four years of service as a Parks Commissioner and for elevating the knowledge and presence of pickleball throughout the city.

Dials stated the Ashland Rotary Centennial Ice Rink will remain closed for the winter season due to risks associated with COVID-19.

**X. UPCOMING MEETING DATES**

1. APRC Regular Business Meeting — January 13, 2021
  - Electronic Meeting.—6:00 p.m.
2. Ashland Senior Advisory Committee – January 11, 2021
  - Electronic Meeting.—3:30 p.m.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted  
Sean Sullivan, Executive Assistant