

MINUTES FOR REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

December 7, 2022

Council Chambers – 6 p.m.

1175 E Main St

Present: Commissioners Landt (Chair), Lewis (Vice Chair), Bachman, Bell, Eldridge; Director Black; Deputy Director Dials; Senior Services Superintendent Glatt; 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 – November 9, 2022

Motion: Bachman moved to approve the November 9, 2022, Regular Business Meeting as presented. Seconded by Lewis

Vote: The vote was all yes

III. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

IV. PUBLIC FORUM

Mike Gardiner of Ashland made the following statements regarding the Oak Knoll Golf Course. Since 1928 there have been many changes at the golf course, with good, bad, and terrible years (like this last year). The course also serves as a neighborhood park. Only a few short years ago Commissioners were discussing constructing pickleball courts and neighborhood park improvements planned to revitalize. Rock the Knoll concerts were well attended, and weddings have been held at the course. The vision of the golf course should be remembered and hopes that Oak Knoll can be revitalized and continue to provide golf to the Ashland Community.

Alan DeBoer of Ashland read the following statement, “As a citizen of Ashland, I am embarrassed to see the condition of our Historic Golf Course. I am here tonight to suggest how to restore, improve, and reduce the financial impact on your budget. First, I would give an example of how the Airport Commission did this over 30 years ago-suffering from the same budget problems you now face with Oak Knoll. We developed a program that allowed airplane owners to build their hangars at a reduced ground lease, and then in 25 years, they revert to the City. With the income increase from the rent, it would be self-sufficient. Combine this with finding Bob Skinner to take over management; it has become a model for the nation. I would propose an RFP to have a private operator take over the course, make improvements and manage it at their expense. Chardonnay Golf Club and Vineyard in Napa Valley is an example of environmentally mixing grapes, wine, and golf. A proposed 35-year lease with seven five-year options, which the City could buy the developer out at each opportunity. It could be Hit and Sip at the Knoll.”

V. CONSENT AGENDA

Item b was pulled for discussion.

a) Subcommittee Minutes Acknowledgement

- [Current Parks, Conservation, and Maintenance Subcommittee – May 31, 2022](#)
- [Ashland Senior Advisory Committee –September 12, 2022](#)

Motion: Eldridge moved to acknowledge the subcommittee minutes as provided. Seconded by Bell

Vote: The vote was all yes

b) Japanese Garden Subcommittee Appointments

The item was pulled because the name referenced in the [staff report](#) does not match what was published on the [agenda](#). The name of the body being formed is Ashland Japanese Garden Advisory Committee. This body will make recommendations to both the Commissioners and the Ashland Parks Foundation. Landt stated that historically, the Chair would simply make the appointments but would like to seek input from Commissioners because of the importance of the committee.

Motion: Lewis moved to approve the list as supplied. Seconded by Bell.

Discussion: Lewis stated that the committee is made up of good people and this committee will have important work over the years. Bell asked if there is a similar amount of interest in the Japanese Garden as there is to the rest of Lithia Park generally. Black stated that currently there is heightened interest in the Japanese Garden because of the recent re-opening. Landt stated the committee will be meeting on an ad-hoc basis. Bachman read the names and positions of the individuals who will be appointed as follows:

Name	Expertise
Jeff Mangin	Donor Relations
Rick Landt	APRC Liaison
Noriko Hansen	Cultural Advisor
Kerry KenCairn	Landscape Maintenance and Construction Advisor
Donna Rhee	Volunteer Relations Advisor/ APF Liaison
Nan Kane	Garden Promotions Advisor/APF Liaison
Mark DiRienzo	Community Relations Advisor
Toru Tanaka	Cultural Advisor/Landscape Maintenance and Construction Advisor

Vote: The vote was all yes

VI. DIRECTORS REPORT

Black reported in the following items

- The lights at the Lithia Park Pickleball Courts have been adjusted and dimmed to comply with APRC lighting policy. They are now available for nightly use from 4:30 – 8 p.m.
- The Senior Services Division will offer their annual Holiday Party at Ashland Senior Center on Wednesday, December 21, 2:00-3:30pm. Sponsor Village at Valley View will be providing refreshments, students from the OLLI French Caroling class will perform, and Rotary Club of Ashland will be passing out gifts. Interested seniors should RSVP to 541-488-5342, and commissioners are invited to attend.
- The Recreation Division will offer the First Frost Community Skating event on December 17th from 4-9pm at the Ice Rink. There will be figure skating demonstrations, live music, and fun for the whole family.
- Benches have been temporarily placed in the Ashland Japanese Garden, the benches will eventually be permanently installed in the garden

VII. BUSINESS

a) Current Biennium Goal Review and Progress Report (Information)

Black displayed each of the 15 goals on screen and provided an update on each goal. Black added that the new biennium starts on July 1, 2023, and goals for the upcoming biennium will need to be determined through a goal setting process.

1. Investigate, develop, and implement a dedicated permanent funding source to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission.
 - a. Commissioners were chiefly responsible for the work to accomplish this goal. The goal is not completed, but the situation is better than what it was when these goals were last adopted almost two years ago
2. Develop an environmental sustainability and implementation plan.
 - a. Accomplishments on this goal include completing objectives such as the purchase of electrical mowers and hand tools. The main purpose of this goal is to create a plan, which has not been done
3. Improve public aquatic recreation and competitive options in Ashland consistent with the findings and recommendations of the Pool Ad Hoc Committee and ensure the continuous operation of an adequate recreational pool in Ashland during the summer months, at a minimum, until construction begins on a new pool.
 - a. A few years back a revenue bond was approved that would have paid for a good portion the project, but this bond was not issued due to financial impacts from COVID. The focus over last few years has been on the planning and

design for the pool, which including reviewing efficient options and a potential covering for pool. Staff will be ready to present on the final proposed design for the pool. Once Commissioners approve a design staff can then move onto the funding portion of the project. This goal also calls for the current pool to remain operational. Commissioners recently approved a new liner and blanket cover for the pool. An RFP has been posted and will close on 12/12/2022.

4. Build east main street neighborhood park including the dog park, bike-skills park, and pump track.
 - a. Planning is underway by the firm that was awarded the design contract through the RFP process. Community meetings have been held. Staff is close to presenting the final design to Commissioners for approval.
5. Explore the feasibility of and make a decision on all trails and proposals by the Rogue Valley Mountain Bike Association.
 - a. This is ongoing but has been moving slower than what may have been anticipated. A subcommittee was created and has been meeting to review the proposals and will make recommendations on individual proposals to Commissioners.

DISCUSSION

Discussion on the presentation included the following items

- The following statements were made regarding goal #2, Develop an environmental and implementation plan
 - Bell stated this goal should mainly focus on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and rather than spending time creating a complicated plan, all gas-powered equipment should be identified and replaced with electric equipment at the end of life
 - Bells suggested a simple inventory could be created with a commitment and timeline established for replacement with electric equipment
 - Eldridge suggested developing a set of guiding principles when reviewing plans/projects to ensure sustainability values are being met
 - Bell added that any capital investment projects should have an accounting of GHG emissions when being proposed or developed, which includes GHG released through construction equipment, to increase awareness on GHG emissions created through projects.
 - Landt stated that Commissioners have already ratified the Valdez Principles as guiding principles and asked that staff send the principles out to Commissioners to re-integrate them into the decision-making process
 - Lewis added that City Council has also adopted these principles

Black reviewed goals 6-15

6. Update the Ashland Open Space Comprehensive Plan.
 - a. Work is well underway on this goal and a final recommendation to the Commissioners will be presented in the near future. The recommendations will include the removal of a significant number of areas from the plan
7. Explore and implement, as funds allow capital improvements that would reduce long term maintenance costs with a goal for the improvements to pay for themselves.
 - a. This is something that staff tries to do with all capital improvement projects such as using as much TID water as possible and improvements to the irrigation system that over time could pay for itself through better leak detection and a reduction in irrigation water
8. Complete the phased master plan for Ashland Creek Park, including the installation of a basketball court with striping for multiple uses, including pickleball.
 - a. This goal has not moved forward at all because the former Finance Director double counted over \$500,000 in Food and Beverage (F&B) funds twice in the last budget (F&B funds were included in CIP and Operations budgets), which resulted in a reduction in capital projects that could be completed. Money should be going back into the APRC CIP Budget, and these projects could move forward
9. Mitigate fire vulnerability on all APRC lands and explore funding to support fire suppression and best management practices.
 - a. Staff is consistently working on the first part of this goal. There are more mitigation steps that will continue to be taken on an annual basis. The funding portion has not been accomplished. Staff has recently begun working with City of Ashland on a larger scale program to list all APRC lands and identify their fire vulnerability and develop specific mitigation plans
10. Develop System Wide Master Plan for Ashland Parks and Recreation.
 - a. A system wide master plan is needed to increase the SDC fees (System Development Charges), which have not been increased for parks in a long time. Public Works increases these fees on a more regular basis. The City of

Ashland parks SDC fee is one of the lowest in the state. This is another item that was set aside due to double counting F&B funds

11. Work with local partners, including the Ashland School District and Southern Oregon University to obtain agreements for mutual use of facilities including school gyms for recreation leagues or open play during non-school times and during smoke events.
 - a. Staff is continually working on this item, but there is nothing to report on increasing agreements other than partnering on recent emergency responses. Recreation programs are still less than what was offered before COVID
12. Complete the work on the Lithia Park Paster plan and present the completed plan to the commissioners for adoption.
 - a. Work has not been done on this item, but there have been discussions on finishing this in the coming year
13. Create a small pocket-neighborhood playground/park in the vicinity of oak knoll clubhouse.
 - a. Work on this item was not done due to the reduction in F&B funds
14. Investigate ways to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) for both internal workforce and public access and services.
 - a. The City of Ashland has formed a DEI committee (SERJ Committee), but APRC does not have seat at table at this time, but APRC will utilize the work done by that committee. The City has an RFP out right now for consultation services for DEI. Superintendent Glatt has done some work on this item including holding a few trainings with entire staff and some with smaller groups. Some APRC staff have participated in giving trainings at the state level through ORPA (Oregon Recreation and Parks Association). Staff will continue working on this goal and will move towards solid plans the creation of objectives
15. Continue to work with the City of Ashland, the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations to promote and support tourism in outdoor recreation.
 - a. Dials constantly works with the Ashland Chamber of Commerce on promoting outdoor recreation in Ashland

Black concluded that this has been an interesting biennium that has included budget reductions and layoffs while also seeing an uptick in outdoor recreation. Less work has been done this biennium, compared to previous biennium, primarily due to a reduction in funds and staff.

The next step on goal creation for the next biennium is to set a date for a goals retreat. Staff will work on getting this meeting scheduled.

b) Butler Perozzi Fountain Public Input Process Plan (Information)

Black made a presentation that included the following points:

- The question before Commissioners is whether to restore or replace the Butler Perozzi Fountain which is in a state of deterioration
 - Later in the meeting it was clarified that in this instance, “replace” means replace the marble that is failing with another material that would be a carbon copy of the existing fountain.
- [A report from Architectural Resource Group](#) has been presented to Commissioners and recommends restoration of the fountain
- The Ashland Parks Foundation (APF) has some funds set aside for the project, but needs clarity on a final plan before it can begin raising more money to complete the project
- Staff is recommending that public meetings be held to gather input from the public on whether to restore or replace the fountain
 - Staff would publicize the meeting (on 1/11 or another day if necessary) and get the report out to the public. The meeting would include a public input session where time will be dedicated for public comments to provide feedback
- The goal is to give direction on how the project will proceed so APF can develop and implement a capital campaign to raise the needed funds.

Landt's stated a decision will not be made tonight, but staff will be provided with direction. Landt added he does not think one meeting will be sufficient and suggested determining the number of meetings needed after the first meeting is held

Public Comment

Mike Gardiner speaking on behalf of the Ashland Parks Foundation stated the APF Board is ready and eager to move forward with fundraising, but the capital campaign is contingent upon how the project moves forward. A subcommittee has been formed to develop the plan once the decision on restoration or replacement is made.

DISCUSSION

Discussion included the following items:

- Black clarified that APF is planning on raising funds for the entire project. Some funds have already been raised but more funds are needed.
- Black clarified that the report states that the cost estimates between rehabilitation and replace are about the same
- Black clarified that management of the repairs would be overseen by APRC with a contractor carrying out the work and noted that APF would provide the funds to APRC
- Eldridge noted that although the costs of the restoration vs. replacement may be similar, one of the options may be more durable and/or take less ongoing maintenance than that other. Eldridge suggested creating a webpage to accept public input over a 30-day period prior to holding the meeting

Landt stated staff will move forward on organizing a meeting where public input will be gathered and he and the vice chair will provide additional input on the process

c) 2023 Meeting Schedule (Action)

Black provided the following information on this item

- Meetings will be held the first Wednesday (Study Session) and second Wednesday (Regular Business Meeting)
 - Only one meeting is held in December
- [The staff report](#) included proposed dates to meetings. The meeting date in June was corrected to state the Study Session is on June 7 and the Regular Meeting is on June 14

Landt noted that the proposal is for Study Sessions to be held via Zoom and Business Meetings to be held in-person in Council Chambers

- Landt noted that holding Study Sessions via Zoom is more cost effective and allows greater access for the public since APRC Study Sessions are not typically broadcast via RVTV
 - Landt stated that it may be necessary to hold some meetings in-person depending on agenda topics
- Bachman stated holding meetings electronically also improves the ability for Commissioners to attend
- Eldridge stated support for holding Business Meetings in-person and would like to consider allowing hybrid attendance for in-person meetings (both in-person and electronically)
 - Black stated staff can look into this and report back to Commissioners

Motion: Bachman moved to approve the proposed APRC meeting schedule as corrected. Seconded by Lewis.

Vote: The vote was all yes.

VIII. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS/STAFF

Landt made a statement of thanks to Commissioner Bell whose term ends at the end of 2022

Eldridge stated that the election results were certified, and Justin Adams was elected to the Parks Commission and will be taking the seat in January

IX. UPCOMING MEETING DATES

- a) APRC Study Session—January 4, 2023
 - Electronic Meeting—6 p.m.
- b) Ashland Senior Advisory Committee—January 9, 2023
 - Electronic Meeting—3:30 p.m.
- c) Bee City USA—January 10, 2023

- Electronic Meeting—3:00 p.m.
- d) APRC Regular Business Meeting—January 11, 2023
 - Council Chambers—6 p.m.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

Landt called for a short break before calling the Executive Session to order.

Respectfully submitted
Sean Sullivan, Business Operations Manager