

City of Ashland  
ASHLAND PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION (APRC)  
ASHLAND SENIOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ASAC)  
Meeting Minutes  
May 8, 2023

Committee Members Present:

- Anne Bellegia
- Cori Frank
- Mike Gardiner, Chair
- Debra Johnson, Vice Chair
- Bob Kaplan
- Kathy McNeal
- Sandy Theis
- Noriko Toyokawa

Staff Present:

- Isleen Glatt
- Natalie Mettler

**CALL TO ORDER**

Gardiner called the meeting to order at 3:31pm.

**OPENING**

No guests.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion: Bellegia/Theis m/s to approve the minutes from March 13, 2023. Voice vote – all AYES. Minutes approved.

**ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA**

None.

**PUBLIC INPUT**

None.

**DISASTER PREPAREDNESS FOR OLDER ADULTS & CAREGIVERS**

Lauren Kraemer, MPH, Associate Professor of Practice with OSU Extension Family & Community Health, presented on why older adults are more vulnerable to disasters and how individuals and communities can tackle disaster preparedness. See [presentation slides](#).

Kraemer added the following information during a question-and-answer period:

- *Ashland has a higher percentage of residents age 65+ (26.9%) than the county, state and nation. Ashland also has a large number of tourist visitors, who might also not be as prepared for disasters.* Kraemer will share a draft document she is developing for hospitality businesses to guide guests to local disaster resources.
- *How do elder care facilities prepare their residents for disasters?* They run drills and some, like Mountain Meadows, have committees dedicated to disaster preparedness.
- *What barriers are preventing 2/3 of seniors from preparing for disasters?* Multifactorial barriers including income, fatalistic attitudes, social isolation, limited physical and mental abilities.

- *How can people remember their Disaster Zones for evacuation during the stress of a disaster?*  
Disaster Zones to guide citizen evacuation are not widespread. But such information might be broadcast via push notifications, although they are limits on what City and County officials can push out as notifications.
- *Do people still get push notifications about disasters if they turn off the location tracking on their smartphone?*  
People should be able to adjust their smartphone settings to filter which emergency alerts will get pushed out to them.

## **ELECT OFFICERS, DISCUSS MEMBER TERMS & RECRUITMENT FOR POSITIONS OPENING JULY 1**

Glatt stated that McNeal and Theis's member terms are ending. McNeal will not renew, and Theis has served her two terms limit. (Members who have completed 2 terms may apply to join again after at least one year off.) Glatt will post the position openings via the website and press release, but also asked ASAC members for input on possible recruits.

Per ASAC Bylaws, the Chair and Vice Chair are elected annually and have no term limits. Currently the Chair is Gardiner and Vice Chair is Johnson; both are willing to continue in their roles. There were no other nominations for these positions.

**Motion:** Bellegia/Bachman m/s for Gardiner/Johnson to continue as ASAC Chair/Vice Chair. Voice vote – all AYES. Motion passed.

The following was discussed during discussion:

- Bellegia noted that Glatt, Mettler and McNeal are best positioned to recommend recruits from among Ashland Senior Center program participants.
- Gardiner would like to see more multigenerational representation.
- Toyokawa asked about representation from medical and/or clinical fields. Glatt agreed that cross-fertilization with Oregon Health & Science University and Asante Ashland Community Hospital would be good. Theis can check in with Asante Ashland Hospital Administrator, Dr. Steven Hersch.

## **STANDING REPORTS**

### **a. APRC Liaison**

Commissioner Bachman reported that APRC based their proposed budget for the coming biennium on a bottom-up analysis and asked for what is needed to run Parks, Recreation and Senior Services, rather than asking for what they think they can get. APRC is also hoping to rebuild their employment levels to pre-pandemic numbers, in order to function more effectively. Bellegia asked if the current proposed budget includes reinstating a third SSD staff person. Bachman responded that APRC is planning on hiring 4-5 generic administrative support positions, which could help SSD. APRC is also prioritizing hiring a Parks Superintendent to improve oversight. Bellegia noted that given Ashland demographics, with almost 27% of residents aged 65+, adequate staffing for SSD should be a priority. Bachman assured he would advocate for this on the Commission level.

### **b. City Council Liaison**

Councilor Kaplan shared that the Council approved an intergovernmental agreement among the City, SOU and Ashland School District to share resources for emergency management. Kelly Burns is the City's new Emergency Management Coordinator. Kaplan attended an ALICE (active shooter) training for City staff that Burns organized. He added that Paige West of RVTD presented to the Council about a new RVTD fixed-route

bus line that will serve Ashland. West stated that this new service is not a substitute for the Ashland Connector, whose return continues to be delayed by staffing limitations.

### **c. Education Report**

Mettler shared about new initiatives and programs: Outdoor Line Dancing (May-June), Digital Supermarket Coupon Tutoring (May-August) and working with OHSU students to research needs and barriers to internet use for local seniors (April-May). In connection with Kraemer's presentation, she added that SSD will host Bill Bateman on June 28, 1-3pm, to present "Survival Prep for Seniors: Beyond the 'Go' Bag."

### **d. Senior Services Superintendent Report**

Glatt referred to her report in the agenda package. She highlighted the following:

- There is concern that RVTD's new route 17 serving Ashland will edge out bringing back the Ashland Connector. She thanked Councilors Kaplan and Hyatt for learning about SSD and assisting with advocacy on this issue.
- Glatt has been advocating with the City Manager and Deputy City Manager, as well as City Departments, to increase the income qualification limit for the City's utility discount to be commensurate with Medicaid limits, which are between 138-150% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL). Currently, a resident's income must be at or below 100-125% of FPL to qualify for the utility discount.
- Glatt shared a story that, through her engagement with SSD, a longtime SSD volunteer learned about and procured affordable hearing aids through the Southern Oregon Lions Sight & Hearing Assistance Program.

Bellegia offered kudos to SSD staff and volunteers for consistently high participation numbers in activities and services. She said this speaks well to the reorganization of Ashland Senior Program into Ashland Senior Services Division.

## **ITEMS FROM ASAC MEMBERS OR WORK GROUPS**

### **a. Update on May ballot measure**

Gardiner reminded all to vote regarding the upcoming ballot measure about reallocating the Food & Beverage Tax to APRC.

### **b. Livable Ashland Alliance update**

This reported that the Alliance continues to work with Ashland Community Health Foundation in the hopes they will become the group's fiscal agent. Bellegia added that securing such sponsorship will allow the Alliance to begin engaging citizens in their efforts. They also plan to update City Council and invite their participation in current or new all age friendly initiatives.

### **c. Other items from ASAC members**

Gardiner spoke for all members in thanking McNeal and Theis for their service to ASAC.

**Next meeting** – Monday, July 10, 2023, 3:30-5:00pm (Zoom)

**Adjournment** – 5:01pm

*Respectfully submitted by Natalie Mettler, Senior & Adult Services Coordinator, Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission*