

MINUTES FOR REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

March 10, 2021

Electronic Meeting – 6:00 p.m.

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

Absent: None

This meeting was recorded by RVTV. The recording can be found on the [City of Ashland video archive](#).

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

III. PUBLIC FORUM

None

IV. DIRECTORS REPORT

Black reported on the following topics:

Goals Update

- Black stated, instead of meeting in smaller work groups, the goals will be workshopped at the Study Session in April due to concerns about open meeting laws brought up by the City Attorney
- Commissioners are welcome to send input to staff on the goals prior to the Study Session for inclusion in the meeting materials

Vaccination Event

- Glatt reported that Senior Services Division partnered with SOU, Mercy Flights, Ashland Fire and Rescue to vaccinate 166 Seniors with the first of two COVID-19 vaccinations. Glatt will be organizing an event to administer the second dose for the 166 Seniors who participated

Cost Recovery

- Dials reported on the next steps of the cost recovery process, which includes a deeper analysis of the data that has been collected to find opportunities to increase cost recovery where needed. Additional reports will be brought to the Commissioners in the future along with a proposed cost recovery policy

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. E Main Park Contract Approval (Action)

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

- Staff is requesting to award a public contract to Terrain Landscape Architecture for design services for E Main Park
- A site survey and wetland mitigation plan have been completed and no wetlands were identified. Oregon Department of State Lands reviewed the report and agreed with this finding
- A public input session was held on October 24, 2019, where design elements and neighbor concerns were gathered. Approximately 60 citizens took part in this meeting. The neighbors and stakeholders are generally in favor of a new park with several key elements as set forth below:
 - Off-leash dog park
 - Bicycle pump track
 - Bicycle skills park area
 - Community garden
 - Active and passive play areas
 - Walking trails
 - Open space

- APRC published a request for Proposals – Qualification Based Selection was issued on October 30, 2020
 - Four proposals were received and reviewed by a six-member team
 - Terrain Landscape Architecture received the top rank
- Terrain Landscape Architects provided a quote of \$107,000
- Food and Beverage funds are being utilized for the design phase; Food and Beverage funds as well as proceeds for the sale of other properties will be utilized for construction of the park
- The image on the first page of the response to the request for proposal from Terrain Landscape Architects is for illustrative purposes and does not represent specific design plans
- Eldridge commented about the lack of bicycle access to this location from other parts of town and inquired if there are plans for connectivity to other bicycle facilities in town
 - Black stated that APRC wants to think outside of park boundaries about how people will access parks and it is possible that the bicycle and pedestrian facilities will need to be upgraded on Main St., but that there are not other plans at this point for connection to regional bicycle facilities, such as the Central Bike Path. Black added that it is possible to work on connectivity issues for the park in the future; the funds that are currently available will be dedicated for the construction of the park; grant funds could be secured for connectivity projects
 - Landt stated the location was a compromise based on available land to locate the bicycle skills park and pump track and that a more central location would have been ideal
 - Lewis stated that years into the future this could become a more centralized location based on future build out
- Per public procurement laws this contract will need to be approved by City Council. If approved by Commissioners, this could go before the City Council on March 16, 2021. Black encouraged Commissioners to attend the City Council meeting
- Prior to the motion, Commissioner Eldridge lost connectivity as was removed from the meeting for a short period

Motion: Landt moved to approve the E Main Park contract for landscape design services to Terrain Landscape Architecture. Seconded by Bell.

Discussion: Bell stated a desire to have a role in selecting plants that will be planted in the park.

Vote: Landt, Bell, Lewis and Gardiner voted yes; Eldridge was absent due to lost internet connectivity (Eldridge stated support later in the meeting for moving forward with the contract and would have voted yes if present).

2. Biennium Budget Presentation/Approval (Action)

Black provided a [PowerPoint presentation](#), which referenced items in the [staff report included in the meeting packet](#). The following items were discussed:

Central Service Fees – [37:20 in the video](#)

- These are services are provided to ARPC and city departments by the City of Ashland for services such as IT, Human Resources, Legal, Payroll, etc.
- City of Ashland Central Service Fees are increasing significantly, by an additional \$558,846 per fiscal year for a total of \$1,117,692 for the biennium
 - Central Service Fees will now cost APRC \$1,762,356 for the biennium, which includes the stated increase
 - The City of Ashland is stating that these fees have not been consistently or accurately applied to APRC or city departments over the years
 - The City of Ashland is stating that the increase in fees represents actual costs that are now being applied proportionally and is seeking to have APRC and city departments cover 100% of the costs provided to each individual unit
- Black stated that the percentage allocation makes sense but there is a question of if the money being charged is appropriate for the kinds of services being provided and that a performance audit would need to be completed to make this determination

Revenue for the Biennium – [58:43 in the video](#)

- Revenue sources included in the budget for the upcoming biennium include:
 - Property Tax \$11,105,878 – 73%
 - Maintenance Agreements \$475,262 – 3% (City of Ashland and Ashland School District)
 - Recreation – Charges for Facilities and Services - \$1,368,442 – 9% (includes Senior Services Division revenue)
 - Misc./Grants - \$1,010,000 – 7% (includes \$400K per year coming into operations from Food & Beverage; the rest is grants)
 - Carry Forward Funds (ending funds balance) - \$1,300,000 – 8% (one-time funding being used to cover operating expenses)
 - \$2.1 million are from sources that are not typically used for annual operating costs
 - Ending fund \$1,300,000

- F&B \$800,000 (expected income over the next two years is \$1.2 million)
- Spending \$1.3 million of the ending fund balance will leave APRC with a projected \$200,000 at the end of the next biennium
- Employee costs such as PERS and health insurance will continue to increase along with other expenses outside of the control of APRC, such as utilities and that there will not be an available ending fund balance to use to make future budgets work based on the current funding model
- Black stated that APRC is losing funds that were once expected (property tax funds) in order to balance the city budget
 - Black stated APRC is now receiving \$1.89 per thousand of assessed value. In the past APRC typically received \$2.09 per thousand of assessed value
 - Black recommended that the budget submitted to City Council not seek \$2.09 per thousand at this time because he thinks that building a budget based on \$1.89 per thousand is feasible and more likely to be approved by the City Council
- Eldridge stated concern for not have a reliable funding source from budget cycle to budget cycle, which created difficulties for planning purposes and inquired about the ramifications of drawing down the ending fund balance
 - Black clarified that this budget would draw the ending fund balance below what is required in the newly adopted policy by the City Council, which calls for the departmental ending fund balances to maintain at least 25% of their budget. The main purpose of this policy is to ensure cash flow. This is less important for APRC since the City of Ashland covers expenses and that APRC will not be put into a situation where bills will not be able to be paid. Black provided a summary of past APRC ending funds balances:
 - 2014 - \$1 million
 - 2016 - \$2 million
 - 2017 - \$321K
 - 2018 - \$866K
 - 2019 - \$866K
 - 2020 - \$1 million
 - 2021 - \$1.5 million (this amount includes \$300,000 that previously thought would be withheld by the City of Ashland)
 - Black stated that it is undesirable to spend one-time funds on operational costs, but it is necessary at this point in time to make sure that levels of services are maintained as much as possible
- Landt stated using one-time funds is justifiable because this is an emergency situation and that the funding model will need to change or APRC will be in the same situation two years from now
- Lewis stated that the ending funds balance in 2016 was taken away by the City Administrator at that time, which is the reason for the sharp decrease in ending balances between 2016 and 2017
- Bell inquired about the process for communicating directly with the members of the City Council on budgetary matters
 - Gardiner stated individual Commissioners are welcome to contact individual City Councilors at their discretion and that if stable funding is not provided it may be necessary to cut programs in the future

Recreation Revenue - [1:30:48 in video](#)

Dials provided the following information on budgeted recreation revenue

- Dials referenced the slide on [page 12 of the presentation](#)
- The golf course was closed for only one month during COVID restrictions and had been steadily bringing in revenue and is one of two recreation revenue sources where the budget will be increasing
 - 19-21 Budget = \$618,875
 - 21-23 Budget = \$780,650
- Community Gardens is the other revenue source where the budget will be increasing by \$1,692 because that program has been able to continue
- All other revenue sources remain shut down and are budgeted to bring in less revenue than in previous budgets
- The Recreation Division is budgeting with caution because of the uncertainty of when facilities will be able to open and programs resume

Expenses for the Biennium

Black reviewed a pie chart in the presentation indicating the distribution of expenses

- Ops and Open Space - \$6,703,704, 44%
- Central Service Fees 2,722,048, 18%
- Recreation - \$1,912,019, 13%
- Golf Course - \$1,234,675, 8%
- Admin \$1,147,000, 8%
- Senior Services - \$783,381, 5%
- Nature Center - \$568,824, 4%
- Facilities - \$37,260, >1%

Black reviewed a pie chart in the presentation identifying Expenses by Type

- Personnel - \$8,916,820, 59%
- City Central Service Fees - \$2,722,048, 18%
- Materials and Services - \$2,540,505, 17%
- Utilities - \$930,132, 6%

Personnel Expenses

- FTE are being reduced from 39.75 (current biennium) to 34.75 (next biennium) Note: it was mistakenly stated in meeting that the next biennium FTE count would be 35.75
- The total PERS / Healthcare increase is \$90,000, which is less than what is expected
- COLA is budgeted to increase in both fiscal years
- Admin staff are now being accounted for within the divisions they are supporting rather than allocating 100% of costs directly to Admin
- Temp employees are increasing in the Maintenance Division and Golf
- Operations includes facility maintenance and custodial services
- Two of the three Office Assistant position that were laid off will not be filled in the current biennium
- Temporary employees have been decreased because of decreased operations at the ice rink and pool
- Senior Services Division FTE level will remain the same at 2.75
 - The increase in budget represents Admin staff allocation to the Senior Services Division

Proposed Personnel	FY20 Actual	FY21 Budget	Proposed FY22	Proposed FY23	Total BN 22/23
Admin	\$ 512,262	\$ 533,922	\$ 375,399	\$ 384,620	\$ 760,019
Open Space, Trails & Forestry	\$ 418,779	\$ 410,919	\$ 585,297	\$ 600,788	\$ 1,186,085
Operations	\$ 1,592,558	\$ 1,848,818	\$ 1,714,214	\$ 1,760,571	\$ 3,474,785
Rec Admin	\$ 282,407	\$ 341,040	\$ 293,796	\$ 301,549	\$ 595,345
Rec Programs	\$ 407,830	\$ 446,442	\$ 397,609	\$ 403,951	\$ 801,560
Facilities-Community Center/Pioneer Hall	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Nature Center	\$ 296,417	\$ 331,157	\$ 240,284	\$ 246,709	\$ 486,993
Golf	\$ 423,566	\$ 474,452	\$ 458,694	\$ 468,608	\$ 927,302
Senior Services	\$ 278,396	\$ 312,315	\$ 337,689	\$ 347,042	\$ 684,731
Total Proposed Personnel	\$ 4,212,216	\$ 4,699,064	\$ 4,402,982	\$ 4,513,838	\$ 8,916,820

Materials and Services Expenses

- Black displayed a table for Materials and Services expenses: Note: the last column in the table below should read Total BN 22/23
- Central Service Fees are included as an Admin Expense
- Discretionary spending was cut to some extent – generally 10%
- Open Space Trails and Forestry is increasing to account for an increase in wildlife mitigation work
- Operations is decreasing resulting in some deferred maintenance
- The Rec Admin decreases are mainly due to a decrease in advertising, the largest expense being the PlayGuide
- Approximately \$24,000 of the increase in golf is allocated for irrigation water. Other increases are pro shop expenses that will be offset by revenue
- Glatt stated \$20K of the annual expenses goes to Pathways to clean the facility, which is a requirement of the housing the Food & Friends program

- A portion of the increase to Senior Services is due to a change in accounting of how instructors are compensated (Glatt originally stated this amount was listed in personnel, which was a misstatement). There are likely to be fewer classes in FY22 due to COVID restrictions which is why FY23 increases more

Proposed M&S	FY20 Actual	FY21 Budget	Proposed FY22	Proposed FY23	Total BN 22/22
Admin	\$ 774,930	\$ 784,863	\$ 1,553,903	\$ 1,555,684	\$ 3,109,587
Open Space, Trails & Forestry	\$ 62,477	\$ 86,675	\$ 77,650	\$ 77,770	\$ 155,420
Operations	\$ 900,513	\$ 973,860	\$ 959,475	\$ 927,975	\$ 1,887,450
Rec Admin	\$ 86,147	\$ 102,780	\$ 82,000	\$ 82,300	\$ 164,300
Rec Programs	\$ 129,871	\$ 189,102	\$ 175,444	\$ 175,370	\$ 350,814
Facilities-Community Center/Pioneer Hall	\$ 17,907	\$ 31,200	\$ 18,630	\$ 18,630	\$ 37,260
Nature Center	\$ 40,555	\$ 46,350	\$ 40,115	\$ 41,715	\$ 81,831
Golf	\$ 154,788	\$ 121,850	\$ 150,124	\$ 157,249	\$ 307,373
Senior Services	\$ 39,243	\$ 42,365	\$ 46,800	\$ 51,850	\$ 98,650
Total Proposed M&S	\$ 2,206,432	\$ 2,379,045	\$ 3,104,141	\$ 3,088,543	\$ 6,192,685

- Dials stated some services will be impacted because of budget reductions and a loss of personnel, including opening the pool on a limited basis and suspending the Bike Swap. The Nature Center programs will be impacted as well
 - Landt stated that the pool should remain open daily if it is possible to do so
 - Dials stated that the limited opening is a result of limited funds and that other programs would need to be cut to open the pool daily
 - Black stated that it would be possible for Commissioners to direct some of the CIP funds currently allocated for pool construction to be transferred to cover an increase in operational expenses to have the pool open daily
 - Bell stated support for moving these funds and inquired if an increase in fees has been considered
 - Dials stated that an increase in fees have not been considered at this time and that revenue received from renting the pool to private groups covers the expenses for the pool during the time of rental
 - Landt stated support for moving the funds for operational costs
 - Dials stated approximately \$27,000 for staff time would be needed, per season, to open the pool 7 days per week
- Black displayed a table of total expenses: Note: the last column in the table below should read Total BN 22/23

Total Proposed Operating Expenses	FY20 Actual	FY21 Budget	Proposed FY22	Proposed FY23	Total BN 22/22
Admin	\$ 1,287,191	\$ 1,318,785	\$ 1,929,302	\$ 1,940,304	\$ 3,869,606
Open Space, Trails & Forestry	\$ 481,257	\$ 497,594	\$ 662,947	\$ 678,558	\$ 1,341,505
Operations	\$ 2,493,071	\$ 2,822,678	\$ 2,673,689	\$ 2,688,546	\$ 5,362,235
Rec Admin	\$ 368,554	\$ 443,820	\$ 375,796	\$ 383,849	\$ 759,645
Rec Programs	\$ 537,701	\$ 635,544	\$ 573,053	\$ 579,321	\$ 1,152,374
Facilities-Community Center/Pioneer Hall	\$ 17,907	\$ 31,200	\$ 18,630	\$ 18,630	\$ 37,260
Nature Center	\$ 336,973	\$ 377,507	\$ 280,399	\$ 288,424	\$ 568,824
Golf	\$ 578,354	\$ 596,302	\$ 608,818	\$ 625,857	\$ 1,234,675
Senior Services	\$ 317,639	\$ 354,680	\$ 384,489	\$ 398,892	\$ 783,381
Total	\$ 6,418,648	\$ 7,078,109	\$ 7,507,123	\$ 7,602,381	\$ 15,109,505

- Black summarized that the budget being presented is unsustainable, but necessary to maintain as many as the services provided as possible. It will be necessary to address revenue sources over the next two years because APRC will no longer have ending balance funds that can be utilized to balance the budget and significant changes to the work force would be necessary
 - Landt stated the following:
 - Additional cuts would result in further deterioration of parks and added that APRC maintenance staff has been reduced from historic levels while having more acres to maintain
 - The rough edges around the parks are visible, part of which is due to the decision, widely supported by community members, to go herbicide free, which increased maintenance
 - Over the next two years it will be necessary to find additional revenue sources or come to terms that the quality of parks will diminish
 - Black stated there are options for revenue that need to be diligently sought over the next two years

- Black displayed 2021-23 Biennium Budget

2021-23 BIENNIUM BUDGET PREVIEW

<u>Total Proposed Operating Expenses</u>	<u>Total BN FY19-21</u>	<u>Total BN 22/23</u>	
Admin	\$ 2,627,984	\$ 3,869,606	147%
Open Space, Trails & Forestry	\$ 985,619	\$ 1,341,505	136%
Operations	\$ 5,595,431	\$ 5,362,235	96%
Rec Admin	\$ 892,741	\$ 759,645	85%
Rec Programs	\$ 1,255,452	\$ 1,152,374	92%
Facilities - Community Center/Pioneer Hall	\$ 62,400	\$ 37,260	60%
Nature Center	\$ 747,391	\$ 568,823	76%
Golf	\$ 1,195,850	\$ 1,234,675	103%
Senior Services	\$ 700,180	\$ 783,381	112%
Total	\$ 14,063,048	\$ 15,109,504	107%

- Black stated the budget is going up 7%, all of which are the Central Service Fees

Black stated this is the budget staff supports taking the budget presented to the Budget Committee and City Council for adoption and that this budget will allow APRC to continue providing a level of service acceptable to the community and that there is work to be done over the next two years to increase revenue sources.

Motion: Landt moved to approve the budget as presented with the only addition being to take money from pool food and beverage money to allow increased pool hours of operation to be consistent with historical hours of operation. Seconded by Bell.

Discussion: Lewis inquired if this motion approves the CIP budget. Black responded that the CIP budget will be presented and approved at a later meeting.

Vote: The vote was all yes.

Black stated the budget will be presented to the Budget Committee and then the City Council for final approval.

VII. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS/STAFF

Bell stated the Climate Policy Commission approached him and stated that there is the potential for energy loss from the pool not being enclosed and stated there would be value in determining cost of enclosing the pool compared to the potential energy that would be lost. Bell inquired if the pool designer could look into this. Bell asked for more detail about the lifespan of the heat pump system that was proposed. Bell added that pursuing solar may not be cost effective since cheap energy can be purchased from the Bonneville Power Station. Black stated a need to meet again about the pool and that there may be a need to do a change order for the contract to have the designer take a look at more options.

Landt stated the ground coupled heat pump concept has been looked at thoroughly and that local experts he has consulted with have stated that should be the most efficient way to heat the pool.

Black stated the Ashland Planning Commissioner met March 9, 2021 and the Walker School parking lot was on the agenda. The Ashland School District (ASD) requested access to Hunter Court at the February 10, 2021 Parks Commission meeting. ASD never met with APRC staff subsequent to that meeting and presented a plan to the Planning Commissioner that does not access Hunter Court. Black made a comment at the meeting expressing the concerns raised at the February 10, 2021 meeting relating to pedestrian safety.

Commissioners discussed possible topics for Park Views articles.

Black reported that the grant application submitted to OR Dept of Transportation to construct a bike/pedestrian bridge over Bear Creek bridge linking Nevada St and Kestral Park scored highly and there is potential that this grant will be awarded.

VIII. UPCOMING MEETING DATES

1. APRC Study Session — April 7, 2021
 - Electronic Meeting—6:00 p.m.
2. APRC Regular Business Meeting — April 14, 2021
 - Electronic Meeting—6:00 p.m.
3. Bee City USA — April 28, 2021
 - Electronic Meeting —2:00 p.m.
4. Ashland Senior Advisory Committee – May 3, 2021
 - Electronic Meeting —3:30 p.m.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Sean Sullivan, Executive Assistant