

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

**April 13, 2022**

**Electronic Meeting – 6 p.m.**

Present: Commissioners Landt (Chair), Lewis (Vice-Chair), Bachman, Bell (joined at 6:02 p.m.) 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. and welcomed Commissioner Bachman to his first meeting

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

APRC Study Session – March 2, 2022

**Motion:** Lewis moved to approve the minutes from March 2, 2022, as presented. Seconded by Eldridge

**Vote:** Landt, Lewis and Eldridge voted yes; Bachman abstained

APRC Regular Business Meeting – March 9, 2022

**Motion:** Lewis moved to approve the minutes from March 9, 2022, as presented. Seconded by Landt

**Vote:** Landt, Lewis and Eldridge voted yes; Bachman abstained

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

Landt stated that agenda item, "City Manager Budget Memo Discussion," has been changed from Information to Possible Action

**IV. PUBLIC FORUM**

None

**V. CONSENT AGENDA**

a) Subcommittee Minutes Acknowledgment

- [Golf Course Subcommittee – December 1, 2021](#)
- [Ashland Senior Advisory Committee – January 10, 2022](#)
- [Bee City USA Subcommittee – February 22, 2022](#)

**Motion:** Bachman moved to approve the consent agenda. Seconded by Bell

**Vote:** The vote was all yes

**VI. DIRECTORS REPORT**

Black reported on the following items:

**Bike Swap-April 30<sup>th</sup>**

The 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Rogue Valley Bike Swap returns on Saturday, April 30, 2022. After a two-year hiatus the Rogue Valley Bike Swap offers the community a place to buy, sell, or donate a bike, parts, or accessories at the festive revival of this long-running annual event. Test ride an e-bike, register your bike with the Ashland Police Department, and learn about bike events and advocacy efforts in your community. A portion of each sale will go to fund youth bike education programs in local public schools. This event is made possible by Ashland Parks & Recreation Commission (APRC); RVTD (Rogue Valley Transportation District); and Get n' Gear. The bike swap was cut from the APRC budget in this current biennium but because of a unique partnership and collaboration with RVTD and Get-n-Gear, APRC was still able to sponsor and host the event. We are still looking for volunteers. call our Volunteer and Event Coordinator Sulaiman Shelton 541-552-2264 if interested. For information on the swap, visit <http://rvtd.org/bikeswap>

## Hiring Lifeguards and Swim Instructors for Daniel Meyer Pool

Starting: \$14-\$18.50/hr. Up to 30+ hours a week. Paid time for Training & Certification in *StarGuard Elite* and/or *Starfish Aquatics Institute* Swim Lessons. Regular on-the-job training and supportive performance evaluations. Join the team and experience the reward of working for your community while developing professional skills. APRC Staff will also be tabling at the SOU Job Fair on Wednesday, April 20.

## Summer PlayGuide

The 2022 Summer PlayGuide will launch on the website on Friday, April 15, and will also be mailed out to all Ashland households.

## Change to Trails Subcommittee Meeting-Tomorrow

The Trails Master Plan Review Subcommittee will reconvene on Thursday, April 14, after gathering in small working groups. The meeting will take place virtually, rather than gathering in Lithia Park, due to inclement weather.

## Mike Hersh Celebration of Life

There will be a celebration of life for volunteer and ASAC member Mike Hersh on Sunday, May 1, 2-4 p.m., on C Street between 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Streets in Ashland. The event is open to all. Ashland Senior Services Division, Ashland Police Department, Ashland Emergency Food Bank and ScienceWorks jointly nominated Hersh for the City's Ragland Memorial Volunteer Spirit Community Service Award. The winner will be announced at the April 19, 2022, City Council meeting.

## VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### a) APRC Subcommittee Assignments (Information)

Landt [displayed the assignments on-screen](#) and reviewed them.

- Landt clarified that there is only one Commissioner (Landt) appointed to the Lithia Park Master Plan Subcommittee because the process is almost complete, and it would take a long time to bring someone new up to speed. Mike Gardiner, who sat on this subcommittee as a Commissioner, will continue to serve on this subcommittee as a member of the public to provide continuity to the process.

There were no objections raised to the assignments made by Landt

## VIII. NEW BUSINESS

### a) Real Estate Donation – Hitt Road Parcels (Possible Action)

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

- Black displayed a [revised location map on-screen](#) that was not included in the packet
- APRC entertains property donations more likely than one might think, which often results in turning down the offer because the land would not benefit the parks and/or open space system
- The two properties being discussed tonight are adjacent to public works property that includes a water tank and an existing trail that connects to adjacent open space property managed by APRC. Black displayed a slide:

## Proposed Donation of Land



- **151 Birdsong:**
  - Owner: Strawberry Lane Meadows HOA
  - 1.09 Acres
  - Current sanctioned/maintained trail
- **142 Hitt Road:**
  - Owner: Falling Acorn Estates HOA
  - .57 Acres
  - Current sanctioned/maintained trail

- There is an existing trail that is maintained by APRC on 151 Birdsong; a very small portion of the trail is located on 142 Hitt Rd. Maintenance costs associated with the existing trail are minimal

- Ashland Fire and Rescue (AFR) will provide maintenance of the property for fire mitigation. APRC would continue to manage the trail
- The property owners have two conditions:
  - The property could not be developed and will remain open space
  - The transfer will not negatively affect Home Owners Association (HOA) member's lot coverage calculations (the planning department will need to weigh in on this)
- Black noted the land donation process: If the Commissioners would like to accept the donation, a recommendation to City Council would need to be made. If Council approved the donation, the land would be transferred into the City of Ashland's name. According to the Charter, the property would be under the control and management of APRC because it would be designated as open space and would show as parks managed properties (green) on maps rather than showing as yellow (city managed properties)
- Black is seeking direction on whether to move forward with the donation. If so, Black would determine if there are any associated costs to transfer the land

#### Questions & Discussion:

- Black clarified that there is one person who is a property owner in both HOAs and worked with both entities to bring these parcels forward as a donation and he could not speak as to what the HOAs see as a benefit to the offer
- Black clarified that the HOAs are currently responsible for fire mitigation on the property and the entire trail on these properties is currently being managed by APRC and that access to the trails would not be lost if the properties were not accepted
- Black stated that AFR has a desire to take over fire mitigation
- Bell stated the rationale for acquiring the Hitt Rd properties and other properties around the perimeter of Ashland is to assume responsibility and ensure fire mitigation efforts are done properly. Bell stated support for accepting the donation
- Black stated an assumption that the City of Ashland carries out fire mitigation on the public works property that contains the water tank but could not answer for sure
- Black clarified on the language in the Charter related to APRC managed properties
  - The City of Ashland is the legal owner and is listed on the title (this is the case for all parks properties including all parks such as Lithia Park)
  - The Charter delegates management and control of properties designated as parks or open space to APRC
  - Parks managed lands are shown on maps as green. City managed lands are shown as yellow on maps
- Black clarified that APRC maintains all of the trails on City and APRC managed lands and is in the process of formalizing this agreement with AFR
- Landt stated that it would be possible for the City of Ashland to accept these parcels as a donation
  - Black affirmed that this is possible and added that in the future APRC would not have control so if there was a desire to improve the area with amenities, APRC would not have the authority to make the improvements without permission from the City of Ashland
  - Black stated that, generally speaking, APRC manages and controls lands within city limits that are designated as open space. City owned properties in the watershed beyond city limits are managed by the City of Ashland (APRC maintains trails based on an agreement with AFR)
- Eldridge stated support for accepting the donation
- Lewis added that being in control of fuel management and having the ability to make improvements make this favorable for APRC to accept. He went on to say that the maintenance would be minimal for these properties
- Bachman stated general agreement and asked a clarifying question regarding the agreement with AFR to take responsibility for the wildfire mitigation
  - Black clarified the agreement (APRC manages trails and AFR assists with wildfire mitigation) is not contractual yet, but that process is underway
- Landt stated that this trail basically serves this small development and could not be heavily used by the public and is directly adjacent to City managed property. Landt stated another option is for APRC to continue to maintain the trail and have AFR take the lead on accepting the donation. He sees limited value in terms of upgrading this area with amenities. Landt went on to say that it makes sense to get it into City ownership, but the properties do not provide value to parks system so the City should take management of them
  - Bell and Eldridge stated that this trailhead is utilized by the public and not just by the people in the neighborhood
    - Landt reiterated that the trail would remain open to the public no matter who manages the land

- Lewis stated that the potential long-term value of this property could be considerable and that APRC is best suited to manage open space
- Bell inquired if there is a way to suggest that the city accept the donation of the properties
  - Black stated one way to address the adjacency issue Landt raised is to see if the City would like to release portions of their adjacent property that has the trail running through it for APRC to manage as open space and added that if Commissioners want him to talk to the City to see if they are interested in accepting the properties, he can do that
- Bachman stated his overriding concern is to maintain access to trails and since access will be maintained he prefers that the City take the properties because of budget pressures. Bachman suggested talking to the City to see if this is even a possibility
- Lewis stated that there would have been no question of APRC accepting these properties 10 years ago and suggested that the current political climate may be resulting in hesitancy to accept the properties. He added that APRC is best suited to manage properties as open space, which provides the most benefit to the community
- Eldridge restated support of APRC accepting the donation
- Bell stated the property will be best managed by APRC and supports accepting the donation
- Landt stated he would be more open to accepting these properties if the discussion with the City included transferring a portion of the adjacent City managed property (lot 201) to APRC to create a better link with the existing trail
- Eldridge stated that the situation of APRC accepting the land as open space and working with AFR on wildfire mitigation seems to be typical of how things have worked in the past
- Lewis stated the importance of public ownership of the Ashland urban wildlands interface and said APRC and AFR have worked together in the past to provide multiple community benefits

Black stated he will approach the City to discuss the points raised by Commissioners and will report back with a recommendation

#### **b) Open Space Plan Map Revision Update (Information)**

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

- Black displayed the [parks, trails and open space program map](#) included in the packet:
  - The map was last officially approved in 2002 and needs to be updated
  - Black Identified the Hitt Rd Parcel and the YMCA Park to illustrate that the status of properties have changed (Hitt Rd properties have been acquired and the YMCA Park has been sold)
  - It is standard practice to update master plans and this one is past due, and this is the start of that process
- Landt [displayed and read a statement](#) outlining his proposed process to update the map:
  - Notify stakeholders like Ashland Soccer Club, RVMBA, Ashland Woodland Trails Association, golf community and others of our intent and invite them to participate
  - Form a working group to consider input and write recommendations
  - Present the recommendations before at least two APRC public meetings
  - Commissioners to vote on finalized recommendations
  - Forward recommendations to the Community Development Department and City Council
- It was clarified that ecological and environmental considerations are taken into consideration when identifying lands and this factor is specifically spelled out in the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan
- Eldridge suggested utilizing the land analysis work done by Forest Land Commission when updating the map

Landt stated this is a kickoff of this process. No decisions are being made and there will be plenty of opportunities for public input. Gathering public input will be followed by a review of the input and deliberation before decisions are made.

#### **c) City Manager Budget Memo Discussion (Possible Action)**

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

- APRC General Fund revenue for FY22-23: \$3,547,000

- APRC and all City Departments funded through the general fund have been directed to provide a plan to cut 5% and 10% from the budget. City Departments that do not receive General Funds are not participating in this exercise
- Landt stated the City Manager has asked for this information and this is an exercise in budget planning
- The City Council will make decisions on the amount of money that is being cut and the Commissioners have the authority to decide about where the cuts are made within the APRC budget
  - It was clarified that APRC has control of funds once they are transferred. The City Council has the authority to allocate funds to APRC and allocations can be amended before they are transferred
- Target Reduction: 5% (\$175,000)
  - \$125,000 – Savings from Materials and Supplies, including fleet replacement
    - Pioneer Hall costs approximately \$20,000 per year to manage. APRC could decline management of this facility, reducing expenses by \$20,000
  - \$50,000 – Reorganization of Open Position
    - There is an open position that could be absorbed into another position (eliminating the open position without the need to lose existing staff)
- Target Reduction: 10% (\$350,000)
  - \$125,000 – Savings from Materials and Supplies, including fleet replacement (same as above)
  - \$50,000 – Reorganization of Open Position (same as above)
  - \$155,000 Staffing reductions through FTE (as little as 1) and Temp Employees (revenue generating programs staffed by temps would not be reduced such as the pool and ice rink)
  - \$20,000 Executive staff furlough (Director, Deputy Director and Superintendent level):
    - There is potential for management-level staff (those not eligible to join a union) to not receive a COLA to achieve reductions in conjunction with furloughs
- The actual decision on the cuts will be made down the road once the number necessary to cut from the budget has been determined. Staff is looking for input on this general strategy

#### DISCUSSION:

- Black clarified that there are 12-14 temp employees hired to operate the pool and reiterated that these temps will not be reduced because that would result in a loss in revenue, which would make savings in expenses null
- Black clarified that only non-revenue generating recreation programs and parks temps will be reduced and noted that the reduction in temp staff will result in reduced level of service
- Black clarified that if the golf course were to cease operations it would not result in significant savings
  - The golf operation revenue funded the club house staff
  - General Fund revenue (approximately \$270,000) funds the maintenance activities at the golf course and the property will still need to be maintained. Any savings on the maintenance side of the course, if it closes, is undetermined at this point and may not be significant
- Black stated that cutting funds allocated to hire consultants that have not been brought on yet will reduce expenses and not directly impact current offerings. It would have a negative impact for planning and future activities
  - Landt stated certain programs could be closed to provide immediate savings, such as the Senior Center and Nature Center, but cutting these programs would have far reaching impacts to the community. Landt added the proposal brought by staff protects these programs and minimizes impacts to the community as much as possible
- Black clarified that he is looking for direction stating that the Commissioners are okay with presenting these as options to meet a 5-10% cut in funding
- Bachman stated this is a great place to start and it is important to emphasize that this is a discussion and that the Commissioners will decide on specific cuts when the time comes. Bachman stated support:
  - Black clarified that the Charter states the Parks and Recreation Commissioners have control over funds that are received
- Eldridge stated support for the proposed discussion points and would like to see a specific economic analysis of the golf course and how much it would cost to minimally maintain the property if golf operations ceased (Landt noted this item will be on the May agenda)

- Lewis stated the Golf Committee is discussing this issue. Staff was directed to send the minutes of the last committee meeting to Commissioners
- Lewis referenced the past willingness of APRC to assist when financial times are tough and noted that APRC took over the management of the Senior Services Program from the City in 2009 when the City was not in a position to fund that program. No additional funds were provided to APRC when this occurred
- Bell requested a list of the consultants that would be cut and what projects they are working on and inquired about the cost recovery analysis that is underdevelopment
  - Black noted that the cost recovery analysis has more to do with determining how much to charge for programming and this analysis will help more with future revenue generation and could not assist with the need for further reductions next fiscal year
- Landt stated that although the details are not fully fleshed out, the general outline for the cuts are apparent, and called for a motion
- Bell stated that he is happy to support the proposal because it impacts services as little as possible

**Motion:** Landt moved to support Director Black's proposed cost cutting as presented in concept. Seconded by Bell

**Discussion:** Bachman stated that lots of ground has been covered and if the motion is to simply support his going forward with this general concept, he can support it. Bachman would eventually like to see more detail as the process unfolds.

Further discussion included the following points:

- Bell raised a concern that all of the consultants would be retired in a single stroke
  - It was clarified that any consultants that have already been retained for projects such as E Main Park will be retained. Funds that have been earmarked for other consultants that have not yet been retained would be cut
- Bachman raised a point of order and stated there is a motion on the floor and the discussion should be about that motion and asked for the motion to be clarified
  - Sullivan stated that the motion generally states that Landt moved to support Director Black's proposed cost cutting as presented in concept, but he would need to consult the recording to get the verbatim motion
    - Landt stated that this seems accurate as to what was stated and in retrospect would have put "in concept" earlier in the motion for clarity
  - Bell stated his concern does speak to the motion and inquired if there will be an option in the future to scrap this framework and identify other cuts to make (Black affirmed that changes can be made). Bell stated a concern about cutting ties with consultants:
    - Landt clarified that no consultants that are currently retained would be cut. Funds allocated for consultants not yet retained would not be spent
- Lewis stated that conceptually is the key word for him and inquired if Bachman is comfortable with the motion as read:
  - Bachman stated he is not convinced that this needs to be a motion rather than simple direction to continue. Bell agreed with this point and would like to see several proposals presented to provide choices
    - Black stated this is the only plan that is being presented because this is the only plan he is recommending. The plan will become more detailed going forward
    - Landt stated that since this is being presented to the City, having the Commissioners vote on it is part of the process to illustrate the level of support
    - Lewis reiterated that Commissioners have the ability to make decisions on the specifics once the amount that needs to be cut has been finalized further down the road
    - Bell reiterated his desire to see multiple cost-cutting options that includes a cost benefit analysis and stated it would be a terrible idea to get out of contracts with consultants
      - Landt reiterated that cancelling contracts of current consultants is not being considered. Funds allocated for consultants that have not yet been retained would not be spent
- Bachman stated it is his understanding that Black is presenting this in two days, and he would like to be confident that Commissioners support his general direction and as long as it is clear that this is not the approval of a detailed plan, that this is support of a general proposal. Bachman asked Black what he needs to have confidence to present this to the City

- Black stated that it seems that there may be confusion about this process and maybe it should be withdrawn to allow further discussion
  - Landt stated that there has been ample discussion and called for a vote, and if the vote fails discussion can continue and another motion can be made

**Vote:** Eldridge, Lewis and Landt votes yes. Bachman and Bell voted no. Motion passed

Black reiterated that specifics will be brought back to Commissioners to make a final decision and a motion was needed because this is part of the budget process and Commissioners have authority over the budget of APRC.

Bell stated that he would be in support of a proposal that keeps all options on the table but does not know how that can be presented in a meaningful way. Black explained that this is an exercise to show it is possible to make the cuts and that all options to make cuts remain on the table and the details will come later. Bell stated support for that exercise.

Bachman stated the following for the record: Commissioners approve the budget. Whatever the Council says APRC has to spend will drive the decision. What Director Black is being asked to do by the City Manager may give the impression that the City Manager has influence over the final decision and that this is too soon for Commissioners to be discussing specific budget items. Black should feel supported by Commissioners and his objection is more about the process rather than the content of Black's proposal, which is on the right track.

Bell affirmed Bachman's comments as being in line with his concerns.

Landt stated that the clarifying positions by Bell and Bachman show that there is support from Commissioners on the proposal and that the objections are based on process.

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

None

#### **X. UPCOMING MEETING DATES**

- a) Trails Master Plan Review Subcommittee—April 14, 2022
  - Electronic Meeting—11 a.m.
- b) Recreation Division Advisory Committee—April 21, 2022
  - Electronic Meeting—4 p.m.
- c) APRC Study Session—May 4, 2022
  - Electronic Meeting—6 p.m.
- d) Ashland Senior Advisory Committee—May 9, 2022
  - Ashland Senior Center—3:30 p.m.
- e) APRC Regular Business Meeting—May 11, 2022
  - Electronic Meeting—6 p.m.

Black stated he can investigate meeting in person in May. There were no objections.

#### **XI. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted  
Sean Sullivan, Business Operations Manager