

City of Ashland
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
Minutes
September 24, 2018

Present: Commissioners Gardiner, Heller, Landt, Lewis, Miller; Director Black; Superintendents Dials, Glatt and Oxendine; Executive Assistant Dyssegard; Assistant Manuel

Absent: City Council Liaison Mayor Stromberg

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gardiner called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main Street, Ashland

APPROVAL OR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF MINUTES

Study Session, July 16, 2018

Motion: Landt moved to approve the Study Session minutes of July 16, 2018, as presented. Heller seconded.

The vote was all yes

Regular Meeting, July 23, 2018

Motion: Landt moved to approve the Regular Meeting minutes of July 23, 2018, as presented. Lewis seconded.

The vote was all yes

Regular Meeting August 27, 2018

Page 2 Paragraph 1 stated: *"The mountain was donated by Domingo Perozzi in 1950."*

Miller pointed out an amendment as follows:

"The Fountain was donated by Domingo Perozzi in 1915."

Page 3 Paragraph 9 stated: *"O'Meara agreed, noting that the camera at City Hall was accessible on YouTube but because it did not record, its usefulness was limited."*

Miller pointed out an amendment as follows:

"O'Meara agreed, noting that the camera at the Plaza was accessible on YouTube but because it did not record, its usefulness was limited."

Motion: Landt moved to approve the Minutes of August 27, 2018, as amended. Miller seconded.

The vote was all yes

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- ***Open Forum***

Dennis Miller, formerly of 1140 Siskiyou Blvd. in Ashland was called forward.

Miller referred to his campaign regarding a brochure on slips and falls, noting that instructive pamphlets were now available in all City of Ashland offices. He stated that in his opinion, his mission had been accomplished.

Miller quoted from another City publication detailing Ashland's commitment to providing services for the disabled as mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). He indicated that he was no longer permitted to visit City of Ashland offices, when the reason he did so had been to share his experiences so that seniors could avoid the trauma of an accident caused by a fall. Miller talked about his injuries and difficulties in finding an attorney to represent him.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

Gardiner stated that he would add a discussion regarding postponement of the October 15, 2018, joint meeting planned between the APRC and the Ashland City Council. He stated that the matter would be a discussion item under the Agenda section entitled ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Bear Creek Greenway Extension (Information and Action)***

Black reported that APRC, Ashland Public Works, and the Bear Creek Greenway Foundation had pooled funds to hire consultants to determine a route or routes for extending the Greenway from the Ashland Dog Park to North Mountain Park. He highlighted the Greenway's mission to eventually complete a route the length of the Rogue Valley, ending at Emigrant Lake in Ashland.

Black relayed that the planned extension would traverse 1.3 miles through private and public properties. The consultant had been tasked with finding the best possible route to accomplish the goal. Ultimately no single route stood out.

Black explained that the intent was to discover the most direct route, a route that would provide an opportunity to interact with nature with minimal risk and conflict – i.e., a trail that would appeal to people because they felt safe and secure, without posing conflicts between user groups. Connectivity with Ashland's neighborhoods was also an important element.

Black commented that key planning considerations included how to best limit property acquisitions and manage environmental impacts. He noted that a large portion of the trail would be located in the 100-year *floodplain*. A top priority was to avoid the *floodway* because of the environmental concerns (walking through wetlands and impacts caused by building walkways of concrete or asphalt were given as examples). Black explained that building was permitted in *floodways* and could be done without compromising the wilderness experience. He stated that APRC had purchased eleven acres that were in the 100-year *floodplain* for that reason and were comfortable with engineering trails through such an environment.

Black talked about the assignment of priorities to the goals and detailed examples from low to high. He stated that the highest priority was to provide the correct amount of connectivity where the user was safe and secure, interacting with nature with minimal conflicts and in the most cost-effective way.

Black proceeded with a presentation about the potential for connectivity, detailing trails and properties as depicted on a map from the Ashland Dog Park (the current official end to the Bear Creek Greenway) to North Mountain Avenue along Bear Creek. He highlighted properties that were either owned by APRC or on which there were APRC easements through private property.

Black reviewed three different alignments as recommended by the consultants, sketching out what was known as the “permanent alignment.” This alignment begins at the Dog Park, travels to Oak Street where it crosses the street onto private property. From there it crosses the creek to Kestrel Park where it begins to intersect with public property. Further on, it is projected to travel through a potential development and onto additional private property. Black explained that it was called the permanent route because it was the most direct pathway. Such a trail would meet the highest priority criteria and goals – providing a scenic experience and a proper transportation alternative with the additional advantage of limiting bridges to just one.

Black noted that a major disadvantage was the construction cost (\$2.5M) that would be in addition to the cost for property acquisitions. He relayed that APRC owns only 10% of the rights-of-way and there was no way to ascertain the cost of property acquisitions or determine timelines because there were no willing sellers at this time. In response to a question by Landt, Black stated that there were two permanent alternatives – one having a steeper grade than the other. The largest constraint for APRC was the lack of a means for the acquisition of property.

The short-term route was designated as such because it was more doable. Ashland Public Works planned to re-route the path to make it adjacent to the Greenway and behind the Dog Park. A new trail would have dedicated access through a new development along Nevada Street – crossing a footbridge to Kestrel Park. The pathway would then cross back over the creek to property known as Riverwalk and from there traverse the Mace property to North Mountain Park. It would include two bridges, one from Nevada Street to Kestrel and the other crossing the creek to intersect with public property on its way to North Mountain Park. Black indicated that both the permanent route and the short-term route were approximately 1.3 miles in length. The two bridges would be bike/ped only – with no vehicular traffic permitted. The footbridge was estimated to cost approximately \$300,000 if abutments were permitted in a *floodway*. There followed a brief discussion about Kitchen Creek and a less desirable small bridge at that location.

In reply to Commissioners’ questions regarding bridges, Black noted that there was a 200-foot span through the *floodway* that would need to be addressed. He acknowledged that bridges for such a long span would be expensive – exorbitantly so if abutments were not permitted in the *floodway*. He stated that accurate cost estimates were not available at this time as there had been no surveys completed or engineers consulted. Black explained that if it was determined that abutments were permitted, a trail through the *floodway* would be preferred.

Black talked about the third proposed route – one referred to as an interim route. He stated that this trail was a hybrid of the permanent and short-term plans, traversing many of the properties already discussed. The difference was that no bridgebuilding or property acquisitions would be required. He stated that because it did not follow Bear Creek as closely, APRC would be responsible for the project.

Lewis asked about the rights-of-way between Nevada Street and East Nevada and whether there was a way to utilize the connection. Black replied that doing so might be problematic due to a requirement to build a bridge wide enough for emergency vehicles. He stated that the possibility could remain open, but that it would be a much bigger project with a much longer timeframe than APRC would want to consider at this time.

Gardiner agreed, stating that the proposed bridge crossing had been moved *away from* the right of way because of the possibility that the City might want a road there. He noted that the proposed interim route would be a specifically bike/pedestrian crossing.

There followed discussion regarding the engineering challenges for both locations. Lewis noted that the eleven acres of Kitchen Creek property, the Riverwalk and the Kestrel properties all became public land because developers did not find those areas amenable to development – thus allowing APRC to acquire land for public purposes. He suggested a negotiation with the developer of the proposed development to acquire floodplain land that could accommodate the proposed Greenway extension.

Black stated that no option would be ruled out. He stated that both the permanent route and the short-term route would be presented for approval at the same time. Black explained that the Transportation Commission recommended that the City Council approve the two routes for incorporation into the Transportation System Plan with an emphasis on competing the short-term alignment as quickly as possible. He noted that the Greenway Foundation was partnering with APRC and planned to assist APRC in the search for funding the proposed bridges. With so much yet unknown, if it were possible to create a route to North Mountain Park without building a bridge, then doing so would be preferred.

Landt expressed his opinion that although he would support the idea of a route without building a bridge, the existing North Mountain bridge that crosses Bear Creek could be problematic as there was no bike lane. He talked about possible solutions such as adding a bike lane adjacent to the existing bridge, noting that the Greenway Foundation would most likely not approve a bridge that didn't provide a bike lane. Landt suggested that if building a bridge became essential (as he believed it would), then there was a possibility that the short-term route could merge with the permanent route.

Black agreed, stating that once bridges were built they would then become permanent. If all the trails were eventually built, then there would be more options for people in the community. He stated that the Transportation Commission did not recommend the interim alignment as part of the Bear Creek Greenway extension.

In response to a question by Lewis, Black stated that APRC was committed to the interim route but that the short-term alignment was a better fit for the Greenway Foundation and would allow them to seek funding for the bridges. Black indicated that the permanent route was the most tenuous one, given that it would require funding that would be difficult to find. He noted that the hurdles not only

included funding, but also property acquisitions at a time when there were no willing sellers – making any decision to proceed with the permanent route implausible at this time.

Landt proposed that the permanent route and short-term route be combined from Nevada Street to North Mountain. He stated that Bear Creek could be crossed at the Riverwalk with the trail proceeding on the side opposite from the one proposed. He commented that the only outstanding issue would be an improvement to the North Mountain Avenue bridge. In that way, over half of the distance outlined in the permanent route and in the short-term route would be shared.

Black commented that any improvements to the North Mountain Bridge would be a City project. If that were the case, then it would most likely be improved to a level that would handle future development. He stated that it would create a better Greenway experience and the consultants had not discarded the option completely; instead, they indicated that additional engineering studies would need to be completed prior to determining the outcome. Gardiner agreed, indicating that building a second bridge to traverse property that eventually would be developed but had not yet been planned could be problematic.

There followed additional discussion about the various options and scenarios. Lewis stated that the Trails Master Plan Committee was in agreement, in terms of keeping all options open, and that the more choices available, the better. Black proposed that APRC follow the Transportation Commission's recommendation to approve both the permanent alignment and the short-term alignment. He suggested that the interim alignment become an APRC project.

Motion: Landt moved to approve the Bear Creek Extension Plan as presented with one alteration – that the permanent alignment from the upstream bridge through Riverwalk to North Mountain Park be moved to the opposite side of the creek where it would follow the same path as the short-term alignment. The permanent alignment on the north side of Bear Creek would be retained as a possibility for an alternate route. Heller seconded.

The vote was all yes.

Motion: Landt moved that APRC move expeditiously to complete the interim alignment from the Dog Park to North Mountain Park. Miller seconded.

The vote was all yes.

a. Senior Services Bylaws and Name Change Approvals (Information/Action)

Glatt reported that the Senior Program Advisory Committee had been meeting for several months – working to complete bylaws as well as a recommended change in name for the Committee. She stated that in keeping with the redesigned Senior Services Division, the Committee was recommending a change in name. Glatt noted that the new name would help develop a better demarcation from the previous Ashland Senior Program. It would demonstrate that there was an official Senior Services Division with a larger mission – with the Ashland Senior Center becoming a sub-set under the more complex organization. The newly created Senior Services Division would act as an umbrella structure for the expanded program. The change would present an opportunity to promote consistent branding throughout the organization.

Miller asked about ways to inform the public of the name change from S-PAC to S-SAC. Glatt replied that it was becoming apparent that there was little public recognition of the Committee and its work. She stated that as communications improved, and the constituents become more engaged, the new website, written materials and other marketing efforts would ensure that the Advisory Committee would be seen as an important component of the program.

Black stressed that it was a change in name only – that the programs and services would not be changed or disrupted in any way.

Glatt introduced the draft bylaws, noting that they were in keeping with APRC’s policies. She stated that the most significant clauses were those requiring a yearly presentation by S-SAC to the Commissioners and provisions for dissolution and/or a merger should the possibility arise. Glatt explained that the dissolution/merger clause could facilitate collaboration with the Ashland City Council or provide an opportunity to develop services for all residents of Ashland. She emphasized that any substantial changes would require APRC approval.

Landt suggested that the order of Articles V. and VI. be reversed, noting that references to a Chairperson should come after the appointment of officers. He also pointed out inconsistencies when referencing APRC. He cited Article II and Article VII as examples. Landt noted that he wholeheartedly supported the content of the by-laws.

Motion: Miller moved to approve the suggested name change to *Senior Services Advisory Committee* or S-SAC and the bylaws as amended. Heller seconded.

The vote was all yes.

SUBCOMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS

- ***Bear Creek Salmon Festival***

Dials announced that the Bear Creek Salmon Festival would be held on Saturday October 6, 2018, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at North Mountain Park. She welcomes all to attend.

- ***Senior Services Event***

Glatt invited the Commissioners to the annual Thanksgiving dinner hosted by the Ashland Fire and Rescue. She noted that the dinner would be held at the Ashland Senior Center on Monday, November 19, 2018. Glatt commented that it would be an opportunity for the Commissioners to connect with senior patrons.

- ***Bear-Proof Garbage Cans in Parks***

Oxendine stated that all bear-proof trash receptacles had been labeled and placed in Lithia Park. In addition, one can was placed at the top end of the park on Glenview Drive. He noted that more bear-proof receptacles would be requested at each budget cycle until the transition was completed.

Landt asked about re-installation of the recycling baskets. Oxendine replied that it had been determined that the baskets could be attached to the trash receptacles without fabrication and their re-installations were underway at this time.

Heller called for continued feedback about bear activity for those receptacles that had not been replaced.

Landt highlighted the quick resolution of affixing the signage on the trash cans, expressing appreciation.

- ***Director's Report***

Black stated that he would be giving a presentation to Ashland City Council on October 2 regarding the option to sell the lower Clay Street park land and, in exchange, purchase the East Main Street property for a second dog park.

- ***Golf Subcommittee***

Gardiner noted that recent Golf Subcommittee discussion included some personnel changes and updates on irrigation work that had been completed over the summer. He stated that the course was in pretty good shape but attendance was down due to the many days of unhealthy, smoky air. He indicated that there would be a cost-recovery impact.

ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS

- ***IGA Ashland School District***

Landt asked for an update of the Intergovernmental agreement between APRC and the Ashland School District. Black stated that the suggested changes had been made to the document based upon Commissioner recommendations and the agreement had been forwarded to the School District for approval. He stated that once the School District approved the changes, the document would be brought back to the Commissioners for final approval.

- ***Joint Meeting with City Council***

Gardiner stated that a joint meeting scheduled for October 15, 2018, between the APRC and the Ashland City Council had been cancelled at the request of Council. He reported that the City had suggested rescheduling their meeting for November but that APRC had conflicts that interfered with a mutually satisfactory date.

Gardiner noted that he had advocated for a joint meeting in the near future, citing the value of a unified program based upon what seniors need and the potential benefits for the community as a whole. He reiterated that he had originally envisioned an informal work session and that while he still believed in the synergy that a collaborative approach could bring, the topic of what seniors needed might result in a presentation by Glatt to the City Council and separately to APRC. He explained that there were other topics of importance that might be discussed jointly at a later date.

Heller said he understood the reasons for the scheduling conflicts. He advocated for rescheduling due to the importance of working together, not just about what seniors need but on other important issues as well. Black agreed, stating that a meeting would be beneficial and moving forward with a joint meeting would be an opportunity for APRC to convey how the Senior Services Division was currently organized. Black noted that the Council's support would ensure that the initiative would thrive.

After further input from the Commissioners, Gardiner stated that he would continue to work with the Council to find an alternative date that could work for both parties. He added that there might be new Commissioners and/or Councilors in place after January 1, 2019, suggesting that meeting in the new year might be of value.

Black proposed contacting the City Council as a double-check that the original date of October 15, 2018, could not work. Gardiner stated that trying to match regularly scheduled meeting times might be a barrier, proposing that alternative dates be considered.

UPCOMING MEETING DATES

- Signs, Plaques, Memorials Subcommittee Meeting—September 25, 2018 @ 2:00 p.m., Lithia Park Admin Office 340 S. Pioneer
- Pool Ad-hoc Subcommittee Meeting—October 3, 2018 @ 1:30 p.m., Ashland Senior Center 1699 Homes
- S-SAC Meeting—October 8, 2018 @ 3:00 p.m., Ashland Senior Center, 1699 Homes
- Study Session—October 15, 2018 @ 5:30 p.m., The Grove, 1195 East Main
- Regular Meeting—October 22, 2018 @ 7:00 p.m., Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main

ADJOURNMENT INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

By consensus, Gardiner adjourned into executive session at 8:20 p.m.

Executive Session: Real Estate Discussion and Disposition, ORS 192.660 (2)(a) 2(b), 2(i)

ADJOURNMENT OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION

By consensus, Gardiner adjourned out of executive session at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Manuel, Assistant

These Minutes are not a verbatim record. The narrative has been condensed and paraphrased at times to reflect the discussions and decisions made. Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission study sessions, regular meetings and subcommittee meetings are digitally recorded; the recordings are available upon request.

