

**MINUTES FOR REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING  
ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
January 13, 2021  
Electronic Meeting – 6:00 p.m.**

Present: Commissioners Gardiner (Chair), Landt (Vice-Chair), Bell, Eldridge, Lewis; Director Black; City of Ashland Recorder Huhtala; Recreation Superintendent Dials; Senior Services Superintendent Glatt, Analyst Kiewel, Assistant Sullivan;

Absent: None

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

**II. SWEARING IN OF NEW COMMISSIONER**

City of Ashland Recorder, Melissa Huhtala, swore in Leslie Eldridge and Jim Lewis to a four-year term as a Parks Commissioner.

**III. CHAIR/VICE CHAIR ELECTION**

Black introduced the item as outlined in the [staff memo included in the meeting packet](#).

**Motion:** Lewis nominated Mike Gardiner as 2021 Chair of the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission. Landt Seconded.

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

**Motion:** Bell nominated Rick Landt as 2021 Vice Chair of the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission. Lewis Seconded.

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

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

APRC Regular Meeting – December 9, 2020

**Motion:** Landt moved to approve the Minutes from December 9, 2020 as presented. Lewis Seconded.

**Vote:** Gardiner, Landt, Bell, and Lewis voted yes; Eldridge abstained.

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

None

**VI. PUBLIC FORUM**

None

**VII. DIRECTORS REPORT**

Black provided the following information in the Director's Report:

- Japanese Garden
  - Construction has been underway for approximately one month. APMC staff finished demolition work this week. Toru Tanaka, the garden designer, will begin marking the site so grading work can begin soon
- Ashland Pond
  - APMC staff is working at the Ashland Pond property to address damage from the Alameda Fire. A culvert was damaged and has been temporarily addressed. A more permanent fix is underway
  - The property is still closed for public safety reasons due to the potential for hazardous trees. There are many trees that were burned that may be able to survive but may end up coming down naturally in a sudden manner. The area will remain closed to provide damaged trees time to potentially recover
  - The greenway is still open, but all adjacent lands to the greenway are officially closed due to hazardous conditions
- Biennium Budget
  - Black and Kiewel have begun working with the City of Ashland on preliminary budget preparation. Once the timeline is finalized, Black will bring information to the Commissioners
  - Black stated that goal setting typically happens at the beginning of the budget process and Black is planning to start that process in February. Black stated that 2020 was an abnormal year where work on many of the goals was put on hold. Black is

proposing a process where the goals from the current biennium will be reviewed to identify which goals should be carried forward. There will also be an opportunity to add and/or remove goals as needed

- Dogs in Parks Campaign
  - Staff is working on a public education campaign to inform the public about where dogs are allowed and other park rules regarding dogs in parks
- Cost Recovery
  - The project team is working to finalize direct and indirect costs as well as start assigning service categories to programs
  - Additional information will be brought to Commissioners as the process continues
- COVID-19 Oregon Health Authority
  - Basketball courts are still closed per OHA restrictions
  - Dials is continually monitoring restrictions and there are changes on the horizon that could impact operations and expenses, such as increased requirements on restroom cleaning. Staff will bring information to Commissioners as the situation changes

## VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### 1. IPM Waiver – Greater Ashland Ponds Burn Area (Action)

Black reviewed the [staff report included in the meeting packet](#) and introduced Eugene Wier from The Freshwater Trust (TFT). Black stated TFT has requested that the Parks Commissioners extend a waiver for the use of herbicides to control blackberry growth in areas affected by the Alameda Fire and located on property that is leased to TFT for riparian restoration. The original waiver was approved in December of 2020 and expires on January 13, 2021. The reason for the request for an extension stems from TFT's inability to apply the herbicides during the prescribed period, due to excessive rain. Black stated that staff recommends granting the waiver. The following items were discussed.

- Wier stated the treatment is being funded through the Soil and Water Conservation District. The funding also includes treating blackberries with herbicides for lands outside of Ashland adjacent to Bear Creek Greenway that were burned in the Alameda Fire. Most of these sites have already been treated
- If the waiver is provided, treatments will be dependent on a window of favorable weather
- Wier requested the waiver be extended through the end of February and if the treatment has not taken place by that time, he will come back with a different proposal that may include mechanical treatments in March and following with herbicide treatment in the fall
- Wier stated one well-timed treatment before the end of February or in the fall of 2021 should be enough to dramatically reduce blackberry infestation
- Wier clarified that steam weeding technology requires site access with a truck. Wier stated this technology is not suited to do weed control at scale and works better for smaller discrete areas. Wier stated that he has used this technology within the City of Talent on trial plots and found it was effective to some degree, especially when combined with a re-seeding effort, but it was very labor intensive. The current funding level would not allow the use of this steam weeding because of the scale of the project
- Wier stated that using herbicide treatments now will help reduce the level of infestation, which could allow for the area to be managed without using chemical methods

**Motion:** Landt moved that APRC Board of Commissioners allow continued emergency use of herbicides on all areas managed by APRC on Ashland Creek that were burned by the Alameda Fire with the following conditions: 1) the use period would be between now through February 28, 2021; 2) limited to blackberries and Japanese knotweed; 3) there would be warning signs posted before application. Lewis Seconded

**Discussion:** Landt stated his loath to using herbicides, but the level of infestation of blackberries has proven to be an extreme fire danger and there is a unique opportunity to access the area in a way that has not been possible in the past.

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

## IX. NEW BUSINESS

### 1. Art Beyond - Presentation by Scott Malbourn of the Schneider Museum (Information/Action)

Black stated the agenda was amended to include this item and that a staff report is not included in the packet. Black introduced Scott Malbourn of the SOU (Southern Oregon University) Schneider Museum who is proposing setting up a temporary art display in Lithia Park. Malbourn's presentation including the following items:

- Outdoor art exhibition can become drivers for tourism and help feed local economies. Ashland is poised for this type of exhibit
- The exhibit could launch May 15 and run to July 15 (2 months)
- Exhibition is called *Art Beyond*, as in Art Beyond the Walls of the museum and can be described as an outdoor art adventure and would be comprised of installations at multiple sites
- Current site partners include Mt. Ashland, Science Works, Willow Witt Ranch & Vesper Meadow

- Lithia Park is being proposed as a centralized location close to downtown
- Programming will be planned at site locations as well. Possible programming at Lithia Park could include outdoor painting activities and weekly drawing events
- Artist, Nancy Backer Cahill will jury an online art competition using her 4<sup>th</sup> wall app ([a visual presentation of the app was displayed at 40:45](#))
- If Commissioners are interested, conversations can continue with the fabricators of the art display
- A video clip of the art display proposed for Lithia Park was presented: <https://vimeo.com/463262576>

**Discussion:**

- Gardiner stated that there are several locations that could work for this type of short-term commitment for an art exhibit and would support the installation if there is support from other Commissioners
- Landt raised a concern that the lawn would be damaged, and this park is already heavily frequented. Landt suggested locating the exhibit at Ashland Creek Park where there are more hardscaped areas and is still close to downtown
  - Black stated APRC is down a major element of Lithia Park now that the Japanese Garden is closed for construction and see this as an opportunity to augment this loss for a short time
  - Malbaurn stated that he will be marketing the exhibit to large cities in the region and wants to highlight the most beautiful areas of Ashland
- Lewis stated there is a long history of art in the park and appreciates the investment that is being made by SOU
- Bell stated support for locating the exhibit in Lithia Park and stated Ashland Creek Park could also work as a location
- Eldridge stated support for the exhibit in Lithia Park and mentioned COVID safety protocol should be taken into consideration
- Landt stated a need for additional public input to see if there is adequate buy-in from the community before he would be comfortable moving forward
- Black stated the exhibit has an interactive component that is in line with the Lithia Park Master Plan and could look at multiple locations in Lithia Park for installation. Black recommended placement in Lithia Park over Ashland Creel Park. Black requested Commissioners to weigh in on agreeing on the potential for allowing the temporary installation in Lithia Park so the planning process can continue and a decision on the specific location and installation logistics can be made at a later date
  - Malbaurn stated he will be meeting with the fabricators the following day to determine when it will be necessary to tell them to move forward and will report back

**Motion:** Lewis moved to approve the concept of this presented art in Lithia Park and will determine the location at a later date. Bell Seconded.

**Discussion:** Lewis stated that Silent Disco has been a successful activity in the park and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival was allowed to erect a tent in the Park on a temporary basis to hold performances. Lewis stated these are examples of offering different types of actives in Lithia Park to benefit the community and that the proposed installation is worth pursuing.

Bell stated the art installation is a great idea and will be an excellent way to get people into the park and could provide potential economic value to the City.

Landt stated that if this motion passes, it will make public participation moot because the motion states it will happen in Lithia Park. Landt stated he will vote against the motion and the Commission owes it to the community to provide the public an opportunity to be involved.

**Vote:** Bell, Lewis, Eldridge, and Gardiner voted yes. Landt voted no. Motion passes.

Black reiterated that this is a temporary installation that happens from time to time with special events and this is within the mission of APRC.

Landt stated that he is not against the idea, but community involvement is paramount and would have liked to see an opportunity to consider public comment.

**2. OLCC License Approval – Mary’s BBQ at Oak Knoll (Action)**

Dials reviewed the [staff report included in the meeting packet](#) and introduced Oropallo. Dials stated staff is recommending applying for a full-on premises license, a one-year contract and once that is implemented, an increase in the percentage of beverage sales payments from 2% to 5%. The following items were discussed:

- Dials stated Oak Knoll currently holds a limited license which does not allow the sale of hard alcohol. A full-on premises license licenses will allow hard alcohol to be sold

- Staff sees expanding alcohol offerings as another tool to improve the guest experience and increases the value of the lease held by Mary's BBQ, the food and beverage vendor operating at the golf course
- The Golf Course Subcommittee recommended moving forward with a full-on premises license on December 2, 2020
- The liquor license application will need to go to City Council for final approval
- Oropallo added the following points:
  - Guests have requested the addition of hard alcohol sales
  - The change in license will increase the value of the lease
  - Additional beverage offerings make the location more attractive for milestone events such as weddings
  - The increase in APRC's percentage of alcohol sales is conservatively estimated to increase annual revenue by \$2-3K
  - Off season activities can be expanded and increase revenue

Discussion:

- Oropallo clarified that the Commissioners are being asked to approve the change in liquor license and a change to the current lease to increase the percentage of beverage sales payments to APRC from 2% to 5%
  - This would be an addendum to the current lease and not approving a new lease
  - Dials stated the current leases ends at the end of 2021
- Oropallo stated the ability to sell beverage allowed under the full on-site premise license is dependent on maintaining a food and beverage vendor
- The license would be shared between APRC and Mary's BBQ
- Black clarified the recommendation is to approve this for the remainder of the current lease, one (1) year, at which time the license would be reevaluated for continuation
- Lewis stated Mary's BBQ will pay the difference for the liquor license and this will result in increased sales and increase in percentage received from sales
- Dials stated that the addition of Mary's BBQ has increased the number of people that are frequenting the golf course

**Motion:** Bell moved approve and recommend to City Council the change in liquor license to a full on-site premise license. The contract will be for one year and once implemented, the lessee's percentage of beverage sales payments to OKGC will increase from 2% to 5%. Lewis seconded.

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

### 3. Subcommittee Appointments (Information/Action)

Black introduced the item as outlined in the [staff memo included in the meeting packet](#). Black stated the APRC Chair holds the responsibility and authority to appoint Commissioners to sit on authorized APRC subcommittees, the Public Arts Commission, the Forest Lands Commission, Joint Powers Committee, and the Ashland Parks Foundation Board. The following appointments were made:

## 2021 Parks Commission Subcommittees / Workgroups

### Ashland Senior Advisory Subcommittee (ASAC)

- Commissioner Gardiner

### Bee City USA Subcommittee

- Commissioner Eldridge

### Current Parks, Conservation, and Maintenance Subcommittee

- Commissioner Bell
- Commissioner Lewis

### Golf Course Subcommittee

- Commissioner Bell
- Commissioner Lewis

### Long Range Park Planning Subcommittee

- Commissioner Gardiner

- Commissioner Landt

### Recreation Division Advisory Committee (RDAC)

- Commissioner Eldridge
- Commissioner Lewis

### East Main Park Workgroup

- Commissioner Bell
- Commissioner Landt

### Japanese Garden Workgroup

- Commissioner Gardiner
- Commissioner Landt

### Lithia Park Master Plan Work Group

- Commissioner Gardiner
- Commissioner Landt

## 2021 Parks Commission Representation

### Ashland Parks Foundation (Voting board member – Parks Commission position)

- Commissioner Gardiner

### Forest Lands Commission (Voting member)

- Commissioner Eldridge

### Joint Powers Committee

- Commissioner Gardiner

### Public Arts Commission (Parks Commission liaison)

- Commissioner Lewis

## **X. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS/STAFF**

Black stated the goal setting process will begin in February.

Black stated negotiations have begun with a potential team to work on the E Main Park design.

## **XI. UPCOMING MEETING DATES**

1. Bee City USA Subcommittee – January 27, 2021
  - Electronic Meeting—3:00 p.m.
2. APRC Study Session—February 3, 2021
  - Electronic Meeting—6:00 p.m.
3. APRC Regular Business Meeting — February 10, 2021
  - Electronic Meeting—6:00 p.m.

## **XII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted  
Sean Sullivan, Executive Assistant