

# ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

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August 20, 2021

Ashland City Mayor and Council;  
Gary Milliman, Interim City Manager  
20 East Main St.  
Ashland, Oregon 97520

RE: Joint Meeting Opening Statement from Commissioners

Dear Mayor and City Council,

Unless one subscribes to the adage that the end justifies the means, we can all probably agree that process matters. This meeting has been billed as a “joint meeting,” but the run-up to the meeting has been one-sided, with APRC’s elected leadership being to a large extent ignored in the agenda setting process. Typically, the mayor and the chair of the parks commission would meet to discuss the agenda and process for a joint meeting; all request for such a meeting were ignored or denied. This is an unfortunate obstruction to the necessary cooperation between our two elected bodies.

That being said, we are here now to actively listen and participate with the goal to discuss the steps necessary to implement the budget committee and city council approved budget that included reducing APRC property tax revenues from the general fund and replacing the reduced funds with money from Food and Beverage Tax that currently is allocated to other City projects.

For our part, the APRC’s proposed “conditions” related to the funding changes should have been communicated as points to be discussed, not ‘conditions.’ We have corrected that in the written material you received and take responsibility for the miscommunication.

We view some of the questions on the agenda as distractions from our common goal. In response, we have attempted to fully respond to the questions in writing, and have distributed them beforehand, with the hope that that approach can free up more time for the primary issue before us.

Notwithstanding our initial disappointment related to preparations for this meeting, we want to put that behind us. We look forward to a productive meeting where all parties are heard and respected.

Respectfully,

Ashland Parks and Recreation Commissioners