

City of Ashland  
ASHLAND PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION (APRC)  
ASHLAND SENIOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ASAC)  
Meeting Minutes  
March 11, 2024

**Committee Members Present:**

- Cori Frank
- Jim Bachman
- John Engelhardt
- Mike Gardiner, Chair
- Noriko Toyokawa

**Staff Present:**

- Leslie Eldridge
- Natalie Mettler
- Shannon Holt

**Committee Members Absent:**

- Anne Bellegia
- Debra Johnson, Vice Chair
- Gina DuQuenne
- Patty Winner

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**OPENING**

Gardiner welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes not approved due to lack of quorum.

**ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA**

None.

**PUBLIC INPUT**

None.

**PRESENTATION: Ashland At Home: Update on status and services**

Katharine Danner, President of Ashland At Home Board of Directors.

The following was covered in discussion:

- Ashland At Home was started in 2012 to help the aging community live independently at home.
- Due to the pandemic, Ashland At Home had to take a hiatus until they reopened in July of 2023, at which time they were serving 75 members with 50 volunteers.
- Ashland At Home is a non-profit that is part of Village to Village Network that started in Boston in 2000.
- Mission is to support and engage members so they can thrive as they age in their homes.
- Volunteers do the kind of services that you would ask a good friend or neighbor to do on an episodic basis. The volunteers do not do any in-home care.
- Volunteers go through background and driving checks.
- 50% of the service requests are for transportation.
- There is a special need box to check if members need extra help, such as a ride to the airport.
- Hope and focus are to get more engagement of members.

- There is no minimum of hours that need to be served. There is a list that is sent out each morning from which volunteers can pick tasks.
- There was a membership support fund before the pandemic when the annual fee was \$600 for a 2-person household and \$500 for a 1-person household; fee is now \$300 for 1- or 2-person household. Currently there is no membership support fund.
- Ashland At Home is redoing their website and working on an outreach program.
- Service area covers Ashland and Talent and currently there are 45 members, 38 volunteers and 5 members who are also volunteers.
- New database tracks member needs.
- Can cover a couple of hours of caregiver respite.
- Regarding unmet needs, there have only been 5 requests that could not be filled; if a request is unfilled, volunteers are reminded.
- Intern assistance for upcoming survey; also projects that bring together intergenerational groups.
- Often refer to ADRC if need is not a good fit for Ashland At Home. Biggest goal is to make it easier for people to ask for help.
- Members can coordinate group outings through website.
- Word of mouth is most common way people become members.
- Ashland At Home is hoping to reach 150 members and 150 volunteers.
- Hope to expand base with more outreach, also with updating website and communications.
- Members do not need to be tech savvy to access services.

## STANDING REPORTS

### a. **APRC Liaison Commissioner Bachman**

Several projects on the horizon - short term challenge is that Eldridge is still Interim Director; job posting for permanent Director position was approved last week. Daniel Meyer pool project will not be breaking ground anytime soon, perhaps by the summer of 2025. East Main Park will have a pump track, food forest, garden and playground. It will be another outdoor space for the community. Might be started by the end of this summer 2024.

The following was covered in discussion:

- Eldridge reported that APRC has applied for grant funding for E Main Park pump track and Hunter tennis courts rehabilitation from.
- Eldridge announced that Mettler will be moving into the permanent position of Senior Services Superintendent
- East Main Park project: there is a webpage that outlines the 4-5 years of planning, project funding and phases.
- The bike pump track is the most expensive piece of the East Main Park project.
- Oregon State Parks has annual grants cycles, there is currently \$30 million from the lottery fund. Eldridge believes APRC has a good chance of being funded from these grants. Eldridge also mentioned that the rehabilitation of Hunter Park tennis courts has also been submitted for this grant funding.
- Frank would like to see more pickleball courts and dedicated funding to fix the broken courts in Lithia Park.
- Eldridge would like to meet with the pickleball association to identify possible areas to put more courts.

**b. City Council Liaison Gina DuQuenne**

Not present.

**c. Education Report – Interim Senior Services Coordinator Shannon Holt**

Senior Services classes are all almost full.

Upcoming activities and events:

- Summer Cookout with Ashland Police Department
- Ongoing Jackson County Library Services (JCLS) tech basics classes and adding a one-time class to help navigate apps and websites.
- Personalized Strength and Balance class with Beth Morris has added 2 more sessions due to demand.

The following was covered in discussion:

- Eldridge notified that Senior Services has exceeded its goal in bringing in projected revenue.
- Some Senior Services classes have a small fee but many, and all services, are free.

**d. Senior Services Superintendent Report – Senior Services Superintendent Natalie Mettler**

- Update on Conversation Clusters, specifically stacking chairs in Lithia Park: These have now been removed due to impact on Parks Staff; the benches in Garfield and Glenwood Parks will remain. [In-meeting material added showing end-of-second quarter statistics](#). These were high, primarily due to the vaccine clinic in October-November 2023, but also seeing steady increased engagement. Senior Center is still closed to public on Fridays due to reduced staffing.

The following was covered in discussion:

- While closed on Fridays, do the phones go to voicemail?  
Yes, unless one of the staff's direct numbers is called, phones go to voicemail.

**ITEMS FROM ASAC MEMBERS OR WORK GROUPS**

Livable Ashland Alliance: Mettler mentioned that some critical members of steering committee have left and the Alliance is currently trying to decide how to regroup.

**b. Other Items from Advisory Committee Members.**

- Eldridge explained that a pump track is a series of concentric loops made out of concrete with obstacles to navigate through on a bicycle.
- Eldridge also reported that State legislators have revised recreational liability. Waiting to hear what the outcome will be.

**Next meeting** – Monday, May 13th, 3:30-5:00pm on Zoom.

**Adjournment** – 5pm

*Respectfully submitted by Shannon Holt, Interim Senior Services Coordinator, Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission*