

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

July 22, 2019

Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main Street

Present: Commissioners Gardiner (Chair), Landt (Co-Chair), Bell, Heller, Lewis; Director Black; Recreation Superintendent Dials; Parks Superintendent Oxendine, Manager VanWyhe, Flora, Assistant Sullivan

Absent: City Council Liaison Mayor Stromberg

CALL TO ORDER

Gardiner called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

APRC Regular Meeting – June 24, 2019

Motion: Bell moved to approve the Minutes from May 13, 2019 as provided by staff on July 22, 2019. Heller Seconded.

Gardiner, Bell, Heller & Lewis voted yes. Landt was absent from the meeting in question and abstained from the vote.

The Minutes sent out on July 22, 2019 included the conditions listed by staff regarding the Art in the Park Request agenda item.

PUBLIC FORUM

There was no one present for public forum

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions or deletions to the agenda

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

1. Consent Agenda (Action)

a. Acknowledgement of Subcommittee Minutes

i. Pool Ad Hoc Committee – June 5, 2019

ii. Ashland Senior Advisory Committee – June 10, 2019

b. Ashland Senior Services Advisory Committee Expansion Member Expansion

Correction: The staff memo for this item should state July 15th rather than June 15th regarding the discussion on this item at a Study Session.

Black reviewed the staff report provided in the [meeting packet](#), stated potential items that could be placed on the Consent Agenda at Regular Meetings and reviewed general procedure. Examples of items that could be placed on the consent agenda included the following:

- Subcommittee Minutes presented for acknowledgement
- Issues discussed at Study Sessions where consensus on an issue was met

Discussion on the time included the following points:

- Commissioners can notify staff prior to the meeting about an item to be pulled from the Consent Agenda, which would allow staff to prepare information on the item to clarify issues raised
- Items can be pulled by Commissioners prior to or during the meeting
- Staff will prepare the agendas and make an initial determination on what will be placed on the Consent Agenda. Commissioners can then request that items be pulled at their discretion

Motion: Heller moved to approve the Consent Agenda on a one-year trial basis. Seconded by Bell.

Commissioner Landt requested an amendment be made to motion to read as follows:

Amended Motion: To approve the use of the Consent Agenda on a one-year trial basis.

Heller and Bell accepted the amendment

The vote was all yes.

Gardiner called for questions on the two items placed on the Consent Agenda.

Heller asked a question regarding the Pool Ad-Hoc Committee Minutes:

- Is it known when the committee is planning on providing recommendation to the Commission as referenced in the Minutes? Black responded that a recommendation to the Commission should be presented in September of 2019.

Landt asked the following questions regarding ASAC Member Expansion:

- Is that a change to the bylaws of the Committee? Black responded that it is a change in the bylaws. This would increase the maximum number allowed by 2 members.
- Is it correct that before there would be a maximum of 7 members, and this would allow a maximum of 9 members? Black responded in the affirmative.
- Is it correct that the reason the committee recommended the expansion is that there is a considerable amount of work to accomplish and this would allow the committee to spread the work around and have more expertise? Black responded in the affirmative and stated the ASAC is a very active committee.

Motion: Landt moved to approve the consent agenda. Seconded by Heller.

The vote was all yes

2. Recreation Fee Adjustment (Action)

Dials reviewed the staff report included in the [meeting packet](#). Dials reported on the last fee adjustments for the Ice Rink and Nature Center School Programs:

- Ice Rink – November 2012 & prior to that in 2008
- Nature Center School Programs – Fee established around 2008 after the discontinuation of the youth activity levy

Dials stated that the fee increases proposed should enable the Cost Recovery Goals to be met.

VanWyhe gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Nature Center School Program and fee adjustments ([see Attachment I](#)). VanWyhe's presentation included a fee increase proposal of \$25 per class over the next two years. Outside funding, from donors, granting agencies and local businesses will be sought to continue funding scholarships offered to teachers to offset costs for the program. Many teachers have reported that they would not be able to attend the Nature Center School Program without financial assistance.

	2019 (current fees)	2020 (increase)	2021 (increase)
K-2 Outdoor Field Trip	\$125	\$135	\$150
3-5 Outdoor Field Trip	\$200	\$210	\$225

Discussion following the presentation included the following points:

- Scholarships are a cost reduction. All classes are typically required to pay at least 50% of the established fees
- Heller recommended trying to identify if participating classes are in actual need of scholarships. VanWyhe stated that most schools served are Title I schools
- Scholarship funds have been solicited through granting agencies such as the Carpenter Foundation, Lithia Springs Rotary Club as well as the Ashland Food Coop. VanWyhe is looking to diversify funding by soliciting businesses

- Scholarships available to any school in the Rogue Valley. VanWyhe has made a point of including statements in grant applications about serving school children throughout the Rogue Valley. Granting organizations are often interested in funding programs that serve diverse populations
- VanWyhe does not think that the School Programs would fill without offering scholarships. 56% of teachers state they would not be able to attend without scholarship assistance
- Grant funding is included in the Cost recovery Analysis. Grant funds are deposited into the Nature Center revenue account
- The School Program began in 1999, however attendance records start in 2006. VanWyhe began working at APRC in 2012 which coincided with a significant increase in attendance.
- Lewis inquired if there is a way for people to make individual donations. VanWyhe stated staff is looking into setting up online donation capabilities in cooperation with the Parks Foundation. Checks can also be made out directly to the Ashland Parks Foundation for this program. Checks can be dropped off at the Nature Center. Lewis also recommended looking into establishing an endowment.
- Landt inquired if staff has considered charging a higher fee for schools outside of the school district since Ashland Citizens are subsidizing 73% of the program. VanWyhe responded that she has concerns implementing different fee structures based on diversity, equity and inclusion practices
 - Dials stated that there are models used in Oregon and in other states for resident and non-resident fees. If the Commission would like to look at establishing this type of fee structure, Dials recommended looking at this for all programs and services rather than just looking at this for the Nature Center
 - Gardiner stated that the program is currently open on a first come first served basis. If the Commission would like to delve into the setting prioritization for Ashland classes, it would be necessary for the Commission to address it specifically
 - Lewis suggested looking into Dials suggestion to review a resident and non-resident fee structure across all programs at a Study Session. Landt concurred. Gardiner directed staff to add it to the future agenda item parking lot
- Heller stated a desire to have staff institute assurances that designated spots are set aside for Ashland School District classes. VanWyhe stated it could be possible to set up an early registration period for Ashland Schools District classes
- Heller suggested approaching the Ashland Schools Foundation and the Medford Schools Foundation as a possible funding source

Landt suggested that the Nature Center fee proposal be voted on separately from the Ice Rink fee proposal and asked staff since there has not been an increase in seven years and the increase is about 14%, is it necessary to do it over two years since it is such a small increase? Landt stated the increase could be done over one year. VanWyhe stated the rationale was putting forth a gesture of good will towards the teachers to allow them to budget accordingly over a period of two years. Additional discussion on the point included the following items.

- Lewis stated that raising the fees over a two-year period would allow staff to continue to identify additional funding sources for scholarships
- Heller supported increasing the fees in one year so as not to give the appearance of continually raising fees and to allow school districts to create budgets based on stable non-changing fees
- The staff proposal would increase this to \$135 in the spring of 2020 and \$150 in the spring of 2021. Dials stated this fee structure would get the Nature Center School program to the 30% cost recovery goal by the end of the biennium.

Landt stated it is advantageous to exceed goals and since this is a modest increase the following motion was made

Motion: Landt moved to increase the Nature Center School Programs K-2 outdoor field trip fees from \$125 to \$150 and increase the 3rd to 5th grade outdoor fields trips from \$200 to \$225 effective the spring of 2020. Heller seconded.

The vote was all yes.

Landt stated he appreciated the thinking of staff in trying to be sensitive to the situation and that it was not an unreasonable proposal. The Commission is trying to be as entrepreneurial as possible under tight budget constraints and when possible make reasonable increases that keep the APRC programs comparable to other programs and still allow as many people as possible to participate.

Heller also recommended communicating to the schools that there has not been a fee increase in some time.

Gardiner invited Flora to present. Flora gave a PowerPoint presentation (See [Attachment II](#)) on the Ice Rink and proposed fee adjustments. The presentation included a fee increase of \$.50 increased over two years (see table below).

Winter 2018 (current fees)	Winter 2019 (increase)	Winter 2020 (increase)
\$3.50 Youth (6-13 years)	\$3.75 Youth (6-13 years)	\$4.00 Youth (6-13 years)
\$4.00 Adult (14 + years)	\$4.25 Adult (14 + years)	\$4.50 Adult (14 + years)
\$2.50 Skate Rental (all ages)	\$2.75 Skate Rental (all ages)	\$3.00 Skate Rental (all ages)
\$5.00 Student Night -Including skates	\$5.25 Student Night -Including skates	\$5.50 Student Night -Including skates

Flora estimated that the revenue impact would be approximately \$10,000 per season.

Type of Admission	APRC Rink Fees			The Rrink	Collier Ice Rink (Klamath Falls)	Siskiyou Ice Rink (Mt. Shasta, CA)
	2018-19 (actual)	2019-20 (proposed)	2020-21 (proposed)	Current	Current	Current
Youth (6-13 YO)	\$ 3.50	\$ 3.75	\$ 4.00	\$ 8.50	\$ 7.00	\$ 7.00
Adult (14+YO)	\$ 4.00	\$ 4.25	\$ 4.50	\$ 8.50	\$ 8.00	\$ 10.00
Skate Rental	\$ 2.50	\$ 2.75	\$ 3.00	\$ 2.50	\$ 4.00	\$ 3.00
Group/Student Night (includes skates)	\$ 5.00	\$ 5.25	\$ 5.50	-	\$ 5.00	-
		<u>Estimated Revenue Impact 19-20</u>	<u>Estimated Revenue Impact 20-21</u>			
Recreational Skating Revenue	\$ 100,309.00	\$ 113,867.50	\$ 124,390.00			
		These estimates do not figure in program and concession revenue that is priced according to schedule and cost of associated products for				

Flora identified programing efforts that will contribute to meeting or surpassing Cost Recovery Goal of 85%.

- Increasing advertising sales
- Skating lessons and school field trip program improvements
- Future concession program improvement
- Managing expenses

Discussion about the presentation included the following points:

- The comparison only includes admission fees for regional skating facilities. These facilities may have other sources of income
- The proposed fees are for recreation skating only. The fees for other programs are set program by program
- Recreation skating fees are the predominant source of income for the Ice Rink
 - Recreation Skating - \$100,309
 - Other Programs - \$ 18,090
 - Concessions – approximately \$7,000

Landt inquired if the proposal was to increase fees by \$2.00 for youth and adult skating, would the admission fees still be below the competition. Flora responded in the affirmative. Gardiner added that not all rinks have the same amenities or are the same size. Landt stated that the APRC Ice Rink has other amenities, such as location next to Lithia Park, that mitigates the smaller size of the rink when compared to regional facilities. Landt stated he is not proposing increasing fees to go right up to regional facilities, but that the fee structure could be increased higher than what is proposed and still stay significantly below the regional facilities. Discussion on this topic included the following points.

- Dials expressed caution and does not want to price families out of coming to the rink. Dials advocated for smaller incremental increases and is concerned that \$2.00 is too large of an increase and wants to ensure APRC is providing an affordable experience
 - Landt clarified that a \$2.00 increase was never proposed
- Program fees are designed to recover as close to 100% as possible based on staffing, equipment and other costs. These fees are reviewed and adjusted on an annual basis
- APRC reaches out to populations that may not have experienced ice skating before, where many other skating facilities have a constituency within the ice-skating community
- Heller stated that raising fees by the dollar rather than quarter increments would make cash transaction more efficient. Flora raised efficient cash transactions as a concern during the presentation
- Programs offered at the ice rink will increase in upcoming seasons
- Fees will be published in the upcoming August PlayGuide, which would require a decision to be made during the meeting

Landt agreed with Heller's statement of raising fees in dollar increments rather than \$.25 increments would be easier, and time saving. Landt also stated that implementing modest increases all in one year makes sense. Landt is thinking of the following increases that would all take effect for the 2019 season. The increases are still below competition and are healthy, reasonable and would not turn people away.

- Youth - \$4.00
- Adult - \$5.00
- Skate Rental – stay the same at \$3.00
- Group/Student Night - \$6.00

Motion: Landt moved that the Ashland Rotary Centennial Ice Rink fees be increased to \$4.00 for youth, \$5.00 for adult, skate rental to \$3.00 and Student Night increased to \$6.00 and all these increases begin in 2019. Seconded by Bell.

Discussion on the motion included the following:

- The Student Night discount is applied on Thursday nights and is available to anyone of school age or with a student id. The Group discount applies to groups of 8+ and the rate is per person
- Recreation skating fees are not taken into consideration when setting program fees
- Dials would like to be more conservative than the increases included in the motion. Too high of an increase could negatively impact admission numbers. A scholarship program is not in place to cover admission fees. However, the proposal is modest proposal and would likely be ok
- Staff made the initial fee increase proposal based on the adopted Cost Recovery Goals
- Heller questioned increasing the Student Night to the amount included in the motion and inquired about the popularity of Student Night
 - Flora stated the attendance numbers fluctuate throughout the season and research would be necessary to provide an accurate response

Landt stated rational for the increasing proposed in the motion as wanting to be as entrepreneurial as possible and from a business standpoint, it seems like a reasonable increase based on the competition and alternative recreational opportunities. Staff did the right thing by trying to meet the Cost Recovery Goal, but in a tight budget time reasonable and fair opportunities to increase revenue should be acted upon. There are some activities, such as swim lessons where the public good should be taken into consideration when setting fees, but this is more of a discretionary activity and getting up to close to paying for itself is a good goal. If the goal is exceeded, it means the Commission and staff have done a great job and are addressing budget struggles.

Proposed Amendment to the Motion: Heller proposed an amendment to the motion to set the fee for Groups/Student Night to \$5.50 rather than \$6.00.

Landt accepted the amendment. Bell did not accept the amendment since increase is modest. The original motion remained as initially stated.

Gardiner called for a vote on the motion on the table.

Motion: Landt moved that the Ashland Rotary Centennial Ice Rink fees be increased to \$4.00 for youth, \$5.00 for adult, skate rental to \$3.00 and Student Night increased to \$6.00 and all these increases begin in 2019. Seconded by Bell.

The vote was all yes

ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS/STAFF

Black made an announcement of phishing emails utilizing his name and encouraged caution when receiving suspect emails.

Black stated that the liner on the Daniel Meyer Pool not getting any better and making patch repairs is not working. The Commission will be alerted if significant failures occur. Staff continue to monitor and remains concerned about keeping the pool functional.

Heller stated that multiple people have contacted him about a rumor asserting that the pickleball courts are not being constructed due to money being spent on the pool. Black responded that this is not true and that once the Commission adopts a CIP plan, that is the plan that staff carries out unless the Commission officially make a change to the plan.

UPCOMING MEETING DATES

1. Pool Ad-Hoc Committee – August 7, 2019
 - Ashland Senior Center, 1699 Homes Ave—3:30 p.m.
2. Ashland Senior Advisory Committee – August 12, 2019
 - Ashland Senior Center, 1699 Homes Ave—3:30 p.m.
3. Current Parks, Conservation, and Maintenance Subcommittee—Aug 12, 2019
 - Lithia Cabin, 340 S Pioneer St.—2:00 p.m.
4. APCR Study Session—August 19, 2019
 - The Grove, 1195 E. Main St., Ashland—5:30 p.m.
5. APCR Regular Meeting—August 26, 2019
 - Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main St., Ashland—7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:28pm