

City of Ashland
ASHLAND PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION (APRC)
ASHLAND SENIOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ASAC)
Meeting Minutes
November 13, 2023

Committee Members Present:

- Anne Bellegia
- John Engelhardt
- Cori Frank
- Mike Gardiner, Chair
- Debra Johnson, Vice Chair
- Noriko Toyokawa
- Patty Winner

Committee Members Absent:

- Jim Bachman
- Bob Kaplan

Staff Present:

- Leslie Eldridge
- Isleen Glatt
- Natalie Mettler

CALL TO ORDER

Gardiner called the meeting to order at 3:30pm.

OPENING

Glatt welcomed Interim Director Eldridge and Gardiner invited ASAC members to introduce themselves for her benefit.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Engelhardt asked for clarification on the following items from the September 9 meeting minutes:

- Is OHRA a “no barrier” shelter?
Staff clarified that OHRA’s Resource Center is “no barrier” and Shelter is “low barrier.”
- Are all ten of the OHRA Resource Navigators bilingual and bicultural?
The minutes reflect what was reported by OHRA Executive Director Cass Sinclair. Staff will check with Sinclair about the actual bilingual status of OHRA Navigators.
- OLLI community education series was in October, not November.

Motion: Engelhardt/Bellegia m/s to approve the minutes from September 9, 2023 with the above corrections.
Voice vote – all AYES. Minutes approved.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA

None.

PUBLIC INPUT

None.

ROGUE VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (RVCOG) SENIOR & DISABILITY SERVICES (SDS)

Connie Wilkerson, Director of RVCOG SDS, presented on SDS programs and services for older adults and adults with disabilities. See [presentation slides](#).

The following was covered in discussion:

- RVCOG SDS provides some grant funding to Rebuilding Together Rogue Valley to cover the cost of labor and materials for home modifications such as grab bars.

- There is a shortage of beds and staff in both adult foster homes and long term care facilities. The Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) Aging and People with Disabilities (APD) office works directly with adult foster homes to place people.
- RVCOG SDS and APRC SSD collaborate in many ways, including: SSD referring client to SDS programs, Ashland Senior Center serving as a Food & Friends meal site, SSD staff serving on the RVCOG Senior Advisory Council.
- RVCOG SDS was contracted to provide referral services during the 2017-18 transition of Ashland Senior Program to Ashland Senior Services Division.
- Typical referrals from SSD to SDS include: Options Counseling, Food & Friends, mental health programs, caregiver resources. In addition, federal funding from the Older Americans Act is funneled through RVCOG SDS to other local agencies to which SSD refers clients, including: Center for Non-Profit Legal Services, Rebuilding Together Rogue Valley, Call-A-Ride.
- Funding for RVCOG SDS's Options Counseling is pulled from a variety of sources, to ensure the continuity of this critical service. SSD is interested in advocating to increase capacity for Options Counseling.

CONVERSATION CLUSTERS PROJECT

Superintendent Glatt presented on the Conversation Clusters Demonstration Project. See [presentation slides](#). Glatt encouraged ASAC members to test the sites, complete the survey, and send photos of the sites in use back to Glatt. ASAC members can also help spread awareness of the project for replication elsewhere.

STANDING REPORTS

a. APRC Liaison

Interim Director Eldridge reported in Commissioner Bachman's absence. At their November 8 meeting, the Commission voted for a new structure for APRC standing advisory committees and less formal management advisory committees, based on the City Council's policy for such bodies. The structure is still being finalized and will provide a template for committees to develop their mission, annual goals and reporting. These changes will have minimal impact on ASAC, which will continue as an APRC advisory committee.

b. City Council Liaison

Councilor Kaplan was absent.

c. Education Report

Mettler reported that staff has been working on next season's activities and events. These are programs that will run from January-April 2024. Current ongoing activities will continue, and a new free memoir-writing class will be offered. Special monthly events for next season include 19th century guitar music performance, Healthy Brain & Aging class, Japanese Garden spring walk and a cybersecurity basics class. The new Personalized Strength & Balance Training class has had a great response and strong enrollment.

d. Senior Services Superintendent Report

Glatt referred to her Superintendent's report in meeting packet. She acknowledged the contribution of SSD instructors and volunteers; these partnerships allow SSD to offer as much as it does to the community. She highlighted that SSD was able to provide 459 flu and COVID vaccinations over three clinic dates. These clinics gave vaccine access to some of the most vulnerable older adults in the community, many of whom face transportation barriers that make it challenging to seek vaccines outside of Ashland. She acknowledged recent awards given to Anne Bellegia (AARP Andrus Award for Community Service) and Kathy McNeal (Oregon Recreation and Park Association Volunteer Service Award).

ITEMS FROM ASAC MEMBERS OR WORK GROUPS

a. Livable Ashland Alliance update

Bellegia shared that the AARP Andrus Award she recently received recognizes the importance of the work being undertaken by SSD and the Livable Ashland Alliance. The Alliance is forming action groups to develop action plans, drawing on the strength of current Steering Committee members. The first such group is a health action group. Eldridge stated that the City is discussing establishing a “Livability Team” modeled after Medford’s efforts to connect unhoused people to services. Glatt shared a link describing the proposed Ashland Livability Team in a recent Oregon Public Broadcasting article: opb.org/article/2023/11/08/ashland-drafts-urban-camping-restrictions-after-opening-homeless-shelter. Eldridge is concerned that the similarity of their name with the Livable Ashland Alliance may cause confusion. Bellegia responded that City Manager Cotta and former City Councilor Hyatt are Alliance Steering Committee members; Bellegia will contact them to make sure there is a clear distinction in name and function between Livable Ashland Alliance and the City’s possible Livability Team.

b. Other items from ASAC members

Gardiner announced that this will be Glatt’s last ASAC meeting because she will be retiring in January 2024. He and other ASAC members thanked Glatt for her leadership and significant contributions and for bringing together a strong group of people on ASAC.

Next meeting – Monday, January 8, 2024, 3:30-5:00pm (Zoom)

Adjournment – 4:57pm

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