

**MINUTES FOR REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING  
ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
June 10, 2020  
Electronic Meeting – 6:30 p.m.**

Present: Commissioners Gardiner (Chair), Landt (Vice-Chair), Bell, Heller, Lewis; Director Black, Recreation Superintendent Dials; Senior Services Superintendent Glatt, Analyst Kiewel, Assistant Sullivan

Absent: City Council Liaison Mayor Stromberg

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**II. PUBLIC FORUM**

Written testimony from the public was encouraged and accepted via email. All information submitted for the public forum has been [posted online](#).

**III. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA**

None

**IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

**V. NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Pathways Contract Approval (Action)**

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

- This request is for approval to award a public contract to Pathway Enterprises, Inc. to provide janitorial services for Parks restrooms and trash removal
- The term for the janitorial service contract will begin on July 1, 2020 and end on June 30, 2021
- Janitorial services for Parks restrooms and trash removal was quoted at \$167,503.54 for the FY21 fiscal year. Trash pickup and restrooms cleaning will be done every day. High use areas may be serviced more frequently
- This is an unbudgeted expense that will be offset through staff reduction. Contracting for janitorial services allows APRC the ability to have flexibility in the frequency of cleaning and to reduces services if needed to save on expenses
- Black stated that contracts would not typically be brought to the Commissioners, and that this is being brought to the Commissioners because moving forward would eliminate 2 FTE staff positions
- Black stated the cost of the contract is currently the same as the cost of the 2 FTE position, long term savings will be realized through the reduction of retirement and healthcare benefits, which are projected to rise significantly. Black also stated improved coverage by not having to deal with vacation and sick days as Pathways will have continual coverage
- Black stated that the duties performed by Pathways were performed by 3 FTE APRC staff members. Two of the positions will be eliminated and the third FTE has been reassigned to other duties. Black clarified that it may be possible for current staff to fill gaps from time to time in the event of a custodial emergency (such as unsanitary conditions in bathrooms). APRC will see an overall savings by contracting with Pathways for custodial services
- Black clarified that the contract provides financial flexibility, stating that the contract can be decreased instead of laying off staff as well as the ability to increase or decrease the level of service over a short period of time
- Black clarified that the cash savings will be realized over time as liabilities are decreased (Paid Time Off, sick time, retirement, health insurance) and that the liability annual increases for 2 FTE positions are likely to climb higher than the expected annual increase to contract with Pathways
- Black stated the contract is based on hours worked, is for a one-year period and will be evaluated prior to renewing
- Black stated that he had considered contracting for custodial services for several years

**Motion:** Landt moved to approve the Pathways contract as presented by staff. Seconded by Bell.

**Discussion:** Gardiner noted for the record that one of his family members works for Pathways in a managerial position, but does not work with contracts.

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

Black stated due to the dollar value of the contract, staff is required to present this contract to the City Council as well. That meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 16, 2020.

## 2. Q3 Budget Update (Action)

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

- Staff prepares budget summary reports for the Commission to review each quarter and at the end of each fiscal year
- The report being presented at this time is the budget summary report for April 2020
- The City financial reports for the third quarter (January 1 to March 31, 2020) are also included for review
- The target for April expenditures is 83.33%
  - Due to cost cutting measures implemented in April expenses are currently trending under budget for expenses at 80.30% (\$261,957)
  - In FY20 APRC has received a total of \$54,709 in grants which includes Ashland Parks Foundation (APF) grants and corporate sponsorships for programs
  - When including these grants as an offset to some expenses incurred, expenditures are currently at 79.28% (\$208,009 under budget) for the year. Budget amendments still need to be approved by the City Council before all grant revenue is reflected on the budget reports
- Recreation revenue shows as negative in April due to program refunds as a result of COVID-19 restrictions
  - By the end of April, recreation revenue is coming in at 57.5% of target due to COVID-19 restrictions
- Heller requested the reports display Net Income
- Black stated that the report indicated significant savings in expenses, but those will increase starting July 1 and the water budget will likely be negatively impacted due to a low water year for the Talent Irrigation District
- Black stated that APRC is currently running in the negative (Net Income) and that staff is continuing to address budget shortfalls due to COVID-19 and he will discuss strategies later in the meeting

**Motion:** Landt moved to acknowledge the quarterly budget report as presented by staff. Seconded by Lewis.

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

## 3. COVID-19 Response Update (Information)

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

- Dials stated a desire to include more info in the staff report, but when it was released for the meeting information on the status of Jackson County moving to the next phase was not known
- Jackson County entered Phase 2 on Friday, June 5, 2020
- Dials stated the same requirements/recommendations are still in place including:
  - Physically distancing
  - Wearing face coverings
  - Disinfecting where possible
  - Posting informational signage
- The new guidance that was released for Phase 2 pertain to the following activities:

- General gatherings & special events
  - Venues
  - Recreational sports opportunities
  - Indoor/Outdoor entertainment facilities
  - Swimming pools/spas
  - Sports Courts
- Playgrounds can be opened, and staff is waiting on guidelines and will open as soon as possible
  - Indoor facilities can be opened if guidelines are followed. Staff is unsure when this will occur and will be following guidelines and restrictions from the City of Ashland Emergency Operations Command (EOC)
  - Some sports practices can begin (non-contact sports only)
  - Pools can be opened in Phase 2
    - APRC will not be opening the Daniel Meyer as discussed at the May Regular Meeting
  - Reservations of facilities are allowed, but have guidelines that make it challenging to move forward
  - Events are limited to 250 people / outdoor gatherings are limited to 100 people / indoor gatherings are limited to 50
  - Indoor facility rental (for indoor or outdoor) has the following restrictions
    - There needs to be 35 square feet of space for each person
    - Handwashing stations
    - Physical distancing monitors
    - Contact tracing for events
  - The City of Ashland EOC still in effect and will be providing guidance to APRC. The status of APRC activities include the following:
    - Oak Knoll Golf Course and Mary's BBQ are open
    - Staff is working on outdoor programs and planning for indoor programs when allowed
    - A virtual 4<sup>th</sup> of July run is being organized
    - APRC staff is still coordinating the Adopt-A-Neighbor program
    - Small volunteer groups have started working outdoors
    - All APRC offices open for phone calls, but are closed to in-person interactions unless there is no other way to communicate and safety protocols will be practiced
    - Community Gardens are open
  - Dials clarified that the phones at the Nature Center are being answered by the Nature Center Manager or Coordinator. They are working with outdoor volunteers and planning future programming. They have also started assisting with grounds maintenance, which was not a typical activity for Nature Center staff in the past
  - Glatt clarified that Senior Division staff are continuing to answer the general phones lines and emails and are diligently working to continue providing services to the senior community. Food and Friends continue to use the Senior Center to prepare meals, but meals are not served on site
  - Dials stated that all incoming calls to The Grove are being diverted to a voicemail and staff is responding to voicemails daily. An automating informational phone system is being implemented
  - Dials clarified that the Calle Guanajuato is currently open. Some restaurants are utilizing their seating areas, others with contracts are not. Staff working with organizers of the artisan market to get it running as soon as possible
  - Dials clarified that Commissioners approved a staff recommendation at the May Regular Business Meeting to close the Daniel Meyer Pool for the 2020 season
  - Dials clarified that the resumption of indoor activities will be determined by the EOC and that restrictions for APRC activities may be greater than what is being required by the State of Oregon
  - Glatt stated that it had been unclear of when Senior Centers will be allowed to open and that she was recently able to get information from the Oregon Health Authority
    - Specific guidance will not be given for Senior Centers and that guidance for indoor facilities should be followed diligently
    - Glatt is researching options for classes and programming
    - The EOC is moving forward cautiously and stated the gatherings in the Senior Center will not be allowed at this time

- Black reinforced the following
  - The City of Ashland, under the EOC, is choosing to not move as quick as every community in Southern Oregon
  - APRC will be acting in accordance with EOC reopening measures
  - Even though Phase 2 allows indoor facilities to open, The EOC has determined to not move forward with allowing the community into indoor facilities
- Dials stated that the State of Oregon has not authorized basketball courts to be opened because it is a contact sport. Staff will continue to monitor guidelines to determine when and how the courts can be reopened
- Black stated authorization to use the sports fields at North Mountain Park has been given to groups for practice only and they are required to follow safety guidelines
  
- All Commissioners stated a desire to open the splash pad to the public as soon as possible. Lewis and Landt suggested using volunteers if oversight is mandated by the State of Oregon
  - Staff stated that guidance from the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), State of Oregon, Jackson County and the City of Ashland will be reviewed to determine the feasibility of opening the splash pad, but there are no immediate plans to open it to the public
  - Black stated a desire to review reopening activities carefully, which may result in activities being open slower than other communities in the region and that staff will continue to work to safely open as many facilities as possible

#### 4. COVID-19 Related Budget Reductions (Action)

Black reviewed the staff report included in the [meeting packet](#) and provided a [PowerPoint presentation](#) (pg.1-6). The following items were discussed:

- Projected losses to revenue due to COVID-19 include the following
  - Recreation Revenue: \$583,419 (FY19/20: \$370,000; FY 20/21 \$211,419)
  - General Fund Decreases: \$300,000
  - **Total Losses: \$883,419**
- The projections of revenue losses will be updated as the situation changes and more information become available
- The presentation includes graphs that show a purple line, which represents pre-COVID-19 projections, the blue line represents current projections
- FY19/FY20/FY21 display general fund revenue, which have become flat. Prior years show an upward trend. This City halted increasing general fund allocations to APRC to deal with pre-COVID-19 budget shortfalls
- Black reviewed the expense reductions staff has taken this FY or plans to take next FY
  - FY 19/20
    - Layoffs: \$181,541
    - Reduction in temporary employees: \$17,400
    - Park Improvements: \$40,000
      - Total FY19/20: \$239,041
  - FY 20/21
    - Parks Division layoffs: \$408,000
    - Recreation layoffs: \$84,768
    - No COLA increase: \$48,000
    - Furloughs: \$93,000
    - Recreation expenses: \$120,892
    - Park Patrol: \$26,000
      - Total FY20/21: \$780,732
  - Grand Total: \$1,019,773 minus Pathways contract expenses (\$167,504) = \$852,269

- Black stated that projected losses total \$883,419 which is more than the projected expense savings. Staff will continue to work on increasing revenue and/or decrease expenses
- Landt asked for an explanation of why Parks has more layoffs than Recreation
  - Black clarified that it was his intention to spread out the layoffs across the organization as a whole
  - The Parks Division layoff total should be decreased to \$167,504 to account for the Pathways contract
  - The remaining layoff in Parks was the superintendent, which comes with a much higher salary cost when compared to the three Recreation staff that were laid off
  - Black stated it is possible that the layoff figures for Parks and Recreation may have bleed over across categories and may need to be cleaned up and revised
- Black stated that the contract in the works with the Ashland School District to use North Mountain Park sports fields will be slightly increased and the school district has not indicated that they will not move forward with finalizing the contract
- Black is recommending furloughing all APRC employees one day per month for twelve months starting July 6, 2020. This will reduce expenses by \$93,000
  - Black is planning to furlough staff on the same day and close all facilities, including the golf course
    - One employee will be available to respond to emergencies
  - Black is planning to finalize the furlough calendar and will identify days that extend time off over the weekend and holidays when applicable, which will be a benefit to staff since their pay is being decreased
  - Dials stated that members of the public will not be allowed to run classes inside facilities or reserve facilities on furlough days. Recreation staff will notify people who use inside facilities
  - Black stated that there will be impacts to the community because the furloughs will reduce the level of service for that day
  - Pathways will collect trash and clean bathrooms on furlough days
  - Black asked for a motion to approve moving forward with the furlough plan and that the first furlough day will be July 6, 2020

**Motion:** Heller moved to approve the recommendation to close the Ashland Parks and Recreation offices and operations one day per month during the 20/21 fiscal year and impose a mandatory furlough on all employees for those twelve days and that the first furlough day would be July 6, 2020. Seconded by Landt.

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

Gardiner added that Black volunteered will take 12 additional furlough days to further reduce expenses.

## 5. CIP Prioritization Discussion (Possible Action)

Black reviewed the staff report included in the [meeting packet](#) and provided a [PowerPoint presentation](#) (pg. 7-11). The following items were discussed:

- Black stated the focus of the discussion will be on projects that are funded with the Food and Beverage Tax (F&B).
- Black noted multiple instances in the staff report where the year 2019 was referenced and it should have been listed as 2020
- Black reviewed the F&B sources
  - Carry Forward (earned in previous years, but not spent): \$981,825
  - FY19/20: \$470,267 (projected)
  - FY20/21: \$275,000 (projected)
    - Total: \$1,727,092
- Black identified Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Projects that have been grouped
  - Critical Projects (projects that are underway): \$537,000
  - Required (Bond Payments and the Ops Transfer): \$740,000
  - Discretionary Projects (remaining available funds): \$450,000
    - Total: \$1,727,000
- Black stated that Commissioners may disagree with the projects that have been identified as Critical Projects in the staff report and could make changes to that list during the reprioritization process

- Black noted that he is recommending the Mace property budget be reduced by \$100,000 and add that to the Discretionary Projects bucket, which would increase the amount of funds for Discretionary Projects to \$550,000. Black stated the property is functional right now and the entire project could be phased in later
- Black reviewed the Discretionary Projects list (focusing on the top 5). Commissioners provided Black with individual rankings, which Black used to create the Discretionary/Desirable Projects Ranking. Black stated that the list is a starting point and asked Commissioners to eventually act on establishing a new priority. Black noted that E Main Park has an additional \$600,000 of non-F&B funds dedicated to it
  1. Daniel Meyer Pool (DMP) Rebuild: \$325,00/YEAR \$2,600,000 TOTAL
  2. East Main Park Development: \$350,000.00
  3. Bike Skills Park: \$ 25,000.00
  4. Build Dedicated Pickle-Ball Courts: \$175,000.00
  5. Oak Knoll Playground: \$113,000.00

## Discussion

- Black clarified that the \$325,000 allocated for DMP assumes that APRC will be able to issue a revenue bond to fund the entire project. The \$325,000 would be set aside to make the first payment
- Bell suggested going out for a General Obligation (G.O.) Bond and stated that the residents of Ashland seem supportive of a pool and should be asked to vote on a G.O. Bond if there is not another source of funding available (**Note:** discussion on this topic occurred at different point in the meeting. All discussion of bonds, general obligation or revenue, will be listed here)
  - Black did not have a recommendation or any insight if getting a G.O. Bond on the ballot and noted that issuing a G.O. Bond would raise taxes and a Revenue Bond would not
  - Landt stated that setting aside \$325,000 would be enough money to cover any shortfalls for three years at this radically lower F&B revenue stream, which is a good argument for going out for and securing a Revenue Bond
  - Heller stated that he is in favor of putting the DMP project to the voters as a G.O. Bond
  - Lewis stated support for reviewing the possibility and a timeline for issuing a G.O. Bond to fund the DMP project, which would then free up money for other projects. Lewis stated that although other bond measures recently failed, the DMP seems to have widespread community support. Lewis also stated a desire to see a fall back plan for getting the current pool in working order for next season
  - Bell stated if a campaign began for a G.O. Bond in the fall and the community was supportive, it would free up funds for other projects such as pickleball or the bike skills park. Bell also stated that some of the smaller projects could be added to a G.O. Bond in the fall or in February
  - Gardiner clarified that the list provided by Black was put together to fund projects with the money that is expected to come in. Issuing a G.O. Bond would be another way to fund projects and that a decision will need to be made on how to proceed with funding
  - Landt proposed that the Revenue Bond should be pursued before pursuing a G.O. Bond. Landt stated the following:
    - Securing a revenue bond would be living within our means. It will be secured with money that APRC has or is entitled to in the future
    - A G.O. Bond would be an increase in taxes and could be considered tone-deaf to raise taxes under the current financial conditions
    - Holding money (\$325,000) back to cover shortfalls of projected F&B funds to ensure debt payments are made on a Revenue Bond would be prudent and would be listening to voters who spoke strongly in the last election
  - Heller restated support for a G.O. Bond to fund the DMP project to free up money so construction of dedicated pickleball courts can move forward
  - Black stated that moving forward with a G.O. Bond would require appealing to other authorities and would take time to determine if it is even possible to get on the ballot
  - Bell stated that bonds are a loan from some other source and are secured from F&B or property taxes and that banks would be more likely to issue a bond for property tax money rather than F&B

- Black stated that there is an assumption that it is possible to get a G.O. Bond on the ballot and that voters approve it. Black added that F&B has not been volatile until now, and there is hope that F&B will again become a secure source of revenue
  - Gardiner stated support for moving forward with a Revenue Bond
  - Lewis stated that the City Council should be approached to see how they feel about it
  - Bell suggested getting input from the City Council on different packages that could be put to the voters through a G.O. Bond
- Black clarified that the development of the E Main Park could be done in phases. One of the things to consider with the development of E Main Park, is that the road and parking improvements to provide access to the property could be a significant expense. Black is in the process of determining what will be required to secure permits to develop the park and will then be able to provide better estimates on what components of the park could be constructed with available funds. Black stated that it is possible that even without allocating the full \$350,000 for E Main Park Development, it should be possible to do some improvements and plan for additional improvements to happen in phases in the future. Black added when planning E Main Park, reducing maintenance costs will be a key component to the design
- Heller stated that when prioritizing he focused on the decreased available funds and made an that argument continuing with the Real Estate Acquisition (\$109,000) under the Critical Projects category should be reevaluated because it adds future maintenance liabilities
- Heller stated that the biggest drain on the budget is the golf course and that the pickleball project was located there to assist with golf course revenue. Heller added that his prioritization list focused on what can be fully accomplished with the available funds which is why he focused on the projects that did not cost as much
  - Landt suggested that Heller state for the record that he has a vested interest in pickleball as a paid instructor
    - Heller stated he does teach pickleball and would be happy to drop teaching in order to get the pickleball courts
- Landt stated that the original motion, which initially approved the Revenue Bond to pay for the DMP included funds for tennis court improvements and the construction of pickleball courts because the funds allocated in the CIP for pickleball were not enough to complete the project. Landt continued and stated the following:
  - Although the tennis court improvements are not a CIP project, F&B funds can be used for the project. Landt stated that the total cost of the DMP (\$2,600,000) does not include funds for the tennis courts or pickleball.
  - Landt proposed using a portion of the limited funds available to fix the tennis courts at Hunter Park, which would be maintaining existing infrastructure, but when improvements are made include striping for pickleball courts
  - This would allow pickleball under the lights and added that at this time of available funds having dedicated facilities for anything is a luxury and multipurpose amenities should be considered to meet the needs of multiple user groups while using fewer financial resources
  - The need for additional pickleball courts could be reevaluated after additional courts are made available to pickleball players at Hunter Park
- Black clarified that the top five projects could not be completed with the funds available. Black provided a hypothetical scenario on how to move forward to deliver on as many of the top projects as possible with the available funds:
  - The Mace Property Improvements do not need to move forward as quickly as previously thought, so \$100,000 could be reallocated to discretionary projects. This would bring the total amount for discretionary projects to \$550,000
  - If the revenue Bond were pursued for DMP, \$325,000 could be set aside for it
  - This would leave \$225,000 for other projects
  - Reduce the allocations of funds for E Main Park from \$350,000 to \$125,000 - \$150,000, which would allow for the design of the park and to develop a phasing plan and complete annexation and other planning processes with the City of Ashland. The \$600,000 of non-F&B funds could then be utilized to potentially complete phase one of the development plan.
  - The Bike Skills Park could be incorporated into the phasing plan for E Main Park
  - The remaining \$75,000-\$100,000 could be utilized to improve the Hunter Park tennis courts and restripe some of the courts to provide additional pickleball courts
  - Black noted that the Revenue Bond is not guaranteed, but staff could start moving the process forward to determine the feasibility of securing a bond
- Heller stated that the original pickleball court plan called for dedicated courts and he has witnessed conflicts between tennis players and pickleball players

- Black stated that Commissioners have control on reprioritizing the CIP projects and how the money is spent and is providing options on how to fund DMP since it has been identified as the top priority
- Black clarified that although resurfacing the Hunter Park tennis courts is not listed as a CIP project, it can be paid for with F&B because it is maintenance on existing infrastructure. Resurfacing the tennis courts would also allow for the expansion of pickleball courts since there would not be enough funds to construct dedicated courts if \$325,000 is set aside to secure a Revenue Bond for DMP
- Heller advocated for the construction of dedicated pickleball courts and thought it important to acknowledge that the cost of the pool is not \$325,000 and that it will take a multi-year commitment to pay for the pool and it will impact every other choice Commissioners make over the next decade
- Gardiner stated support for resurfacing the tennis courts for two reasons 1) it addresses a deferred maintenance issue 2) expands the number of pickleball courts
- Heller restated support for reevaluating the land acquisition to expand E Main Park
  - Black stated that unlike building new infrastructure on currently held APRC property, if property is not purchased now there may not be an opportunity to purchase it in the future. Additional details should be addressed in Executive Session and added that if Commissioners still consider acquiring the land a priority, then the acquisition should move forward
  - Lewis stated that E Main Park is a once in a lifetime chance to provide a park for the community. The Park will be there 100 years from now and he is viewing this an obligation to the Ashland residents who need a park on that side of town
  - Heller clarified support for moving forward with E Main and his comments about reevaluation are only regarding the land acquisition for expansion

Gardiner proposed he and Black prepare next steps to continue the discussion at the next Study Session in July. There were no objections. Gardiner directed Black to determine if it is possible to meet in Council Chambers.

**VI. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS/STAFF**  
None

- VII. UPCOMING MEETING DATES**
1. APRC Study Session—July 1, 2020
    - Location TBD—6:30 p.m.
  2. APRC Regular Business Meeting—July 8, 2020

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**  
The meeting adjourned at 9:31pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Sean Sullivan, Executive Assistant