

City of Ashland
ASHLAND PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION (APRC)
ASHLAND SENIOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ASAC)
Meeting Minutes
July 10, 2023

Committee Members Present:

- Anne Bellegia
- Cori Frank
- Mike Gardiner, Chair
- Debra Johnson, Vice Chair
- Bob Kaplan
- Jim Bachman
- John Engelhardt
- Patty Winner

Committee Members Absent:

- Noriko Toyokawa

Staff Present:

- Isleen Glatt
- Shannon Holt

CALL TO ORDER

Gardiner called the meeting to order at 3:30pm.

OPENING

Gardiner introduced two new ASAC members: John Engelhardt and Patty Winner. All current and new members introduced themselves with some of their background.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Johnson/Frank m/s to approve the minutes from May 8th, 2023. Voice vote – all AYES. Minutes approved.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA

None.

PUBLIC INPUT

None.

AGE + -TALENT SENIOR APARTMENTS AND CIRCLES OF CARE PROGRAM

Olivia Robinson, Community Outreach and Engagement Manager with AGE+, presented on new affordable housing in Talent, Oregon, and a community outreach program, Circle of Care. See [presentation slides](#).

Robinson added the following information during a question-and-answer period:

- AGE+ has been active in Jackson County for many years and sees older folks as assets. The units for Talent are being constructed in a warehouse and will be installed soon; they will start leasing around the end of August or beginning of September. Units are for either one person or a couple. Pets are allowed, but there may be breed restrictions placed. Applications are not ready yet, but inquiry forms are available at ageplus.org. Based on experience in other areas of the state, the Circle of Care program has identified the primary needs for transportation, light housekeeping/yard work, and friendly check-ins to help with loneliness and isolation.
- *Will AGE+ manage the site?* No, AGE+ is contracting with Quality Property Management as they believe they are aligned with their mission and goals.
- *Will AGE+ Circle of Care be a fee-based service like Ashland at Home?* No, all services will be free.

- All Circle of Care volunteers must have a background check. The AGE+ Community Liaison will coordinate the Rogue Valley program.
- The Talent Senior Apartments will accept HUD vouchers and other rental assistance programs, but rents are set at rates affordable even without assistance.
- Units are efficiently constructed with mini split air conditioning and heating units and are also fire hardened.
- AGE+ is not intending to become a housing developer but hopes to show housing developers an economically viable model for building affordable housing.
- Funding for AGE+ comes from grants and annual fundraising events.

STANDING REPORTS

a. APRC Liaison

Commissioner Bachman reported that APRC Director Micheal Black is resigning. Leslie Eldridge, who is currently a Parks Commissioner, has been appointed Interim Director for one year, starting late August. The Parks Commission plans to slow down the search for a permanent Director to make sure Eldridge has a chance to be successful. Eldridge's Commissioner position will need to be filled within 60 days of her formal resignation.

Director Black has appointed Business Operations Manager Sean Sullivan as Interim Parks Superintendent. ASAC members asked, since Food and Beverage Tax change did not pass, whether the APRC budget will be met. Bachman replied that yes, the City Council has already approved the APRC budget mostly as requested.

b. City Council Liaison

Councilor Kaplan shared that the APRC budget was approved by Council. A motion to cut the golf course budget was voted down. Kaplan said that what will likely happen is an accumulation of Food and Beverage funds for two years. Kaplan shared that under current restrictions, the Food & Beverage funds may only be used for Parks capital improvements or paying off street debt and will only be collected until fall 2030. Kaplan expressed that it would have been nice if it did pass so that there was more flexibility to use for operating expenses and not have to use the City's general fund.

Next week the City Council will discuss in more detail about how money is spent, which was not possible during the budget discussions. Kaplan also announced that the City received a \$1 million grant from the Governor's emergency fund to be used for building or procuring a homeless shelter for year-round use. The shelter will have funding until January 1, 2024, then it will be City of Ashland's job to maintain it. The City is in talks with OHRA to run the shelter.

Kaplan reported that the City Recorder will resign at the end of August. The Council will have 60 days to appoint an Interim City Recorder for this elected position.

c. Education Report

Mettler reported that recent Smokewise and Survival Preparedness for Seniors classes were very successful, covering an critical topic for summer risks. By partnering with Britt, Senior Services had a fun field trip to a Britt Orchestra concert, and Britt offered a Drumtastic Beats workshop in Ashland Senior Center's outdoor space attended by about 75 participants from multigenerational families. A Flamenco guitar performance is scheduled for August. Fall will feature Medicare and Social Security classes.

d. Superintendent Report

Superintendent Glatt praised Coordinator Mettler for her hard work to offer additional education and cultural events this summer and fall, more than the usual one per month.

Glatt provided an update on the Conversation Clusters seating project. She credited Anne Bellegia for championing the idea as an age-friendly livability improvement for Ashland. Conversation Clusters is a great opportunity for people to be outdoors with seating facing towards each other. Glatt reported that the project was not chosen for an AARP Community Challenge grant, but Director Black had set aside a portion of CIP funds for the project just in case. The new seating would be in Lithia, Garfield and Garden Way Parks.

ITEMS FROM ASAC MEMBERS OR WORK GROUPS

a. Livable Ashland Alliance Update

Bellegia stated that the upcoming Alliance Steering Committee meeting is important because they have been working on getting a fiscal sponsor for Livable Ashland Alliance so that they may receive donations and grants and possibly hire a paid project coordinator. Bellegia has also recruited Deputy City Manager Sabrina Cotta to be part of the Alliance Steering Committee.

b. Other items from ASAC members

Glatt reported that Toyokawa was unable to attend today's meeting but sent a written report (in the agenda package) about her intergenerational discussions at SOU.

Bellegia announced that the OLLI Open House will be on Friday, July 18 at SOU. APRC and the Senior Services Division will have a table there.

Next meeting – Monday, September 11, 2023, 3:30-5:00pm

Members again considered having some meetings in person while continuing most meetings on Zoom to reduce staff burden and allow members to attend when out of town. Glatt suggested holding the September and March meetings in person. At Gardiner's suggestion, members agreed to try the September meeting in person at Ashland Senior Center before making a long-term decision.

Adjournment – 4:55pm

Respectfully submitted by Shannon Holt, Office Assistant II, Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission