

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

May 11, 2022

Electronic Meeting – 6 p.m.

Present: Commissioners Landt (Chair), Lewis (Vice-Chair), Bachman, Bell (joined at 6:03 p.m. during the Directors Report), Eldridge, Director Black, Deputy Director Dials, Senior Services Superintendent Glatt, Analyst Kiewel, Manager Sullivan

Absent: None

This meeting was recorded by Rogue Valley Television (RVTV). Links to recorded meetings can be found on the [City of Ashland website](#).

I. CALL TO ORDER

Landt called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

APRC Regular Business Meeting – April 13, 2022

Motion: Bachman moved to approve the Minutes from April 13, 2022, as submitted. Seconded by Lewis

Vote: The vote was all yes

III. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

a) Subcommittee Minutes Acknowledgment

- [Trails Master Plan Review Committee – November 29, 2021](#)
- [Trails Master Plan Review Committee – December 14, 2021](#)
- [Trails Master Plan Review Committee \(Wonder Trail Working Group\) – February 7, 2022](#)
- [Trails Master Plan Review Committee \(Alice in Wonderland Working Group\) – February 15, 2022](#)
- [Recreation Division Advisory Committee – February 17, 2022](#)
- [Golf Course Subcommittee – March 29, 2022](#)

Motion: Lewis moved to acknowledge the subcommittee minutes on the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Bachman

Vote: The vote was all yes

V. DIRECTORS REPORT

Black reported on the following items:

- Starting June 1, Ashland Senior Center and the Senior Services Office will be closed on Fridays due to loss of Office Assistant II, who will not be replaced due to hiring freeze and budget cuts. No senior activities will be canceled, but two activities are being moved to another day. Staff will still be working in the building on Fridays, but not answering the phone or door. Food & Friends will unlock the front door 11 a.m.-1 p.m. on Fridays to serve lunch. Division staff will secure the building after they leave
- Rogue Valley Bird Day on Sat, May 14, 8 a.m.-Noon at North Mountain Park. A local celebration of an international event called, "World Migratory Bird Day." The theme this year is, "Dim the Lights for Birds at Night"
- The 7th Annual Ashland World Music Festival will take place in person over Memorial Weekend. The festival features multiple events at various locations in Ashland
- Registration is open for the 46th Annual 4th of July Run. Two routes will be offered, a 10K and a 2-mile fun run. This event benefits in part the Ashland and Phoenix High School Cross Country Teams
- Registration for early sessions of Swim Lessons at the Daniel Meyer Memorial Pool will open on May 24
- APCR has an open application process for those interested in serving on the RDAC- Recreation Division Advisory Committee

VI. PUBLIC FORUM (moved to after Directors Report to accommodate late arrival of speaker)

Albert Pepe of Ashland stated that E Main Park was discussed at the last meeting and spoke in favor of establishing a food share garden as large as 1-acre and added the following items: This use is Educational and is a more sustainable model. Rogue Valley Farm to School is interested in finding a location in Ashland to establish a food share garden. Pepe asked Commissioners to consider something more than a standard community garden and stated he would like to participate in the planning of E Main Park.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) **Oak Knoll Irrigation – vote to not use of City of Ashland potable water for irrigation (Action)**

Black referenced the [staff report included in the meeting packet](#) and stated the following:

- A presentation on the status of water availability at the golf course at the May 4, 2022, Study Session
- Available Talent Irrigation District (TID) is not going to be enough to meet the irrigation needs of the golf course. There are not enough funds available to use culinary water for irrigation purposes at the golf course
- Commissioners supported staff plan to not use culinary water at the golf course and directed staff to put this item on the business meeting agenda so a motion can be made to that effect

PUBLIC INPUT

Jim Hatton of Ashland stated that no analysis has been completed and that an irrigation expert would be able to handle the situation better. Hatton provide the following comments: The greens are not being maintained properly and staff is looking for excuses rather than a solution. Staff seems to be incompetent and lazy and there is a hidden agenda. Rumors have started about the course being closed. More women and younger people are playing golf. It is possible to predict how much water is needed and will likely not be that much. Golfers pay to play, and the course should stay open and be managed properly.

DISCUSSION

Black clarified that the item being considered is not about closing the golf course. The question before the Commissioners is whether culinary water should be used to irrigate the golf course.

- Bell stated a concern at the last meeting and wanted Commissioners to actively decide on irrigation. Bell added that this is not a complex decision. The simple equation is that there is not enough money to pay for culinary water and would not be a good use of natural resources and that it is likely that Ashland will call for water curtailment over the summer. Bell concluded that many people care about the golf course, and this is a decision that should be made by the Commissioners

Motion: Bachman move to suspend watering Oak Knoll golf Course with potable water whether from Ashland or TAP (Talent, Ashland, Phoenix) unless the policy is reversed. Bell Seconded

Discussion: Bachman stated that he included TAP in the motion because it would be best to not use any source of potable water because of the ongoing water crisis. Bachman added that when possible APRC should move away from using potable water and clarified that TAP water is delivered through Phoenix and Talent and supplied because of Lost Creek Lake water rights held by Ashland.

Lewis stated he is concerned that trees that were recently planted at an Arbor Day event still need to be irrigated or they could be lost and would like to know what the plan is for watering trees at the golf course.

Black stated that there is still water in the pond and there is an expectation of receiving some amount of TID water. Some trees may need to be hand watered using water tanks and that staff will come back to the Commissioners if there is a need to use culinary water at the golf course. Lewis added that young trees need water in August and September and there needs to be a plan to provide water to the trees on the golf course.

Bell stated support for saving trees but does not think there is a meaningful difference between the trees and grass. His personal priority is that money is not spent on potable water to irrigate the golf course. Eldridge stated that should the time come in August and September, it is worth coming to Commissioners again and would like receive information on the situation. Bachman clarified that a policy adopted by Commissioners can always be reversed should it be necessary to do so.

Vote: The vote was all yes

Eldridge reiterated a request made at the Study Session for staff to provide an economic analysis and usage report of the golf course.

b) Parks, Trails, and Open Space Program Map Revision (Information)

Landt summarized the [staff report included in the meeting packet](#). The [Parks & Open Space chapter of the City's Comprehensive Plan](#) and the accompanying [Map](#) was last reviewed, updated and approved by Ashland's City Council in 2002. Typically, the reviews occur every 10 years. The current park system is consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and all purchases of parks property were approved by City Council decisions. It is past time for the plan/map to be updated to reflect current needs and realities on the ground.

- Black displayed slides that included the proposed goals of the Process
 1. Determine if there are properties on the Plan Map that given today's realities could/should be removed from the Plan.
 2. Get the Plan Map to align with current and future acquisition realities.
 3. Provide a full opportunity for the public and stakeholders to provide input.
 4. Review current and past goals to determine if they are met and therefore can be celebrated.
 5. Review current and past goals to see if they need to be modified to meet current financial and system realities.
- Black displayed the Parks, Trails, and Open Space Program [Map](#)
 - Landt pointed out two properties on the map (#13 & #14) and that are no longer viable to acquire, but they are still listed on the map, which illustrates the need to update the map
- Landt stated additional goals could be added by Commissioners, staff, or stakeholders
- Black displayed a slide laying out proposed steps to accomplish the goals
 1. Notify stakeholders like Ashland Soccer Club, RVMB (Rogue Valley Mountain Bike Association), Ashland Woodland Trails Association, and others of our intent and invite them to participate.
 2. Review input from stakeholders.
 3. Form a working group to consider input and write recommendations.
 4. Present the recommendations before at least two APRC public meetings.
 5. Commissioners to vote on finalized recommendations.
 6. Forward recommendations to the City of Ashland Community Development Department and City Council.
- Landt stated that some stakeholders have been contacted and asked for input. Black added that stakeholders can be involved in working groups when those are formed

Landt stated that at this point the plan is to continue with steps 1 and 2 to continue moving forward.

c) Proposal for Security Camera Use at Perimeter of Japanese Garden (Action)

Black reviewed the [staff report](#) and displayed [slides illustrating recent vandalism](#) occurring in Ashland Parks. The presentation included the following points:

- Staff and volunteers spend a significant amount of time dealing with vandalism, which has increased recently
- Black displayed a [site plan \(pg. 9\)](#) identifying the proposed location of the cameras at the four corners of the Japanese Garden. Black later clarified that the site plan is a generalization and final placement of the cameras will take coverage into consideration
- Black stated the cameras will help protect the Japanese Garden, which has significant value
- Toru Tanaka, the designer of the garden, has provided design specs for the housing of the cameras that would be consistent with the design of the garden
- The garden will be staffed by volunteers and paid staff, partially paid for through a grant that spans a 10-year period
- Staff is asking Commissioners to consider the use of cameras at the garden with the following conditions:
 1. The cameras will be located on poles that have been designed to align with the aesthetic and cultural design of the Japanese Garden, as shown in the exhibits.

2. The cameras will only record during hours that the Japanese Garden is not staffed.
 3. The cameras will only be used as a deterrent and to aid in identification and prosecution of individuals who commit crimes of vandalism, theft or other illegal activity associated with Lithia Park or the Japanese Garden.
 4. Installation, including materials, will be paid for by the Ashland Parks Foundation (APF)
- Installation will be covered through a grant from APF made possible through a donation made by Jeff Mangin
 - Black noted that cameras have been used recently to apprehend people who graffiti more than one park property
 - Black clarified that there will be signage stating the presence of cameras, but the signage will be modest and will fit the aesthetic of the garden
 - Black clarified that the location of the cameras will provide coverage of a majority of the perimeter and inside the garden. The final placement of the cameras will be done in consultation with security professionals

Motion: Eldridge moved to approve the recommended installation and practice if the limited use security cameras for the Japanese Garden as described in the staff report and including the following conditions:

1. Costs will be covered by a grant through the Ashland Parks Foundation
2. The cameras will be located on poles that have been designed to mesh with the aesthetic and cultural design of the Japanese Garden, as shown in the exhibits.
3. The cameras will only record during hours that the Japanese Garden is not staffed.
4. The cameras will only be used as a deterrent and to aid in identification and prosecution of individuals who commit crimes of vandalism, theft or other illegal activity associated with Lithia Park or the Japanese Garden.

Seconded by Bell

Discussion: None

Vote: The vote was all yes

d) Budget Adjustments per City of Ashland Manager, 5% - 10% reduction (Possible Action)

Black reviewed the [staff report](#). The presentation included the following points:

- The City Manager has informed all General Fund (GF) departments and APRC that there will be amendments to the next fiscal year, 22-23, GF (General Fund) revenue allocation. Staff is preparing for a 5%-10% cut in GF contributions next fiscal year, which begins on July 1, 2022
- Staff developed a conceptual plan for budget reductions and presented this to Commissioners at the April business meeting
- The City Manager recently informed staff that the reduction now includes Food & Beverage (F & B) funds, which was understood to be outside of the original budget reduction. The new calculations of a 5%-10% reduction for GFs and F & B Funds that APRC is required to present is as follows:
 - 5% = \$275,000; 10% = 550,000
- Black displayed a table that identifies APRC funding sources and how those funds are distributed

Distributions of Funds

	Rec Revenue	Contracts	F&B	City	Grants	CIP	Other	Carry forward
Parks Admin	\$1,930,045.00		\$ 118,857.00	\$1,696,188.00	\$ 75,000.00		\$40,000.00	
Parks Ops	\$2,600,216.00	\$238,131.00	\$1,887,085.00		\$ 40,000.00	\$435,000.00		
Rec Admin	\$ 373,483.00	\$ 44,000.00		\$ 329,483.00				
Rec Programs	\$ 603,971.00	\$229,250.00		\$ 373,721.00	\$ 1,000.00			
Community Center	\$ 18,630.00	\$ -		\$ 18,630.00				
Nature Center	\$ 271,563.00	\$ 13,300.00		\$ 255,963.00	\$ 2,300.00			
Golf	\$ 620,618.00	\$408,300.00		\$ 212,318.00				
Senior Services	\$ 401,824.00	\$ 16,000.00		\$ 385,824.00				
Open Space/Trails	\$ 668,963.00			\$ 274,870.00				\$394,093.00
Contingency/Unappropriated	\$ 332,174.00							\$332,174.00
	\$7,821,487.00	\$710,850.00	\$2,005,942.00	\$3,546,997.00	\$118,300.00	\$435,000.00	\$40,000.00	\$726,267.00

- Black pointed out that the \$408,300 of the golf budget comes from revenue earned through the golf course. The remaining budget, \$212,318, come from the City of Ashland GF. The GF covered one maintenance employee and materials and supplies. If the golf course were to be closed there would still be expenses to provide basic maintenance for the property, resulting in a small amount of savings if the course were to be closed (Black illustrated this as marked up below).

\$ -	\$ 18,630.00							
\$ 13,300.00	\$ 255,963.00	\$ 2,300.00						
\$408,300.00	\$ 212,318.00							
\$ 16,000.00	\$ 385,824.00							\$394,093.00
	\$ 274,870.00							\$332,174.00
\$710,850.00	\$238,131.00	\$2,005,942.00	\$3,546,997.00	\$118,300.00	\$435,000.00	\$40,000.00	\$726,267.00	

- Golf Superintendent
 - Golf Business Manager
 - Temp/PT Employees
 - Materials and Services – Club House
- Park Tech 1
 - Materials and Services - Grounds

- The Parks Admin line includes almost \$1,000,000 that goes back to the City of Ashland to provide central services such as IT and payroll.
- Black displayed the [APRC org chart](#) and made the following points:
 - Per the City Charter, the Commissioners have the authority to determine how to make the cuts
 - APRC currently has 34.75 regular employees
 - APRC has eliminated seven (7) positions in recent years (displayed in red on the chart)
 - There are positions (displayed in blue on the chart) that are funded through recreation revenue and not through the GF tax dollars
- Black displayed the conceptual plan for the additional cuts of 5% = \$275,000 and 10% = 550,000. This is a staff recommendation. Commissioners will determine specific cuts once the dollar amount of cuts has been finalized by the City of Ashland.
 - 5% Budget Cuts – Including Food & Beverage = \$275,000
 - Consulting Fees – Legal: 53,500
 - Equipment Replacement: 25,000
 - Materials &Supplies: 25,000

- Personnel Reductions (1.25 FTE) 109,000
- Temp Employees: 50,000
- Management Furlough: 12,500
- 10% Budget Cuts – Including Food & Beverage = \$550,000
 - Same as above with the additional changes
 - Equipment Replacement goes from \$25,000 to \$50,000
 - Personnel Reductions goes from 1.25 FTE/\$109,000 to 4.0 FTE/\$359,000
 - Black noted that it is likely that programs will need to be cut to accomplish reducing the workforce by 4 FTE. Commissioners will need to determine these cuts and there is no way to make this many cuts without reducing services provided to the community
- Black noted that the City Council has the authority to allocate funds to APRC and the level of allocations is at the discretion of the City Council

QUESTIONS

- Bell stated that the Commissioners have had discussion in the past about outsourcing administrative services that the City of Ashland currently provides to APRC and asked if this is a viable option
 - Black stated that this issue has not been resolved and is ripe for discussion. It was presented to the City at the request of Commissioners and it was never addressed by the City of Ashland
- Black reiterated that it was previously understood that F & B funds were not going to be included in the amount that needed to be cut. That has now changed, per the City Manager, and that is why the amounts to be cut have increased
 - Bell stated he does not understand the benefit of taking away F & B funds from APRC because those funds cannot be used by departments that are funded from the GF
 - Black confirmed that, aside from APRC, F & B funds can only be used by the Streets Department, and they are already fully funded
- Black clarified that the \$50,000 for each fiscal year (\$100,000 total for the current biennium) has been budgeted and some of those funds will likely be expended. These fees are outside of central service fees
- Black clarified that the \$25,000 reduction in M & S (materials and supplies) will be spread-out through all APRC divisions

DISCUSSION

- Landt stated that it seems that it would be useful for the Commissioners to vote on the conceptual plan presented by staff
- Bell asked if it is possible to get more clarification on central services fees before consideration on cutting staff
 - Black stated that there are no actions that can be taken on central service fees in the short-term and added there are vacant staff positions that are generally funded through central service fees, but APRC is still paying the full central service fee
- Black stated that it is important that Commissioners vote on the conceptual plan and note that once the amount that needs to be cut is determined, Commissioners will be making detailed decisions on which services will be cut
 - Bachman stated he is okay with a motion if it is to authorize the Director to speak with the City Manager about potential cuts, but should not give the impression that this would be a final approval of this model
 - Black reiterated that the plan is conceptual in nature and Commissioners will be making specific decisions on what will be cut at a future meeting once the City of Ashland determines how much APRC will need to cut from the next fiscal year budget and that an acknowledgment by the Commissioners would be helpful
 - Black reiterated that the City Manager is looking to reduce budgets for all GF departments, but it is likely that APRC will get cut more than other areas that provide health, safety, and welfare services
- Landt read the following statement: "Commissioners are aware that significant cuts are necessary to meet the requested five and ten percent budget cuts. Director Black will be bringing his conceptual cuts to City Council"

Motion: Bachman moved to approve the statement just read by Commissioner Landt as acknowledging Director Black working with the City Manager. Seconded by Bell

Discussion: None

Vote: The vote was all yes

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

None

IX. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS/STAFF

- Landt requested that the water priority list presented at the last meeting be uploaded to the website and Facebook page
- Lewis stated he attended the official opening of the Nature Play Area at North Mountain Park (postponed due to COVID) and said it was a great event
- Black stated that discussions on the Nutley Easement are continuing, and staff will report back at a future meeting

X. UPCOMING MEETING DATES

- a) APRC Study Session—June 1, 2022
 - Electronic Meeting—6 p.m.
- b) APRC Regular Business Meeting—June 8, 2022
 - TBD—6 p.m.
- c) Bee City USA Subcommittee—June 20, 2022
 - The Nature Center—3:00 p.m.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted
Sean Sullivan, Business Operations Manager