

City of Ashland
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
Minutes
June 25, 2018

Present: Commissioners Gardiner, Heller, Landt, Lewis, Miller; Director Black; Interim Superintendent McFarland; Superintendent Dials; Executive Assistant Dyssegard; Assistant Manuel

Absent: City Council Liaison Mayor Stromberg

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gardiner called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main Street.

APPROVAL OR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF MINUTES

- Real Estate Subcommittee Meeting, May 9, 2018—acknowledged
- Trails Master Plan Update Committee, June 1, 2018—acknowledged
- S-PAC Committee, June 4, 2018—acknowledged
- Lithia Park Master Plan, June 13, 2018—acknowledged

Study Session May 14, 2018

Motion: Landt moved to approve the Minutes of May 14, 2018, as presented. Miller seconded.
The vote was all yes.

Regular Meeting May 21, 2018

Motion: Landt moved to approve the Minutes of May 21, 2018, as presented. Miller seconded.
The vote was four yes, with Commissioner Gardiner abstaining

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- *Open Forum*

Dennis Miller, 1140 Siskiyou Blvd. Ashland, OR. was called forward.

Miller talked about safety issues when traveling, based upon his recent experiences during a vacation. He advocated for extra care when faced with posted height restrictions, particularly if traveling with a vehicle featuring a bicycle or luggage rack. In addition, he suggested that care be taken to ensure that straps holding bicycles onto car-top bike carriers be double-checked for security.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were none.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. *IPM Policy (Action)*

McFarland stated that he and Commissioner Landt had proposed a series of edits to the policy—predominantly grammatical errors. He talked about the chapter on pesticide safety and the rationale for duplicating instructions for posting requirements for pesticide use. He noted that the APCR maintenance staff used the policy for direction.

McFarland proposed an amendment to the policy that explained what to do with old or unusable pesticides – stating that APCR has two dedicated pesticide cages for secured storage of old or unusable pesticides. Those pesticides remain secured in the cages until permanently disposed of through the City's hazardous material collection process.

McFarland stated that the policy currently restricted pesticide use from Memorial Day to Labor Day. He noted that the Commissioners previously authorized an exemption for the spraying of wasps or yellow jackets when such use was warranted for safety purposes. McFarland indicated that the restriction about not using pesticides from Memorial Day to Labor Day was in conflict with the actual practices of APRC and he proposed striking that from the policy. He noted that APRC maintenance staff used very little or no synthetic pesticides or herbicides per policy guidelines.

Commissioner Discussion

Landt suggested a motion that would approve the changes and incorporate the comments, tracked changes and edits currently under discussion.

Lewis advocated for the changes as presented. He stated that he was appreciative of the format used to document the edits - commenting that it was easier to track.

Motion: Landt moved to approve the revised IPM Policy including the tracked changes, comments one and two on page four of the policy and striking the 2011 revision that stated there would be no spraying of pesticides in any Ashland park from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Lewis seconded.

Commissioner Discussion

Landt explained that policy provisions prohibiting pesticide use from Memorial Day to Labor Day was no longer valid because of the allowance for spraying of yellow jackets and wasps for safety purposes. He noted that the provision would be applicable as a method of last resort.

There followed a brief discussion about Commissioner approval of the changes and comments presented prior to preparation of a clean copy.

Motion: Landt moved to approve the revised IPM Policy, including the tracked changes, comments one and two on page four of the Policy and add a note striking the 2011 revision that stated there would be no spraying of pesticides in any Ashland park from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Lewis seconded

The vote was all yes.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Grove Shower Request from Ashland Community Resource Center (ACRC) (Information/Action)

Dials introduced Leigh Madsen, ACRC Director and facilitator of the shower and laundry program. She stated that a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) had originally been granted in 2014 that allowed a mobile unit with showers and laundry facilities to provide the service at several Ashland locations. At that time, permission was granted by the City of Ashland to use the parking lot behind The Grove as one of the approved locations.

Dials noted that the goal of the CUP was to support the homeless with hygiene services and although approved, the Grove location had never been utilized. She explained that a new request had been received by Madsen on behalf of the Ashland Community Resource Center. Dials reported that the Ashland Planning Department had since alerted staff that the original CUP was no longer valid. She recommended postponement of any action until the CUP had been updated or re-issued.

In response to a question by Heller, Dials noted concerns about the location. She stated that she would be willing to proceed on a trial basis and that a potential agreement might include additional parameters. Dials indicated that accommodation would entail operational changes and limitations as to specific times and days of the week.

Leigh Madsen was called forward.

Madsen talked about the mandate to count the homeless each year. He stated that in 2013, volunteers counted approximately 150 homeless people in Ashland. At that time, it became apparent that the highest unmet needs were options for showers and laundry facilities. Madsen stated that those services were an important step toward the health and well-being of those in need.

Madsen talked about ACRC and its mission to help people become self-sufficient. He stated that in 2017, 30 people were able to find employment and housing in Ashland.

Madsen reflected that needs for showers and laundry services extended to people working in Ashland's service industries. He stated that in ten months of 2017, the United Methodist Church served over 890 people. Madsen indicated that a significant number of those people worked in Ashland but did not have shower or laundry facilities available to them.

Madsen acknowledged that many of those using the shower trailer were not easy to serve. He stated that if approved, he would participate in the setup of the trailer at the Grove – initially staying on site to make sure everything worked. Madsen commented that in the four years of providing similar services at United Methodist, there had been no serious events or injuries. He applauded Dials' willingness to move forward at The Grove location on a trial basis.

Madsen talked about the advantages the new trailer provided. He stated that the first day of operation would be July 12, 2018 – beginning with an unveiling ceremony. APRC Commissioners would be receiving invitations to attend.

In response to a comment by Lewis about mitigations, Madsen relayed that he connected with the neighbors near each location to explain the service and provide contact information should there be an issue or concern. He stated that shower users signed an agreement outlining expectations and, if not met, non-compliers were asked to leave. Madsen explained that three volunteers provided assistance at the site – one overseeing showers, one overseeing laundry facilities and one attending to general housekeeping.

Lewis asked about procedures for The Grove site. Madsen provided assurance that the neighbors would be contacted and the mission explained. The onsite program administrator would be accountable and could address issues or concerns as needed.

There followed a brief discussion about the CUP, the location and various logistics challenges. In response to a question by Gardiner, Madsen discussed the average number of participants. He estimated that approximately 15 to 20 people would utilize The Grove location.

Gardiner inquired about an APRC budgetary impact. Black replied that utility costs would be difficult to calculate and were deemed negligible. Madsen stated that APRC would be compensated for providing a 220 outlet.

In response to a question by Heller, Madsen noted that the trailer had air conditioning and heaters and could operate year-round. He anticipated no "down days" due to weather. Heller also asked about hikers on the PCT and whether they could use the facility. Madsen replied that there were no restrictions with regard to people using the facility other than behaving responsibly.

Questions about potential damage and insurance claims were discussed. Madsen noted that the new trailer was smaller than the previous one but would provide two showers and three laundry pairs. The trailer was 18 ft. in length. Madsen indicated that the trailer had been built without wooden materials that could be subject to deterioration.

Commissioner Discussion

Gardiner suggested that approval of the request be postponed until a qualified request with a properly permitted CUP could be obtained.

Black highlighted a couple of options, stating that the Planning Department would want to know that APRC, as the "defacto" property owners, would support the CUP. If the Commissioners' preference was to wait until the Planning Department established requirements for the CUP, support for moving forward could be approved at that time. Alternatively, if the information remained the same and APRC staff continued to work out the parameters with Madsen, then support for the CUP could be affirmed immediately.

Heller confirmed that Dials was recommending that the request be subject to a short-term trial. Dials noted that there were a number of factors to take into consideration. She stated that limiting the shower and laundry service to Saturday mornings would assist staff in minimizing the impact on The Grove. She indicated that there would not be public access to The Grove while the laundry and shower services were onsite. Saturday morning recreation classes would be canceled so the building could be locked. She expressed concern about using the Garfield Park restroom facilities, stating that in her opinion, a walk across the road to the restrooms could become a safety matter. Black suggested that those concerns be presented for possible mitigation to the Planning Department.

In response to a question by Gardiner, Madsen said the United Methodist Church location permitted use of the restroom facilities while the Food Bank no longer did. He advocated for utilizing restroom services at Garfield Park.

Landt shared his thoughts regarding moving forward or delaying the request. He stated that there was not enough information available to reach a decision and approval should be predicated upon the parameters established by the CUP. Landt suggested a middle ground – such as a straw poll – to indicate whether the Commissioners would be willing to support the request with certain conditions once they were identified.

Black suggested that Dials be appointed as a liaison between APRC, the Ashland Planning Department and Madsen. He intimated that the group would be tasked with developing ways to offer the program while ensuring public safety and addressing security concerns.

Landt suggested that the program be approved with parameters that would work for staff. He acknowledged that closure of The Grove when the service was offered would reduce revenue, noting that finding a way to grant the request remained worthwhile. He encouraged the appointment of a staff liaison who would be tasked with moving forward.

Lewis agreed, noting that other services such as meals in the parks were problematic at times, but important enough to continue offering. He advocated for the appointment of Dials to work with all parties in finding a way to approve the request. He agreed with proceeding on a trial basis, suggesting that the Commissioners preapprove the project conceptually. Lewis also noted that there was a review process associated with the CUP that could be a built-in safeguard.

Gardiner called for a motion that would cover approval on a trial basis without provisions for restrooms. He stated that the motion would appoint Dials as staff liaison and authorize her to bring back the request for final approval once the issues and concerns were addressed. In response to a question by Landt, Gardiner stated that there would be no restrooms available at The Grove.

Madsen also agreed, stating that there was a similar agreement with Ashland's Food Bank. He said the clientele were not always easy to serve, but in the four years the program had been offered at the Church, there had been no serious fights or injuries.

Madsen stated that he was appreciative of Dials' willingness to work things out. He highlighted the mission to get people off the street and into productive jobs and housing. The program benefited those in need while also benefiting the City of Ashland and its residents.

Motion – Landt moved to provisionally approve use of The Grove grounds for showers and laundry services as presented above. Final approval would be contingent upon approval of the CUP and a subsequent approval of Memorandum of Understanding initiated by staff for a six-month trial basis. If issues arose during the six-month trial, the Commissioners would consider amendments to the MOU or revocation. Heller seconded.

Commissioner Discussion:

Gardiner asked about the six-month timeline – suggesting an annual timeframe instead. Landt agreed given that the motion outlined provisions for reconsideration at any time. He accepted the annual timeline as a friendly amendment.

Black suggested postponement of the timeline until the CUP had been granted and a MOU presented. Landt replied that the provisional approval could be amended to reflect different circumstances if needed.

Heller advocated for a timeframe of six months, indicating that the shorter timeline should be sufficient to assess continuation of the program. He stated that he was supportive of the project and its goals.

Gardiner reiterated that the motion would reflect a timeframe of one year unless staff recommended something different.

Motion: Landt moved to provisionally approve use of The Grove grounds for showers and laundry as presented above. Final approval would be contingent upon approval of the CUP and a subsequent approval of Memorandum of Understanding initiated by staff for a trial basis of one year. If issues arose during that period, the Commissioners would consider amendments to the MOU or revocation. Heller seconded.

The vote was all yes.

b. Formation of the Pool Ad-Hoc Committee (Action)

Black stated that APRC had been working on a potential solution to accommodate the need for additional pool services due to the closure of the SOU pool several years ago. APRC had since opened the Daniel Meyer Pool for high school swim team practices during the school year and water polo teams during the shoulder seasons.

Black proposed the establishment of an Ad-hoc Pool Advisory Subcommittee to review and evaluate the feasibility of a re-build of the Daniel Meyer Pool, and to explore potential funding sources for doing so. He suggested that the Subcommittee include himself and Commissioners Mike Gardiner and Matt Miller along with Finance Director Mark Welch and Recreation Superintendent Rachel Dials or Recreation Manager Flora. He proposed that up to eight members of the public be appointed to the Subcommittee as well.

Black recommended that the Ad-hoc Pool Advisory Subcommittee be tasked with evaluation of the feasibility of planning and funding the Daniel Meyer re-build. He stated that the Subcommittee would prepare a recommendation for Commissioner review of a plan for the future of the pool and potential funding sources as well.

Public Input

Rebecca Kay of 2350 Ranch Road, Ashland, OR. was called forward.

Kay agreed with the establishment of the Ad-hoc Subcommittee, suggesting that potential members of the public represent as many user groups and interested people as possible. She stated that it was not well known that the pool was being used during the winter, intimating that greater awareness might broaden the number of users.

In response to a question by Landt, Black explained that typically Commissioners were assigned to Subcommittees annually. He referred to the precedent regarding Ad-hoc subcommittees such as the RFP Ad-hoc Subcommittee created for the Performance Audit and Ad-hoc Committee for evaluation of Senior Services. Black stated that authorizing the creation of the Ad-hoc Pool Advisory Subcommittee by vote of the Commissioners showed the intent behind the action and alerted the public via noticing.

Gardiner added that it would remain up to the Subcommittee Chair to appoint the members.

Motion: Lewis moved to approve the Director's proposal to create the Daniel Meyer Pool Ad-hoc Pool Advisory Subcommittee as detailed in the staff report dated June 20, 2018. Heller seconded.

The vote was all yes.

c. COLA Review (Action)

Black reported that the Commissioners adopted a Policy in 2014 that directed the Director to base each year's cost of living adjustment (COLA) on the March Consumer Price Index (CPI-W). Employee wages could increase between 1% and 5%. Black stated that the March 2018 CPI-W was 2.8%. He recommended that the increase be approved for that amount even though the increase was larger than anticipated. Black relayed that a budgetary surplus would cover the 2.8% dictated by the APRC COLA Policy.

Black noted that discussions with the City of Ashland Finance Director and Human Resources Director were supportive but they asked that the Commissioners review the policy for future changes because the index had indicated close to 3% increases for the past several years.

Commissioner Discussion

In response to a question by Heller, Black stated that the budgeted amount for the biennium was 2%.

Landt noted that the approximate mid-point between the 1% to 5% outlined in the policy was 3%. He relayed that he continued to be a proponent of parameters ranging from 0% to 5%. If that were the case, then the mid-point would be 2.5%. Landt highlighted the conundrum of increasing inflation equating to increased COLA adjustments that did not give workers a boost by increasing their buying power. Landt advocated for a realistic cost of living gauge rather than a negotiated contract.

Gardiner asked that the issue be placed in the "parking lot" so as not to be forgotten.

Motion: Landt moved to approve a 2.8% increase for APRC staff salaries for the fiscal year 2019. Lewis seconded.

Commissioner Discussion

Landt explained the rationale for accommodating the percentage even though the budgeted amount was less. He noted that Black's memo stated that there was room in the budget to do so.

Motion: Landt moved to approve a 2.8% increase for APRC staff salaries for the fiscal year 2019. Lewis seconded.

The vote was all yes.

d. Q3 Budget Update (Information and Action)

Black presented the quarterly financial update provided by the City of Ashland's Finance Director as well as APRC's financial data through May 31, 2018. He stated that APRC's financial statement would become a part of the City's third quarter report.

Black reviewed the information, noting that as of May 31, 2018, APRC was at 82% for the fiscal year. He indicated that this was approximately 8% less than it would be if the intent was to utilize 100% of the budget. He stated that because staff had pursued strategies that resulted in significant savings, there would be money to fund projects and expenditures approved by the Commissioners for the next fiscal year.

Black noted that revenue was at 88%, a little lower than the projected 91%. He stated that funds had yet to be collected from the City as payment for maintenance work provided by APRC. In addition, there were a couple of areas that underperformed. He said Superintendent Dials would research and evaluate those areas to determine if the underperformers should be taken into account for the next biennium budget.

Black recommended approval of the 3rd quarter budget update.

Commissioner Discussion

Landt stated that he would prefer to acknowledge the financial report rather than approve. Black agreed, noting that there was technically nothing to approve.

Motion: I move to acknowledge the Quarterly Financial Report from the Director of APRC that the City Finance Director has presented. Miller seconded.

Commissioner Discussion

Heller asked about the recreational programs that were at 67% of budget. Black replied that most of the revenue shortfall was due to extraordinary expenses for the Senior Program. He explained that one of the strategies that were implemented was to provide a portion of the funding for recreational programs offered at the Senior Center.

Motion: Landt moved to acknowledge the Q3 Financial Report from the Director of APRC and as outlined by the City of Ashland Finance Director. Miller seconded.

The vote was all yes.

SUBCOMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS

a. Lithia Park Design Week Update (Information)

Black reported that Design Week was an activity-based series of meetings and work sessions that was similar to the charette process. The consultants from MIG provided an opportunity for APRC staff and the public to work with the design team on a fast-paced design process that would evolve into a Master Plan for Lithia Park. Public participation was encouraged, resulting in significant input from interested citizens. Conceptual ideas were explored beginning with a visioning process and continuing with work sessions that were open to the public. Black stated that a number of user groups participated in addition to people who were new to APRC who expressed innovative views. The Lithia Park Master Plan Subcommittee met at the conclusion of Design Week to wrap up the week. The Subcommittee was able to give some final thoughts and direction to the consultants. Black stated that the consultants would then compile the information and prepare a plan that would offer a series of preferred alternatives for the Park for further review.

Miller stated that he had enjoyed the process and was impressed by the ideas and input, describing the week's work as "joyful chaos."

Landt noted that during the first part of the process, people seemed resistant to the potential for change. As Design Week progressed, the message began to focus on identifying the essence of Lithia Park. Once that was captured, the essence was treated with the utmost respect by the consultants. He acknowledged that most Ashlanders were attached to Lithia Park and were reluctant to lose what was considered special about it. Landt stated that he was optimistic about the final plan because of the thoughtful way the consultants listened.

Heller asked if there would be continued opportunities to provide input. Gardiner replied that the public comment period remained open either on the website or through APRC.

b. Subcommittee Updates (Information)

• Bear Creek Greenway Extension Open House

Black reported that APRC, Ashland Public Works and the Bear Creek Greenway Foundation previously agreed to hire a consultant to look at alternative routes for extending the Bear Creek Greenway from the Dog Park to North Mountain Park and beyond. Options were presented at a public open forum on Thursday, June 21, at North Mountain Park Nature Center.

Black thanked Susan Dyssegard for creating community awareness about the project. He stated that because of the extensive publicity, the Bear Creek Greenway Foundation meeting to discuss alternative plans was well attended with ample public comment received.

• Trails Master Plan Update Subcommittee

McFarland noted that the Subcommittee was one meeting away from finalization of the meeting process and there were just two chapters left to approve. He said members of the Trails Subcommittee had reviewed and re-written existing chapters that were a part of the original Master Plan published in 2006. Two new chapters were added and edited by the group. Once all of the edits were approved by the Subcommittee, and the maps and photos inserted, the entire document would be forwarded to consultant Mark Mularz for format editing.

McFarland outlined the next steps – indicating that once Mularz had formatted the document, the completed package would be presented to APRC for approval by the Commissioners. Once that was done, the document would be reviewed by the Ashland Planning Department and Ashland City Council.

McFarland stated that there would be additional public hearings as the document wound down toward adoption. Those wishing to see the document in advance of adoption could view the 2006 original Trails Master Plan and track changes.

ITEMS FOR COMMISSIONERS

• *Agenda Distributions*

Landt asked about agenda packets, asking whether the Commissioners preferred receiving the entire packet or a version that separated the topics for individual assessment. It was agreed by consensus that individual agenda items were preferred.

• *McFarland Retirement*

Black touted McFarland's 35 years of service with Ashland Parks. He stated that his contributions to the trails system, forest management, parks design and more were difficult to measure. Black noted that McFarland's contributions to Ashland Parks would have a lasting impact.

Black extended an invitation for McFarland's retirement party scheduled on Tuesday, July 3, 2018, at The Grove from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Landt paid tribute – describing McFarland’s contributions as quality work. He highlighted McFarland’s approach to his work with the words “he cared.”

Gardiner emphasized McFarland's contributions as a park historian – noting that people would identify his work as the source document for all things related to APRC.

McFarland thanked the Commissioners and staff.

UPCOMING MEETING DATES

- Trails Master Plan Update Committee, June 29, 2018 @ 51 Winburn Way—9:00 a.m.
- Study Session, July 16, 2018 @ The Grove, 1195 E. Main—5:30 p.m.
- Regular Meeting, July 23, 2018 @ Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main—7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

By consensus, Gardiner adjourned into executive session at 8:45 p.m.

- *Executive Sessions: ORS 192.660 (2)(e) and (2) (h)*

ADJOURNMENT OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION

By consensus, Gardiner adjourned out of the executive sessions at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Manuel, Assistant
Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission

These Minutes are not a verbatim record. The narrative has been condensed and paraphrased at times to reflect the discussions and decisions made. Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission Study Sessions and Regular meetings are digitally recorded; the recordings are available upon request.