

**MINUTES FOR REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION**

August 12, 2020

Electronic Meeting – 6:30 p.m.

Present: Commissioners Gardiner (Chair), Landt (Vice-Chair), Bell, Heller (joined the meeting at 6:33), Lewis; Recreation Superintendent Dials; Senior Services Superintendent Glatt, Supervisor Minica; Analyst Kiewel, Assistant Sullivan

Absent: Director Black; City Council Liaison Mayor Stromberg

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

APRC Study Session – July 1, 2020

Motion: Landt moved to approve the Minutes from July 1, 2020 as presented. Lewis Seconded.

Vote: The vote was all yes

APRC Regular Meeting – July 8, 2020

Motion: Landt moved to approve the Minutes from July 8, 2020 as presented. Lewis Seconded.

Vote: The vote was all yes

III. PUBLIC FORUM

None

IV. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. COVID-19 Response Update (Information)

Dials reviewed the staff report included in the [meeting packet](#). In addition to the items listed in the staff report, the following items were discussed:

- Staff members may be impacted due to school closures. As more information on school plans become available, staff will work to develop necessary plans
- Trash cans are being heavily used and there has been an uptick in graffiti in parks
- Recreation programs are being offered outdoors at the Nature Center and Senior Center including yoga and discussion groups
- Glatt reported the Senior Services Division (SSD) staff continue to address isolation issues faced by Seniors and reported that SSD is working on the following programs
 - organizing a drive through ice cream social as a way to offer a positive activity and to touch base with constituents
 - conducting outreach to determine if additional social group creation is needed
 - exploring opportunities to hold programs via Zoom or call-in methods
- Kiewel stated that APCR is being reimbursed for some expenses, such as the sanitation stations. APCR will not be reimbursed for lost revenue. The reimbursement process is ongoing, and staff will seek reimbursement where appropriate

2. Hunter Park/Lithia Park Court Resurfacing (Possible Action)

Heller made the statement that he is not intending to recuse on this item because there is no financial relationship between himself and any decision being made by the Commission during the meeting. Heller stated that it is important for pickleball to have a voice and that many of his constituents have asked him to not recuse himself.

Dials reviewed the staff report included in the [meeting packet](#). The following items were discussed:

- At the July 8 meeting the Commissioners did the following:
 - Allocated \$100,000 to resurface the Hunter Park tennis courts
 - Directed staff to review cost for resurfacing the courts at Lithia Park to determine if additional funding was necessary
 - Scheduled a decision on where and how to stripe the courts would be made at the August 2020 meeting to allow for the public to comment
- A quote to resurface the Hunter Park and Lithia Park courts was secured by staff
 - Resurface and stripe Hunter Park courts: \$66,000
 - Resurface and stripe Lithia Park courts: \$17,000
 - Total Cost: \$83,000
- Minica reported the quote is for a basic resurface and striping and does not include the option of additional crack treatments. The vendor no longer recommends undertaking this kind of treatment. The crack treatment would have increased the cost of resurfacing the courts at Hunter Park to more than \$100,000
 - This is a basic resurface
 - There is an options crack treatment that is no longer being recommended by the vendor
 - Fill cracks with basic asphalt sealer, paint and stripe
- Minica stated the following:
 - Resurfacing is likely to last five to 10 years, but Hunter has a history of the courts continuing to crack over time
 - This is not a permanent, long-term fix, but would improve the playing surface for five to 10 years
 - Changes to the striping configuration could minimally increase the cost
 - The cracking at the Hunter Park courts is a result subsurface settling. A more permanent fix would require removing the courts completely and addressing the subsurface issues
 - It is possible and less costly to add lines to courts if Commissioners want to add additional striping after resurfacing the courts
 - It would be necessary to resurface the courts again to remove line configurations
- Dials stated that it is possible to finish the project this fall
- Dials stated that Bike polo has been using court #5 at Hunter Park since 2015 and holds tournaments there
- Dials displayed [various options for striping the courts](#)
- The staff recommendations are as follows:
 - At the Hunter Park Tennis Courts:
 - Resurface and stripe courts 1-4 and 6-8 for tennis only
 - Resurface and stripe court 5 for tennis and bike polo
 - At the Lithia Park Tennis/Pickleball Courts:
 - Resurface upper and lower court
 - Upper court striped for four dedicated pickle ball courts without tennis lines
 - Lower court striped for four pickle ball courts and for a tennis court
 - As determined by staff, lower court will have the prime-time hours weighted towards pickleball only with times not reserved for pickle ball open for both pickle ball and tennis on a first-come, first served basis
 - Tennis net on lower court would remain
 - If there are Remaining funds staff will consider:
 - Permanent pickle ball nets for the upper court at Lithia Park
 - Replacement of tennis nets as needed
 - Adding gates to Court #5 at Hunter Park for Bike Polo
 - Any remaining funds after above amenities are obtained returned to CIP fund for contingencies for 2020 approved projects
 - Commission to Re-evaluate Court Usage in one year:

- After one year from the opening of the new courts, re-evaluate to determine if the reallocation of courts is equalizing use pressure between tennis and pickle ball

Public Input:

Written testimony from the public was encouraged and accepted via email. All comments submitted for the public input for this agenda item have been [posted online](#).

Daryl Whitmore spoke on behalf of the Rogue Valley Bike Polo Club and advocated for court #5 at Hunter Park to be a dedicated no net multi-use court. Whitmore's full testimony begins at [36:40 on the RVTV recording](#).

Jason Catz of Ashland spoke on behalf of the Ashland Soccer Club and advocated for court #5 at Hunter Park to be a dedicated no net multi-use court. Catz provided [signatures gathered](#) in support of this position. Catz offered the financial support of the Ashland Soccer Club to facilitate the purchase of equipment. Catz's full testimony begins at [41:44 on the RVTV recording](#).

Allen Kenner of Ashland spoke in favor of maintaining the striping on all Hunter Park courts for tennis and not to remove the net from court #5, and not stripe for pickleball on any of the courts at Hunter Park. Kenner also advocated the inclusion of a current drain on the south side of the courts to address cracks. Kenner's full testimony begins at [51:03 on the RVTV recording](#).

Commissioner discussion included the following points:

- Dials clarified the staff recommendation for #5 court at Hunter Park does not include the removal of the net, but does include striping for bike polo and tennis
- Bell recommended striping all the courts at Lithia Park for pickleball and striping the courts #1-7 at Hunter Park for tennis and making court #5 a no-net multi-use court
- Landt made the following comments:
 - APRC provides significant resources to soccer at North Mount Park, including fields and lights, 35% of the cost of the lights were paid by the soccer community
 - Unfortunately, there is currently not enough room for the various user groups at APRC court facilities
 - In the short term APRC will not be constructing new courts
 - The current decision seeks to allocate uses in the best way possible under current conditions and stated that allocations should be done incrementally. Most of the proposal is incremental and would provide total of eight pickleball courts at Lithia Park with all of the courts available to pickleball during prime times and minimally changes things at Hunter Park
 - It is more expensive to redo the striping on courts, but it is feasible to add striping in the near future to accommodate other uses that are not currently striped. Therefore, it makes sense to move forward in a minimal manner and re-evaluate uses after a short period of time. Data on usage should be collected to help inform the decision-making process
- Lewis stated that there has been public input from the bike polo, Futsal and the tennis communities and would like to get input from the pickleball community regarding the staff recommendations
 - Gardiner referenced the written comments received from the pickleball community, some of which were submitted after the staff recommendations were posted
 - Heller stated the following:
 - He has played on the Hunter Park tennis courts for 30 years and has not had to wait to get a court unless there is a tournament or when youth tennis lessons are in session
 - In general, the pickleball community would be content, for now, with eight courts at Lithia Park
 - There is concern that Lithia Park is not as usable during the non-warm weather months
 - As long as there is still the long-term vision of building dedicated pickleball courts at Oak Knoll, the recommendations are sufficient
- Dials stated that Parks Staff have reported that the tennis courts are not typically full outside of tournaments
- Dials recommends rethinking the current net at court #5 in Hunter Park and explore more agile options that would allow for the net to be removed in an easy way that does not introduce safety issues when it is removed .

Landt stated that APRC should be as agile as possible. A decision needs to be made now so the courts can be resurfaced and less lines are better at this point. Landt added that with more time and data collection on usage, decisions can be made about competing users.

Motion: Landt moved to allocate the \$100,000 previously approved by APRC Board of Commissioners to resurface and restripe Hunter and Lithia Park courts as follows:

- **Hunter Park Tennis Courts**
 - Resurface and stripe all eight courts for tennis only
 - No change to bike polo use
 - *Staff will work to accommodate Futsal on court five*

- **Lithia Park Tennis/Pickleball Courts**
 - Resurface upper and lower court
 - Upper court striped for four dedicated pickleball courts without tennis lines
 - Lower court striped for four pickle ball courts and for a tennis court
 - As determined by staff, lower court will have the prime-time hours weighted towards pickleball only with times not reserved for pickle ball open for both pickle ball and tennis on a first-come, first served basis
 - Tennis nets on both courts may remain

- **If there are remaining funds, staff will consider:**
 - Permanent pickle ball nets for the upper court at Lithia Park
 - Replacement of tennis nets as needed
 - Any remaining funds after above amenities are obtained returned to CIP fund for contingencies for 2020 approved projects

- **Commission to Re-evaluate Court Usage in One Year**
 - After one year from the opening of the resurfaced courts, re-evaluate to determine if the reallocation of courts is equalizing use pressure between tennis and pickleball
 - At the same time, Commission will determine if Hunter Park court five and possibly court six should be transitioned to multi-purpose

Seconded by Gardiner

Discussion:

- Landt clarified the motion is different from the staff recommendation in the following ways:
 - Removed mention of the gate and striping for bike polo
 - Allowed the possibility for the net on the upper court at Lithia Park to remain to serve as a barrier if desired by the pickleball community
 - Added that when the Commissioners re-evaluate after one year, the Commission will determine if Hunter Park court #5 and possibly court #6 should be transitioned to multi-purpose

- Gardiner stated support for the motion and will vote for it because he thinks that separation between user groups is critical at this juncture and this recommendation achieves this. Gardiner supports bike polo and likes the idea of a multi-purpose court. Gardiner acknowledged that one tennis court is being lost at Lithia Park and there is the potential to lose another court if the net on court #5 in Hunter Park is removed

- Lewis stated that it seems Futsal could be accommodated on court #5 in Hunter Park through scheduling to determine when the net can be removed
 - Minica stated that it is possible to address the safety issues when the posts are removed by placing an insert into the hole and that staff is also looking into roll away nets as a possible solution
 - Dials stated that staff is willing to work to allow Futsal to use court #5 in Hunter Park through scheduling

- Heller recommended putting up a sign at court #5 in Hunter Park, stating that users other than tennis are allowed
- Landt inquired of Dials if the motion passed as stated, would it preclude accommodating Futsal on court #5 in Hunter Park
 - Dials stated that it would be best to include this in the motion
 - Landt stated he is open to a friendly amendment to accommodate Futsal on court #5 in Hunter Park. Gardiner supported the friendly amendment.
 - This friendly amendment has been included in the motion above in italics “*Staff will work to accommodate Futsal on court #5.*”

Vote: The vote was all yes

VI. NEW BUSINESS

None

VII. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS/STAFF

- Bell requested to speak with the contractor who is working on the pool design regarding renewable energy heating systems
- Heller noted that the pool in Brookings is open. Dials stated there are pools in Oregon that are open, including the Ashland YMCA pool, which is open for lap swim
- Gardiner stated that the Ashland Parks Foundation will be hearing community grant requests on August 13, 2020
- Heller stated Southern Oregon Pickleball Association may want to engage in fundraising activities to improve the lights at the Lithia Park courts and will reach out to staff

VIII. UPCOMING MEETING DATES

1. **APRC Study Session—September 2, 2020**
 - Location TBD—6:30 p.m.
2. **APRC Regular Business Meeting —September 9, 2020**
 - Location TBD—6:30 p.m.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Sean Sullivan, Executive Assistant