

MINUTES FOR SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING
ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
August 20, 2021
Electronic Meeting – 3:00 p.m.

Present: Commissioners Gardiner (Chair), Landt (Vice-Chair), Bell (joined at 3:15pm), Eldridge (joined at 3:29pm), Lewis; Director Black; Deputy Director Dials; Senior Services Superintendent Glatt, Analyst Kiewel, Cottle; Manager Sullivan

Absent: None

This meeting was recorded and uploaded to the APRC YouTube Page: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NBHnGFYmdUo>

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Landt (acting Chair) at 3:00 p.m.

II. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

III. PUBLIC FORUM

None

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. **Discuss Monday, August 23, 2021 City Council and Parks Commission Joint Study Session related to the meeting process and agenda. Provide staff direction on responding to the various questions that have been posed in agenda by the City Council. Determine if action, like a full Commissioners' statement to be read at the beginning of meeting or other action warranted (Action)**

Landt stated the following items:

- The special meeting was called to address the concerns related to the preparations for the meeting that to a large part, excluded APRC leadership and to attempt to maximize productivity for our meeting Monday
- There is some concern among council and community members about APRC receiving a dedicated funding source when Fire, Police and Planning would still be wholly dependent on the general fund
- Commissioners need to determine if the [draft opening statement](#) provided by Landt before the meeting should be sent to City Council

Discussion:

- Gardiner and Lewis stated support for submitting the opening statement to City Council

Motion: Gardiner moved to write out the opening statement as presented by Commissioner Landt, send it to Council prior to the meeting and request that it be read at the joint meeting on Monday, August 23. Seconded by Lewis.

Vote: The vote was all yes (Bell and Eldridge were not present to vote)

Black displayed the [draft memo](#) sent to Commissioners prior to the meeting. Staff is proposing to send it to the City Council prior to the meeting to address the questions included on the joint meeting agenda. The following items were discussed:

- Black stated that the [joint meeting agenda](#) included questions and statements and this memo is an attempt to address and provide background to those statements and questions so the focus of the meeting can be on the Food and Beverage (F&B) Tax proposal that is included in the adopted budget
- Black reviewed the memo, drafted by Landt and Black, point by point. Summary:
 - If reductions in funding fell below \$1.89/\$1,000, APRC would look to reduce recreation programs such as the Nature Center, Senior Services and the Oak Knoll Golf course, which are all subsidized

Point of Order: Bell joined the meeting at 3:15 p.m. via phone (voice only)

- Black suggested making the previously approved “conditions” (as listed below), “discussion points”
 - F&B Tax must be extended 10 Years (at least until 2040)
 - Adopt an Ordinance dedicating a specific millage of Property Tax to APRC equivalent to \$1.89/\$1,000 minus new F&B contributions
 - Evaluate and if possible, designate APRC as a Contracting Review Board
 - COA (City of Ashland) will provide central services to APRC on a contract basis, which shall be renegotiated and renewed every two years
- The following projects were discussed regarding the potential for increased funding for maintenance:
 - **E Main Park:** The park will replace the YMCA park, which was sold to the YMCA. Staff believes the park can be maintained within the equivalent of \$1.89/\$1000 although at the same lower service level that all parks will experience
 - **Japanese Garden:** This project is being funded in total by a grant from a local resident. Additional maintenance for the Garden is fully covered for the next 10 years with a donor grant as well
 - **Daniel Meyer Pool:** This project is in the exploratory phase and thus a new pool will not have a maintenance effect in this biennium, although the current pool, due to its deterioration, could require additional maintenance funds or be shut down, which will reduce maintenance costs overall. Any major maintenance for the pool prior to its replacement will be paid for out of dedicated funds already within APRC’s capital improvement plan
- As long as the revenue proposal is implemented and no further expenses or reduction in revenue from the City are imposed, APRC will be able to maintain the current level of service through the biennium

Point of Order: Eldridge joined the meeting at 3:29 p.m.

- With the development of E Main Park and the use of Ashland School District fields and playgrounds, almost all residents have the opportunity to recreate in/on parks and open space within walking distance of their homes, satisfying the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan goal to have a park within ¼ mile of all residents
- The F&B Tax is not permanent, so a discussion about extending the tax will have to occur before the tax expires in 2030
- All discussions to this point have been about the F&B Tax amendment being permanent, or as permanent as the F&B Tax is, considering that it will expire in 2030
- If F&B Tax revenues come in less than projected, APRC does not expect that the general fund contribution would increase to fill the gap. If this were to occur, APRC would reduce expenses to accommodate the reductions in revenue
- Since APRC has been granted control and management of funds via the Charter, the Commissioners are seeking an exploration of the procurement rules surrounding APRC acting as an independent contract review board
- APRC currently pays full price for central services provided by the COA. APRC is only asking that this matter be examined and discussed in the terms of considering these services as part of the MOU that is negotiated between the City as opposed to services and fees simply being dictated to APRC
- APRC has contracted out services like janitorial services. But most park “services” do not lend themselves to privatization as they have historically, politically, and culturally been considered quality of life amenities that should be open to all citizens
 - Thus, for example, fences with admission entrances do not surround our parks. The possible exception could be the Oak Knoll Golf Course since it does charge admission. APRC Commissioners have chosen to provide time for the new manager, with his aggressive and creative business approach, to eliminate the need for subsidies. If significant subsidies remain, APRC may consider privatization or other means to eliminate the subsidies. The other benefits and revenue producing potential of the Golf Course would of course also be considered

Black requested that Commissioner make a motion to send this to Council if Commissioners support the memo.

Discussion:

- Gardiner stated that joint meeting agenda has numerical errors where the questions and statements are listed. Black stated the memo has been numbered as if the error did not occur
- Black clarified that the F&B tax plan outlined in the budget would not equal \$1.89/\$1,000, so there would still be a need for some general funds to be allocated to APRC to meet the adopted funding level of \$1.89/\$1,000 for this biennium as displayed in the adopted budget slide below that Black displayed (“Charges for Services” includes property taxes; “Taxes” is F&B

APRC Funding Sources



	2017-18 Actual	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Adopted Budget	2021-22 Proposed Budget	2022-23 Proposed Budget
Charges for Services	\$ 6,078,063	\$ 6,308,536	\$ 6,211,435	\$ 6,573,375	\$ <u>6,407,662</u>	\$ 4,495,978
Taxes	-	-	-	-	-	2,005,942
Operating Transfers In	85,000	85,000	185,000	185,000	435,000	435,000
Intergovernmental Revenue	750	500	190,356	15,000	90,000	90,000
Miscellaneous Revenues	19,883	25,700	33,425	31,000	25,000	25,000
Interest on Pooled Investments	9,692	20,599	19,232	23,543	15,000	15,000
Total	\$ 6,193,388	\$ 6,440,335	\$ 6,639,448	\$ 6,827,918	\$ 6,972,662	\$ 7,066,920

Motion: Gardiner moved to approve August 20, 2021 memo from Director Black titled, *Consideration of Questions Posed in the 8/23/2021 Joint Meeting Agenda*. Seconded by Lewis.

Discussion: Lewis stated that this information is valuable to the Council and answers the questions included on the agenda allowing for the focus of the meeting to address the F&B Tax plan that is outlined in the adopted budget. Eldridge thanked those who generated the document and pointed out that there are some minor typos that need to be addressed before sending it to City Council.

Vote: The vote was all yes

Staff was directed to send the Opening Statement and the Memo to Council prior to the joint meeting.

2. Discuss and give direction on the message for the APRC Fall Mailer (Action)

- APRC sends out a PlayGuide three times a year that includes information on programming and other relevant information. The PlayGuide going out at the end of August will not be printed and mailed since COVID restrictions are fluid and recreation offerings are not certain at this point
- A post card will go out at the end of August to all Ashland households letting them know that the PlayGuide has been released electronically
- The PlayGuide typically includes a message from the Director
- Staff were directed to work with Commissioners Eldridge and Bell to finalize a message from Commissioners that will replace the message from the Director. This message will also be included on the post card

VI. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS/STAFF
None

VII. UPCOMING MEETING DATES

- a) Joint Parks Commission/City Council Study Session — August 23, 2021
 - Electronic Meeting — 5:30 p.m.
- b) Ashland Senior Advisory Committee — September 13, 2021

- Electronic Meeting — 3:30 p.m.
- c) APRC Study Session — September 1, 2021
 - Electronic Meeting — 6:00 p.m.
- d) APRC Regular Business Meeting — September 8, 2021
 - Electronic Meeting — 6:00 p.m.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:12 pm

Respectfully Submitted

Sean Sullivan, Business Operations Manager