

MINUTES FOR REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
February 10, 2021
Electronic Meeting – 6:00 p.m.

Present: Commissioners Gardiner (Chair), Landt (Vice-Chair), Bell (arrived at 6:02), Eldridge, Lewis; Director Black; Recreation Superintendent Dials; Senior Services Superintendent Glatt, Analyst Kiewel, Assistant Sullivan.

Absent: None

This meeting was recorded by RVTV. The recording can be found on the [City of Ashland video archive](#).

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

APRC Regular Meeting – January 13, 2021

Motion: Landt moved to approve the Minutes from January 13, 2021 as presented. Lewis Seconded.

Vote: The vote was all yes.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Acknowledgement of Minutes

- Current Parks, Conservation, and Maintenance Subcommittee – March 3, 2020
- Bee City USA Subcommittee – October 28, 2020
- Ashland Senior Advisory Committee – November 9, 2020

Motion: Landt moved to acknowledge the consent agenda. Lewis seconded.

Vote: The vote was all yes.

IV. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

V. PUBLIC FORUM

None

VI. DIRECTORS REPORT

Black provided the following information in the Director's Report:

Goals/Budget

- Deadlines from the city have been set earlier by the City of Ashland compared to previous budget cycles
- Goal setting will start at the public meeting scheduled on Friday
- Black is proposing a goal process that is a different from previous years because progress was not made on a number of goals due to the challenges of 2020. Staff will propose a number of current goals to move forward to the next biennium and would like to see fewer new goals introduced so previous goals can move forward and because of budget constraints

Cost Recovery

- Staff continues to work on the cost recovery project that will analyze how much costs are recovered by each program where fees are collected
- Staff will continue to provide updates and plans to make a presentation to Commissioners in the near future

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Walker School Parking Lot Access to Hunter Court (Action)

Black reviewed the [staff report included in the meeting packet](#) and displayed a [PowerPoint Presentation](#) reviewing the characteristics of the site. The following items were discussed:

- Walker School is adjacent to a Hunter Court, which is a private street owned by APRC. This allows APRC the authority to grant or deny permission to directly access Hunter Court from Walker School property. It also means that APRC is financially responsible for all maintenance of Hunter Court. The City of Ashland does not maintain this street
- Sidewalks are currently located on the east side of the street adjacent to Hunter Park. The west side does not have sidewalks
- The Ashland School District (ASD) is proposing a new parking lot that would require access to and from Hunter Court in addition to an access point on Homes Ave
- ASD is proposing to move the currently available parallel parking on the east side of Hunter Court so it would be located on school district property as well as adding a right-hand turn lane onto Homes Ave, also from their property adjacent to Hunter Court
- Black stated the reconfiguration of the parking lot could provide the following benefits to APRC:
 - Increasing available parking, including the additional parallel parking as well as a cross parking agreement for the new parking lot that could be used during non-school hours for user of Hunter Park and the pool
 - Adding sidewalk on the east side of Hunter Court where none currently exists
- Black stated a concern that the access point into the proposed parking lot from Hunter Court does not line up with the parking lot entrance adjacent to the pool in Hunter Park. Black stated it is a best practice to line up parking lot entrances/exits for pedestrian and automobile safety reasons
- ASD is requesting the use of the existing Hunter Court storm water system. Black is not clear if the existing storm drain can handle the increased load and would like this to be determined before moving forward
- Black stated that the staff report did not include creating a maintenance agreement, which is typical when a private street is shared, and recommends that one be agreed to by both parties as a condition of approval
- Black recommends approval of the project with the following conditions, as outline in the staff report with the addition of the maintenance agreement:
 1. The District and APRC will work together and successfully negotiate a cross-parking arraignment in writing that will benefit Hunter Park and allow parking on school property for Hunter Park events and activities that do not conflict with school use.
 - a. The final agreement for parking will be approved by the Parks Commissioners in a public meeting.
 2. The District will prepare and provide a comprehensive pedestrian plan for the approval of the Parks Director for the shared pedestrian load that the school use will have on Hunter Court and Hunter Park, including:
 - a. Locations and design specification for sidewalks, crosswalks and other at-grade pedestrian facilities that intersect with Hunter Park and the existing park pedestrian circulation. Consideration of the entire Walker School frontage of Hunter Court will be required.
 - b. A plan for controlling pedestrian movements over the school field and other school property onto and into the vehicle travel lanes of Hunter Court at unmitigated points of access. This could include a low fence along the eastern boundary of the District's property adjacent to Hunter Court that directs all pedestrian movement to controlled points of access to Hunter Court.
 - c. Crosswalks should be evaluated for Hunter Court and placement of those sidewalks should be consistent with intersections of driveways and other logical and convenient crossings of Hunter Court.
 3. The Walker School driveway on Hunter Court shall line up with the existing driveway for the tennis court/pool parking lot.

4. The new parallel parking spaces on Hunter Court will be available at all times as public parking. The storm water discharge request will need to be reviewed by the City and the District's engineers. District staff shall work with APRC staff to create an agreement for the use of the storm system contingent on engineering review and determination.
5. Create a maintenance agreement for Hunter Court that is approved by the School Board and Parks Commission

- Black clarified that there will be multiple public processes the project will need to go through before approval. The Parks Commission needs to grant permission to access Hunter Court and there will also be an approval process managed by the City of Ashland at which time the surrounding neighbors will be notified and a final decision on the plan will be made

Members of the school district team working on this project, attended the meeting to speak on the matter, included: consultants Kerry KenCairn, Matthew Guthrie, Mike Freeman, Amy Gunter; and Steve Mitzel representing the Ashland School District

- KenCairn displayed an [updated site plan](#), which saves a large tree along Hunter Court
- The design facilitates parent pick up and drop off in addition to parking
- The bus loop on Walker Ave will remain as the only bus pick up and drop off location
- A reconfiguration was displayed that would align the parking lot with the Hunter Park parking lot ([see video at 41:50](#))
 - Parallel parking would no longer be located on ASD property and additional trees would be saved
- KenCairn stated there are plans to create a walking path inside of a perimeter fence below the parking lot. Access points could be added to allow pedestrians to access the path from Hunter Court
 - Guthrie stated this path may need to be developed at a later date due to budgetary constraints and the fence may be as high as 6 feet. The fence would not be installed next to the curb so parallel parking will still be possible
- Mitzel stated this design seeks to relieve traffic congestion on Walker Ave
- Eldridge raised concerns about bicycle safety during drop off and pick up times and would like to see a comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle plan. Eldridge stated the design should include connectivity to the Central Bike Path located at the end of Hunter Court
 - KenCairn stated they have not developed a bike plan yet aside from increased bicycle parking on site
 - Gunter stated the streets in the area through the safe routes to school program and stated safety issues remain. Gunter added the plan encourages bicycles to come up Hunter Court and enter into the parking lot
 - Black stated additional discussions on the plan need to occur so issues such as connectivity to the Central Bike Path can be worked out and raised a concern about the walkway being off limits during school hours if it is behind a fence
- Landt raised the concern that the crossing at Hunter Court, to the ASD side of Hunter Court, does not have a readily available pathway to reach the building
- Black stated the role of APRC should focus on how the access changes things and gives opportunities to correct undesirable realities on Hunter Court and the pedestrian plan on the ASD site will have impacts on Hunter Court and Hunter Park
- Gunter stated storm water standards require post development peak flows are equal to or less that predevelopment peak flows and that the storm water swale should result in less water leaving the site than what is currently released
 - Black stated the condition of the storm water facilities need to be assessed to determine if it can handle any possible flows that may come off the ASD property since there is a request from ASD to use APRC storm water facilities
- Gardiner stated there is a significant number of seniors who park on Hunter Court to access the Senior Center and that use should be taken into consideration when developing the pedestrian plan
- Landt stated a raised crosswalk across Hunter Court at Homes Ave should be evaluated to act as a traffic calming feature
- Mitzel stated he is working on a letter of intent to put together a cross parking agreement and would like to work with Black on developing a maintenance agreement
- The Commissioners directed Black to continue discussions with ASD to work out the conditions listed in the staff report before a decision is made

2. Senior Services Division Report (Information)

Glatt provided a [PowerPoint presentation](#) on Senior Service Division activities. The full presentation begins at [1:32:20 in the video](#). The following items were discussed:

Pandemic-Adapted Services

Service statistics prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic showed a sharp rise in participation in activities, education, special events, and services offered by the Senior Services Division (SSD) at Ashland Senior Center and other sites. However, after APRC closed facilities to the public in March 2020, all in-person activities stopped. Progress on many Division goals slowed, while Goal 2, to “Identify and reach frail or vulnerable seniors who may be isolated and connect them to services that could help them maintain independence and well-being” became the focus.

Division staff now serve seniors and their families via phone, email, a frequently updated COVID-19 Senior Resources [webpage](#), and a monthly [newsletter](#) with pandemic education and resources. SSD has heard frequent feedback from patrons who are grateful that they actually answer the phone live (or return calls promptly) in a time when so many agencies have only a voicemail in place; patrons also name the newsletter as a lifeline of vital information that they aren’t receiving elsewhere.

The Division has developed several new services and continued regular services remotely as possible:

- Adopt a Neighbor Ashland: Staff worked with a citizen group to develop and staff an emergency program to link those most vulnerable to the virus to volunteers for shopping and errands. Because the pandemic has stretched far longer than the original citizen group expected, this program is now run completely in-house with APRC Senior Services Division and Volunteer Program.
- Senior Phone Buddy: Staff launched this new program to combat pandemic-induced isolation by linking seniors to phone companions for check ins and socializing. They are in the process of adapting this program to be a permanent service to counter the significant health risks of chronic isolation and loneliness among seniors
- Outreach Calls: Staff and volunteers conducted outreach calls to seniors sheltering at home, to check in, offer our new services, and help link seniors to community resources to meet their needs. They started with known vulnerable seniors and eventually called all 500 patrons for whom they had phone numbers
- Other Remote Services: Volunteers from SSD’s Computer Tutoring and Senior Health Insurance Benefits Assistance counseling are meeting with seniors over the phone or Zoom. The monthly Dementia Caregiver Support Group, co-sponsored by the Alzheimer’s Association, continued without interruption by switching to the Zoom platform. Other partners such as AARP are providing online classes in lieu of those they previously offered in-person.

Staff have innovated and learned from other senior centers to provide safe opportunities for connection, engagement, and fun in these isolating times:

- Programs Outdoors and Online: Last summer staff brought back some regular programming outdoors, including yoga and discussion group. Yoga and education

programs live over Zoom started last fall and include a phone-only option for those without internet access. (Other activity groups have declined the online option.)

- Drive-Through Events: With the help of local sponsors, the SSD introduced some fun drive-through social events in summer and fall until Jackson County’s “extreme risk” rating required those to pause
- Holiday Cards: In lieu of holiday drive-throughs, SSD took the unusual step of sending personalized holiday cards to bring cheer and connection in a dark year
- Ashland Radio Hour Play: To create a fun event accessible over the phone, staff asked a talented group of local seniors to create an old-fashioned radio-style play. They will perform the play live over Zoom, with a phone-only option, on February 10 for our audience and again on February 25 for OLLI members. Learn more [here](#).

Vaccine Access for Seniors

Now that COVID-19 vaccines are available, Superintendent Glatt is part of a work group with Jackson County Public Health to plan for dissemination of the vaccine to seniors. Glatt is also working with transportation providers to solve transportation barriers and with

Mercy Flights to try to host a drive-through clinic for seniors at Ashland Senior Center, perhaps as early as March. Staff are working with City administration on risk management issues.

Future Planning

SSD staff continue to schedule remote programs such as Zoom yoga and education events and are preparing to resume programming outdoors and later indoors when risk levels ease. In alignment with our mission and goals, staff balance support of vulnerable seniors with provision of social, health and educational programs for the diverse senior population of Ashland.

3. Calle Guanajuato Rental Space (Possible Action)

Dials reviewed the [updated staff report](#) that was posted after the packet was released. The following items were discussed:

- Dials displayed a [boundary map of the rentable areas on Calle Guanajuato](#)
 - Purple spaces are allocated to artisan's market booths
 - Red spaces are allocated to restaurants
 - Blue spaces are shared between restaurants and the artisan's market
- Because of impacts from COVID, Parks Commissioners waived rental fees and provided staff the flexibility to redistribute seating spaces to provide the greatest good for the greatest number of restaurants at the July 8, 2020 meeting
 - Contracts were signed by users agreeing to these changes
 - Seniority for outdoor dining would revert back to pre-COVID contracts at the close of the season
- Staff is recommending the following:
 - Continue to allow staff the flexibility to allocate space while COVID restrictions are still in place, which could include using the front of Lithia Park for artisan market booths and allow any restaurant on Calle Guanajuato to apply for outdoor seating space
 - The season would run from March 8, 2021 through November 14, 2021 with administrative fees charged for July, August, and September only
 - The current monthly fees of \$8 (per sq ft. for restaurants – 7 days per week) /\$5.50 (per sq. ft. for restaurants – 5 days per week)/\$5.00 (per sq. ft. Lithia Artisan's Market) would be charged for those three (3) months. There would be no charge for the shoulder seasons of March, April, May, June, October, and November
- Dials clarified that under typical operating procedures, not all restaurant located on Calle Guanajuato are allocated space for outdoor seating because of the limited space available

Public Comment

Elijah Katkin of Ashland spoke in favor of changing the policy that regulates rental space on Calle Guanajuato, pre-COVID, which precludes restaurants located on the second floor of buildings adjacent to Calle Guanajuato. Katkin stated the policy is in conflict with warranties made by the City Attorney and the Ordinance passed by City Council when land was donated to the City of Ashland by private property owners. Katkin also stated that a restaurant who rents outdoor seating space utilizes private property directly adjacent to the entrance to his establishment and would like this to cease

- Dials stated that she will inspect the set-up situation to make sure that renters are not using private property

Landt stated staff recommendations are a good balance between being supportive of tenants and being fiscally responsible and this motion supports those recommendations.

Motion: Landt moved to approve the following:

- 1) Use all relevant elements of the emergency COVID-19 pandemic contract used last year for the new contracts this year that among other things allows for APRC staff to adjust rented spaces and locations to provide the greatest good for the greatest number of renters.
- 2) The season of operation to run from March 8, 2021 through November 14, 2021.
- 3) Fees of \$8/\$5.00/\$5.50 (7-day restaurant renters/weekday restaurant renters/ Lithia Artisan's Market respectively) per square foot will be charged for the months of July, August, and September only.

- 4) Space allocation for the 2021* season will revert to 2019 unless the APRC Commissioners change the policy.
- 5) An approved site plan, 2 million in liability insurance and a waiver will be required before any space can be used.

Seconded by Bell.

Discussion: Bell stated this is the most efficient way of administering the space and that the fees are not onerous. Landt clarified that point number 1 allows staff to provide outdoor seating space to any restaurant located on Calle Guanajuato. Landt noted that point number 1 includes the term relevant because the emergency contracts last year required restaurants to have a flood plan because of operation into the winter months, which will not be an issue under the proposed season that ends in November. Gardiner and Lewis stated that this motion accommodates restaurants in an emergency situation and that demand for outdoor seating will likely decrease once indoor seating capacities are no longer limited by COVID restrictions.

Dials clarified that the use of the front of Lithia Park for the artisan's market is only possible with approval by the Parks Commission.

Vote: The vote was all yes.

***Post Meeting Note:** When the minutes for this meeting were approved at the April 14, 2021 Regular Business Meeting it was discovered that the approved motion contained a misstatement under condition #4. The intent of the motion was that the space allocation for the 2022 season, and not the 2021 season as stated in the meeting, would revert back to 2019. A motion was passed at the April 14, 2021 to correct the approved motion. Condition #4 now reads as follows:

- 4) Space allocation for the 2022 season will revert to 2019 unless the APRC Commissioners change the policy.

4. Parks View Topics (Commissioner Lead Discussion)

Gardiner stated the Ashland Tidings prints a monthly column entitled Parks Views and has requested that Commissioners recommend topics and volunteer to write pieces for the column. Commissioners stated they will contact Gardiner with topics and offers to write columns.

IX. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS/STAFF

Bell stated it should be possible to make a connection from the Central Bike Path directly to Walker School property and requested that staff work on the feasibility of this.

Black requested Commissioners start to prepare for goal setting by thinking about policy and/or infrastructure projects to be prioritized for the next biennium.

X. UPCOMING MEETING DATES

1. Ashland Senior Advisory Committee – March 8, 2021
 - Electronic Meeting —3:30 p.m.
2. APRC Study Session – March 3, 2021
 - Electronic Meeting—6:00 p.m.
3. APRC Regular Business Meeting — March 10, 2021
 - Electronic Meeting—6:00 p.m.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted
Sean Sullivan, Executive Assistant

