

**MINUTES FOR REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING  
ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
August 26, 2019  
Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main Street**

Present: Commissioners Landt (Co-Chair), Bell, Heller, Lewis; Recreation Superintendent Dials; Senior Services Superintendent Glatt; Parks Superintendent Oxendine, Supervisor Minica; Manager VanWyhe; Analyst Kiewel; Assistant Sullivan

Absent: Commissioner Gardiner; Director Black; City Council Liaison Mayor Stromberg

**CALL TO ORDER**

Landt called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

APRC Study Session – July 15, 2019

**Motion:** Heller moved to approve the Minutes from July 15, 2019 as provided by staff. Lewis Seconded.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes.

APRC Regular Meeting – July 22, 2019

**Motion:** Heller moved to approve the Minutes from the July 22, 2019 Regular Meeting as provided by staff. Bell Seconded.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

**Kristina Lefever of Ashland** thanked the Commissioners, Oxendine and other APCR staff for attending a training event on September 18, 2019. Osbourne Organics will hold a training for municipalities and other entities engaged in turf management. Lefever spoke in favor of the methods used by Osbourne Organics to manage turf including the use of organic fertilizers.

**ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA**

None

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- **Subcommittee Minutes Acknowledgment**
- **Ashland Senior Advisory Committee (ASAC) Bylaw Update Acknowledgement**
- **Recreation Division Advisory Committee (RDAC) Formation**

Landt removed the Recreation Division Advisory Committee (RDAC) Formation item and placed it on the agenda at the end of New Business. The Subcommittee Minutes Acknowledgement and the Ashland Senior Advisory Committee (ASAC) Bylaw Update Acknowledgement remained on the Consent Agenda.

**Motion:** Bell moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Heller Seconded.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- **Request from Public Works for limited use of herbicides for water quality improvement and riparian habitat restoration (Action)**

Dials reviewed the staff report included in the [meeting packet](#). The Public Works department is undertaking a riparian restoration project on City land that is designed to bring the City into compliance with the Clean Water Act. Public works is requesting the use of some of APCR property adjacent to Bear Creek. The Freshwater Trust and Public Works have proposed a protocol for using glyphosate herbicides sparingly to control

invasive weeds in these areas. To ensure the long-term health of the Bear Creek riparian area, Public Works is requesting an exemption from the APRC Integrated Pest Management Policy. Dials introduced VanWyhe to present on APRC staff support for granting this exemption.

VanWyhe gave a PowerPoint presentation (see [Attachment I](#)). VanWyhe discussed the following Ecological Impacts of the restoration project being proposed which include:

- Improve long-term water quality for our community and those down stream
- Help APRC reach a goal of riparian restoration
- Replace the invasive species monoculture with native overstory and shrub plants
- Reduce erosion, decrease water temperature, and increase dissolved oxygen in Bear Creek
- Improve habitat for in-stream species, including salmon
- Increase resources for nesting birds
- Improve the habitat corridor for wildlife moving through the urban-interface

VanWyhe concluded with staff's recommendation to grant an exemption to the IPM for the properties outlined in the attached report, in order to accomplish the riparian restoration and Clean Water Act compliance.

Paula Brown of Ashland Public Works was invited to presented on the item (see [Attachment II](#)). Brown introduced Eugene Wier of The Freshwater Trust (TFT) who is managing the restoration project. The presentation included the following items:

- Current effluent standards are not in compliance with the Clean Water Act. This restoration program will put the City of Ashland in compliance with the Clean Water Act
- The partnership with TFT allows the City to comply with the Clean Water Act while providing the ecological benefits of riparian restoration on publicly owned land
- Mechanical options, such as the construction of cooling towers, to meet compliance would require significant amounts of energy while not providing the additional benefits restoration would provide
- Through this proposed program the City of Ashland has been accepted by DEQ into the Water Quality Trading Program
- Public Works will be providing annual reports to DEQ which could also be provided to APRC
- Potential parks managed sites for riparian restoration are identified in [Attachment II](#)
- Public Works is seeking an exemption to the IPM to use herbicides on parks managed lands for this restoration project

Discussion on the presentation included the following items:

- Brown stated that herbicides could be used in North Mountain Park along Bear Creek. Wier clarified that most of the stream side property in North Mountain Park has had restoration work completed. A potential location where additional restoration work could take place would be the very upstream area of the park. Otherwise, North Mountain Park is not a prime target for restoration
- Brown stated that the request does include properties within North Mountain Park to take advantage of opportunities where available in North Mountain Park

Wier of TFT gave a PowerPoint presentation on riparian restoration processes (see [Attachment III](#)). The presentation included the following items:

- TFT is a nonprofit organization working to achieve restoration while using as little chemicals as possible
- Performance standards required to meet compliance strive to equate to high quality, resilient native riparian communities
- TFT is working on ~12 projects along the Rogue River that are in year 5 of the process and have been verified by a third party that the performing to the required performance standards
- Plastic is utilized as weed control in an effort to reduce the amount of herbicide used
- Native plants benefitting native pollinators and wildlife are utilized in restoration projects managed by TFT

Wier concluded the presentation with a report from a paper published in the Journal of Water Resources in February of 2019. The paper stated that available restoration methods to cool streams in face of climate change were assessed and stated that even under the most aggressive climate change scenarios, riparian restoration could result in stream temperatures cooler than they currently are.

Discussion on this topic included the following items:

- Brown reported that the community response regarding the general use of glyphosate has been minimal. Public Works will now go to the City Council in the next month or two for approval of the program and will state that glyphosate will be used in spot applications
- Wier stated the plan calls for planting 1,600 stems (trees) per acre which replicates regeneration after a flood event. The plants will be sourced locally and will be adapted to the area. Plantings typically include 15-20 species including conifers and deciduous trees, which make up the bulk of plantings
- Brown is able to provide the scope of work to APRC staff for distribution to Commissioners
- TFT is the project administrator. TFT hires local contractors to do the work on the ground. Plant Oregon is a local contractor that could be used
- Wier reported that TFT has never had any accidents chemical spills. Public concerns received have been demonstrable that the projects are in compliance
- Heller stated a concern about using herbicides at North Mountain Park
- Wier stated herbicides are not typically used on annuals but would like to keep it on the table in case of invasive annual taking over a project
- Spot applications rather than broad applications will be used on all project areas
- Horsetail is native and welcome in a riparian areas
- Relatively small amounts of plastic used on projects for weed abatement will eventually go to the landfill. The use of plastic reduces the amount of herbicide used. Wier stated that cardboard is not a feasible material for weed abatement at the landscape level

### **Call to the Audience**

**Kristina Lefever of Ashland** speaking on behalf of Pollinator Project Rogue Valley & Beyond Toxics believes everyone is doing their best to reduce impacts but stated dismay about the need to use glyphosate. Glyphosate is listed as highly hazardous by the international organization Pesticide Action Network (PAN). Lefever questioned if other chemicals listed in the project report will be used. Lefever recommended using steam weeding techniques and biodegradable plastics.

Wier clarified that glyphosate is the only chemical that will be used for the program.

### **Commissioner Discussion**

Bell expressed support for the program and expressed understanding that the use of glyphosate is an issue. Lewis stated the project is worthy of an exemption to the IPM based on its merits. In response to an inquiry from Heller, Wier stated that portions of the project could begin in 2020 depending on when the program is authorized. Heller then stated support for the proposed restoration activities.

**Motion:** Bell moved to approve the request from Public Works for an exemption to the APRC Integrated Pest Management Policy as outlined in their proposal with the following conditions:

- Limit the herbicide application of herbicide to no closer than six feet to the waters' edge of Bear Creek and no further than 60 feet from the waters' edge of Bear Creek
- Limit the period of application to three years from the date of the commencement of the work
- The exception is limited to the following properties: Ashland Pond, Mace Property, Riverwalk and North Mountain Park
- Follow all APRC IPM policy including signage
- Exceptions beyond the above parameters would require approval by APRC
- Public works will submit an annual report to APRC on the work being done

Heller Seconded

**Discussion:** Landt stated heavy involvement in APRC efforts to eliminate the use of herbicides in parks and is uneasy about using glyphosate or any herbicides in parks. In this case, it is necessary to strike a balance to achieve the ecological benefits of the projects. There are also economic benefits associated with riparian restoration. In addition, the carbon footprint would be significantly larger if mechanical methods for weed abatement were used. Because of these considerations, Landt stated a willingness to support a limited exception to the herbicide policy.

Lewis identified the issue of unlicensed private applicators of glyphosate as a bigger issues than the professional limited application of herbicides to achieve riparian restoration.

**Vote:** the vote was all yes

## NEW BUSINESS

- **Nature Play Area – Intent to Award Bid (Action)**

Dials reviewed the staff report included in the [meeting packet](#). Staff requests that the Commission recommend the City of Ashland to enter into a contract with Knife River Materials for the Nature Play at North Mountain Park. Dials gave special recognition to Manager VanWyhe who spearheaded the creation of and fundraising for the Nature Play Area.

Discussion on items include the following items:

- Minica stated staff is working on identifying detour routes to move cyclists and pedestrians through the area because the existing path will be relocated during construction. Landt recommended stopping bike and pedestrian traffic during construction since this is a recreational path and not a commuter path
- Construction equipment will enter near the Nature Center. APRC staff is working on a mitigation plan to reduce disturbances to Nature Center visitors
- Minica is still identifying the mobilization area
- APRC staff will be installing all construction fencing and barriers
- The bid came in under what has been budgeted. Landt recommended using additional funds to make the Beach Street culvert an open bottom. Dials added that grants funds raised for the Nature Play Area are conditional and would need to be spent on construction. If funds are left over the funds would need to be spent on on-going maintenance

**Motion:** Lewis moved to recommend that the City of Ashland approve the bid award and contract for Knife River Materials for the Nature Play Area at North Mountain Park. Heller Seconded.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes

- **Memorial Request – Marjorie O’Hara (Action)**

Oxendine reviewed the staff report included in the [meeting packet](#). Staff is recommended approval of a request to install a memorial plaque on a bench in Lithia Park for Marjorie O’Hara with APRC covering the cost. Marjorie, December 27, 1927 – July 9, 2019, was a lifelong resident of the Rogue Valley and is well known for her contribution to the Ashland Community through the publication of her book “Ashland, the First 130 Years”. The request requires an exception to the current Signs, Plaques, and Memorials policy since her plaque would be installed on a bench that currently contains a plaque for her husband.

Lewis stated the item was discussed at the Current Parks, Conservation, and Maintenance Subcommittee and praised the contributions Marjorie has made to the history of Ashland. Bell stated that because her contributions to the community, the Subcommittee recommended APRC cover the cost of the plaque.

**Motion:** Bell moved to approve the installation of a plaque dedicated to Marjorie O’Hara as proposed. Lewis Seconded.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes

- **Forestry Update (Informational)**

Minica gave a PowerPoint presentation on Forestry & Trails activities (see [Attachment IV](#)). The presentation included information on the following topics:

- Forestry Management - Mitigate fire hazards in the urban interface
- Forestry Management - Reduce risk of fire in the City by fuels reduction, weed abatement and firewise landscaping
- Forestry Management - Promote conservation as a long-term strategy to protect the environment
- Trails Management - Maintain and expand park, recreational and educational opportunities
- Trails Management - Building public communication and community partnerships
- Natural Resource Management - Preserve natural areas, protect and enhance our environment

Minica reported on the likelihood of undertaking thinning and burning piles within Siskiyou Mountain Park, Lithia Hillside and 1 acre in Westwood once fire season is over.

- **Recreation Division Advisory Committee (RDAC) Formation**

Dials reviewed the staff report in the [meeting packet](#) and provided a [new draft policy](#) for the formation of the RDAC that contains updates to the Committee Make-up section. The proposed policy to form this committee is based on the language used to create the Ashland Senior Advisory Committee. Dials reported the next step would be to open the application process to recruit member which would be open for 6 weeks. Staff and Chair Gardiner will review applicants.

**Motion:** Bell moved to approve the formation of the Recreation Division Advisory Committee as described in the draft policy dated 8/26/2019. Heller Seconded.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes

#### **ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS/STAFF**

Heller announced that the Lithia Park tennis courts are in the processes of being painted for pickleball by the Southern Oregon Pickleball Association

Landt displayed an [example of a sign](#) that utilizes positive statements rather than listing what is not allowed. The sign read “Birds Only Beyond This Point.” Landt encouraged staff and the Current Parks, Conservation, and Maintenance Subcommittee to take this into consideration when reviewing language for APRC signs. Landt noted language on a current APRC sign that states “No Dogs Allowed” and recommended language such as “Wildlife Only.”

#### **UPCOMING MEETING DATES**

1. Pool Ad-Hoc Committee—September 4, 2019
  - Ashland Senior Center, 1699 Homes Ave—3:30 p.m.
2. Ashland Senior Advisory Committee – October 14, 2019
  - Ashland Senior Center, 1699 Homes Ave—3:30 p.m.
3. APRC Study Session—September 16, 2019
  - The Grove, 1195 E. Main St, Ashland – 5:30 p.m.
4. APRC Regular Meeting—September 23, 2019
  - Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main St., Ashland—7:00 p.m.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38p.m.

Respectfully Submitted  
Sean Sullivan  
Office Assistant II