

**MINUTES FOR SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING
ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
January 6, 2022
Electronic Meeting – 10:00 AM.**

Present: Commissioners Gardiner (Chair), Landt (Vice-Chair), Bell, Eldridge, Lewis; Director Black; Deputy Director Dials; Senior Services Superintendent Glatt, Analyst Kiewel; Manager Sullivan; Councilor Graham

Absent: None

This meeting was recorded and uploaded to the APRC YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BFuSdx7curl>

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

II. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

III. PUBLIC FORUM

None

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. APRC Long-term Organizational & Funding Strategy Discussion (Possible Action)

Gardiner read the following statement: "Social media self-appointed budget watchdogs and some council members have really misrepresented APRC's concerns about future city funding. Normally, this early January meeting, of this commission, would be to develop new goals for the coming biennium or just for the current goals for the coming year, but today we are here again to discuss our long-term organizational structure and funding strategies."

Black [read a statement into the record](#) detailing the services and programs APRC provides to Ashland residents. Black stated the following:

- At the Special Business Meeting on December 23, 2021 Commissioners approved to "formally request that City Council refer a \$2.09 levy to the May election and that we ask that they do that at the January 4 meeting and if they are unwilling to do that, we reserve the right to move forward with an initiative"
- The request was not placed on the City Council agenda, essentially denying the request
- Black recommended that Commissioners not pursue a May initiative. The timeline necessary to get something placed on the ballot is short and may not be successful. Additionally, Black stated that if there is support for a solution from the City Council, there is greater chance for success
- Black recommended working with the City to determine if both elected bodies can come together to reach the goals of both the City of Ashland and APRC and that Commissioners also establish timelines and expectations for the process to determine if and when it may be necessary to look to the November ballot for a solution if collaboration is not achieved through the city-led process
- Black and Landt drafted a letter that could be sent to the City Council if approved by Commissioners
 - The letter was [displayed on screen](#) (discussion of the letter begins at [18:52 in the recording](#))
- Black clarified that he has had conversations with Councilor Graham and there seems to be a commitment to work with Commissioners. While Black recommends that Commissioners attempt to work with the City Council, that would not preclude Commissioners from taking a different path at any point in time as the process unfolds
- Black recommended support for an APRC funding levy only if there are assurances from the City of Ashland that they will reduce the taxes currently being collected to fund APRC (\$1.89/\$1,000 of assessed value)
- Councilor Tonya Graham joined the meeting ([32:05 in the recording](#)) and provided an outline of the City of Ashland process in the works

- A survey, managed by SOU, will be sent out to all addresses that receive a City of Ashland utility bill in the fall of 2022
- The results would be returned and analyzed in the summer of 2022. The results would inform next steps taken by the City Council
- The Council has not determined the process for developing survey questions. Graham stated support for the involvement of Commissioners, but stated that the process will be determined by vote of the Council
 - Commissioners expressed concerns that the timeline of this process would not provide enough time to put something on the November ballot if Commissioners determined to be the best way forward to secure funding for APRC
- Graham suggested that the Commissioners send a letter to Mayor and Council expressing interest in being directly involved in the process to formulate survey questions
- The Council will hold listening sessions to receive input from the public
- Both reductions in services and revenue enhancements are on the table for consideration
- Graham left the meeting ([1:19:16 in the recording](#))
- Landt [provided edits to the letter](#) that was displayed earlier in the meeting. This letter will be sent to Commissioners for review and will be considered at the January 12, 2022 Regular Business Meeting
- Black was directed to provide the following information at the February 2 Study Session
 - Deadlines and requirements to place an initiative on the November 2022 ballot
 - Recommendations on holding APRC listening sessions that could be in collaboration with the City of Ashland outreach efforts
- Black stated he will work on providing multiple budget snapshots to illustrate different financial scenarios that could come to fruition
- Black was directed to draft a letter to Council expressing the Commissioners desire to be involved in formulating the survey questions

V. NEW BUSINESS

None

VI. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS/STAFF

Black commended maintenance staff on the clean-up efforts that are underway because of the recent winter storm

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Sean Sullivan, Business Operations Manager