

**MINUTES FOR REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING  
ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
April 12, 2023  
Council Chambers – 6 p.m.  
1175 E Main St**

Present: Commissioners Landt (Chair), Eldridge (Vice-Chair), Adams, Bachman, Lewis; Director Black, Deputy Director Dials, Senior Services Superintendent Glatt, Analyst Kiewel, Manager Sullivan

Absent: None

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Landt called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

a) APRC Regular Meeting – February 8, 2023

**Motion:** Bachman moved to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Eldridge.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes

b) APRC Special Meeting – February 21, 2023

**Motion:** Eldridge moved to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Adams.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes

c) APRC Special Meeting – March 1, 2023

**Motion:** Lewis moved to approve all minutes as presented. Seconded by Adams.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes

d) APRC Regular Meeting – March 8, 2023

**Motion:** Adams moved to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Bachman.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes

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

None

**IV. PUBLIC FORUM**

**Jack Opgenorth of Ashland** stated concern about the use of gas-powered blowers and would like to see the use of these tools reduced or completely phased out.

**V. CONSENT**

a) Minutes for Acknowledgment

- Ashland Senior Advisory Committee, January 9, 2023

**Motion:** Eldridge moved to approve the consent agenda. Seconded by Adams.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes

**VI. DIRECTORS REPORT**

Black reported on the following items:

**SENIOR SERVICES DIVISION**

Ashland Senior Center is hosting a show of watercolors by Priscila Franco as part of the Seniors Celebrating Creativity program, a rotating exhibit of senior artists. The exhibit is in the Senior Center dining room through June.

**RECREATION DIVISION**

The 31st annual Rogue Valley Bike Swap will occur on April 29th from noon until 2:30pm in the parking lot of the Grove. A portion of each sale will go to fund youth bike education programs in local public schools.

**PARKS DIVISION**

The Ashland Japanese Garden will be closed for scheduled maintenance noon, April 17 to noon, April 21

**VII. BUSINESS**

**a) City Finance and Admin Discussion on Transfers and Elimination of Dedicated Park Funds (Possible Action)**

Landt noted this item will also include information on changes to The Grove. Black introduced Ashland City Manager Joe Lessard and Deputy City Manager Sabrina Cotta. The discussion can be viewed in the [video recording of the meeting at 10:33](#). A summary of items discussed is below:

Transfer of funds from APRC to the City of Ashland for the Communications staff position

- Cotta stated the transfer is no longer being sought because it is a small amount of money
- There was concern from Commissioners about the process rather than the amount that was being requested since these funds were allocated to APRC and require action by the Commissioners to transfer fund back to the City of Ashland
- Cotta stated that it was practice at other jurisdictions where she had worked where funds typically follow staff positions and that does not need to be the case here

Dissolution of the Parks Fund

- Historically, APRC's operational funds were kept in a separate fund (Parks Fund) than the General Fund
- Starting with the next biennium, City Administration will dissolve the Parks Fund and will keep APRC operations funds in the General Fund
- There was a concern raised by Commissioners about this resulting in APRC no longer rolling the ending fund balance into the next biennium if expenses come in lower than what was budgeted because this has been the historical practice. It was also noted that this action could be perceived as reducing the authority and separateness of APRC as identified in the City Charter
- It was confirmed by Cotta and Lessard that the City Council has the authority to allocate remaining fund balance to APRC, but that is at the discretion of Council

Moving City Staff into The Grove

- APRC was given control of The Grove through a previous budget process
- APRC has paid for all maintenance and improvements to The Grove since the building was transferred from the City to APRC
- The City has a need to permanently move staff out of City Hall after staff were temporarily moved out of City Hall because of an odd smell
- Discussions have begun about transferring Pioneer Hall and the Community Center to APRC through a resolution by City Council in exchange for moving APRC staff out of The Grove
  - The City would be financially responsible for addressing the structural issues in both buildings prior to the transfer
- It was clarified that the City is not currently planning to upgrade other infrastructure in the facilities, such as restrooms which are not up to modern standards
  - A concern was raised that the City is moving staff out of City Hall because of less-than-ideal working conditions and APRC staff is now being asked to move to buildings that have less than ideal working conditions if upgrades to restrooms and other infrastructure is not made
    - Lessard acknowledged the concern, but did not state that upgrades other than structural repairs would be made by the City
- It was stated that long-term use of the gymnasium by the public and for programs is desired by APRC

**b) Conversation Clusters Seating Project Grant Proposal (Possible Action) – CHECK MEMO FOR ADDITIONAL BULLETS**

Black stated Glatt will be presenting a grant application that Black supports and would like to get the support of Commissioners as well. Glatt gave a presentation that included the following information and referenced photos included in the [meeting packet](#).

- This grant would be provided by AARP that seeks to encourage communities to take steps to become more livable and age friendly
- The Livable Ashland Alliance recommended that APRC create outdoor spaces where people can gather, specifically for conversation
- Traditionally, seating in parks looks onto the landscape and not directly facing other seating areas
- This proposal seeks to provide seating that is more conducive to conversation
- There are three seating areas being proposed
  - Lithia Park – Utilizing moveable and stackable chairs in the front of Lithia Park. This grant would fund a pilot project to see if this type of project is viable
  - Garfield Park – Install a semi-circle of three permanent benches near the corner of E Main and California St

- Glenwood Park – A circle of four permanent benches near the corner of Ashland St and Glenwood Dr
- A decision on the grant would be known in May and the project would need to be completed by November

#### Discussion

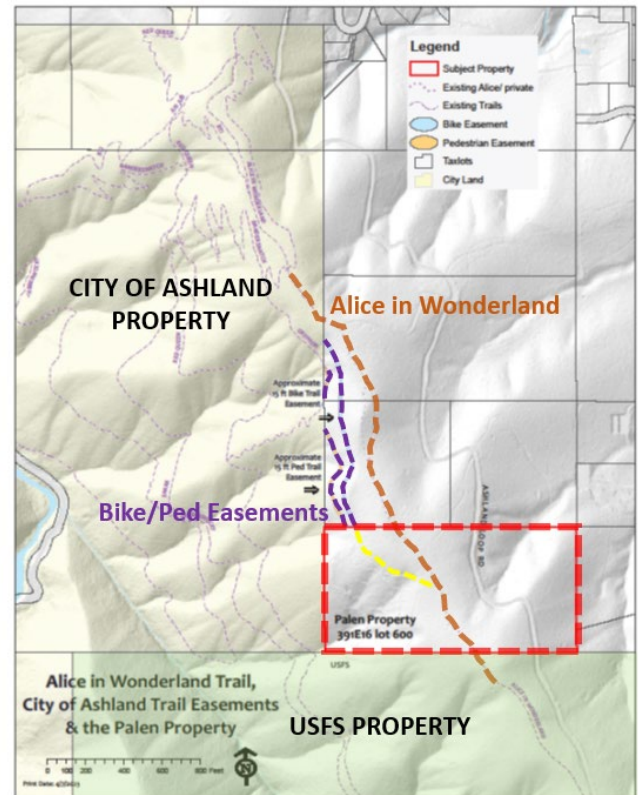
- Glatt clarified that the grant would pay for the benches and that APRC would provide in-kind labor through site preparation and installation
- A concern was raised about the potential impact towards maintenance and should be part of the planning
  - Glatt stated the area with permanent benches would be finished with decomposed granite that would decrease maintenance when compared to lawn and the chairs in Lithia Park would not be locked up daily, which would otherwise take staff time to secure

There was general support for the installation of permanent benches and the pilot program in Lithia Park.

#### c) Acquisition of Palen Property (Taxlot 391E16 - 600) (Action)

Black presented slides on screen and provided the following information

- A location map was displayed
- The property is located on Ashland Loop Road and the Alice in Wonderland Trail goes through the property
- It connects to existing bike/ped easements on adjacent properties
- Palen is bridging a gap of authorized use for the Alice in Wonderland Trail. The owner of this property could legally block the use of the Alice and Wonderland Trail at any time
- Purchase of this property would ensure that the legal use of this trail would be secured in perpetuity
- The asking price from the property is \$150,000 and would be paid for using Parks SDC funds
- The property would be designated as Open Space and managed by APRC
- This property has been identified for acquisition in 2005 Open Space Plan
- If approved tonight, it would go to City Council for final approval
- Staff recommends purchase of the property



**Motion:** Eldridge moved to approve the acquisition of the Palen Property known as Taxlot 391E16-600 for the price of \$150,000. Seconded by Adams.

**Discussion:** Eldridge stated surprise when she first realized that the entirety of the Alice and Wonderland Trail was not legally protected for use by hikers and bikers and that this parcel is the missing piece will protect this trail in perpetuity. Adams expressed support for Eldridge's statement and supports acquisition. Lewis stated he was part of the Trails Master Plan process and there are several more properties that would be nice to check off the acquisition list and this is one of them. Landt stated that although official support from AWTA and RVMBA has not been submitted, individual members have been extremely supportive, and it is safe to say that there is organizational support. Landt added that APRC is in the process of updating the Parks, Open Space, and Trails Master plan which includes a recommendation to remove a significant amount of property from the plan because it is no longer needed for city parks, but land that supports critical trail connections will remain in the plan.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes

#### d) Calle Guanajuato Rental Space Application Approval and Fee Increase Proposal (Action)

Dials stated this item was brought to the Commission last week, but due to an error to properly notice the meeting properly this item is being brought to the Commission to take action. A [recording of the improperly noticed meeting](#) has been uploaded to the APRC website for reference (note: the action taken at the Study Session has been considered null) Dials reviewed the memo included in the [meeting packet](#) and displayed [slides](#). The presentation included the following information.

- Staff will be reviewing and asking Commissioners to take action on the following items
  - Approval of 9 applications for rentals

- Updated boundary map
  - Use of the front of Lithia Park by the Artisans Market
  - Length of regular rental season / Addition of off-season rental period
  - Fee increase
- The following applications for rentals have been received.

#### Applications

- Skout
- 14 Calle Guanajuato
- Osteria La Briccola
- Louie’s Bar and Grill
- Bar Juliet
- Oberon’s
- Greenleaf
- Mix Bake Shop
- Lithia Artisans Market

#### Draft Boundary Map location

- R-6 & R-6a
- S-2a & S-2b
- A-7, A-6, A-8
- part of R-4a, R-4b, R-5
- part of R-3
- part of R-3 and part of R-4a
- part of R-3, R-2 & part of S-3
- R-1a & R-1b
- Access to all locations marked “A” & “S” & front of Lithia Park

- A draft of the updated [Boundary Map](#) was displayed on screen that displays to rental areas listed above.
- A [schematic of the areas](#) proposed for use by the Artisans Market was displayed on screen
- The last time Calle fees were raised was February of 2017
- The most current cost recovery numbers are from 2018 and show that we are only at 62% cost recovery.
- The Consumer Price Index for the West Region has had a cumulative increase of 20.6% since 2018.
- APRC Staff and Materials and Services costs have continued to increase each year.
- Staff is making the following recommendations

#### 1. Increase fees for the 2023, 2024 and 2025 season of operation.

- While an increase is being proposed for the artisans, it is less than the restaurant increase.
- The artisans currently pay 54% more than the restaurants pay for the weekend.
- By increasing the percentage for the artisans less than the restaurants, that discrepancy over time will diminish.
- Current fees for use of the Calle are \$5/\$8/\$5.50

Staff recommends an increase of 9% in 2023, 2024 and 2025 for the restaurants based on the stated factors in this memo. Staff recommends an increase of 7% for the Artisans in 2023, and no increase in 2024 or 2025. The example is meant to illustrate a 9% increase for restaurants per year (3-years) and a 7% increase for Artisans only in 2023:

- 2. Approve the Boundary Map for the 2023 Calle Guanajuato season.** Staff recommends approval of the 2023 Boundary Map. The requests for 2023 are similar to the 2022 requests.
  - 3. Artisans Market use of the front Lithia Park.** Staff recommends approval of the use of the front of the park for the 2023 season with no use of lawn or grass areas after November 1 or if a ½ inch of rainfall occurs within 3 days.
  - 4. Extending the “season of operation” for the agreement.** Staff recommends two options for renters to choose from: Option 1) eight (8) month season March 13<sup>th</sup>-November 12, 2023. Option 2) nine and a half (9.5) month season March 13-December 31, 2023, giving a choice to restaurants and the Lithia Artisan Market to extend the months of the season of operation with a plan in place by November 1 to remove equipment, chairs, tables, etc. if a flood threatens. **If the Commissioners choose to provide the option of (9.5) months, the per month fees would be prorated.**
  - 5. Allow for "Off-season” agreements for restaurants to utilize the Calle Guanajuato for seating.** Staff recommends an off-season be considered for January 1, 2024-March 10,2024 for any restaurants interested. Several restaurants have been participating this year in off-season opportunities. No fee increase.
- Dials clarified that the proposal has not changed from what was presented on April 5

**Motion:** Bachman moved to accept the recommendations contained in the six motions as presented in the packet material. Seconded by Adams.

**Discussion:** In response to a question from Commissioner Landt regarding grouping all six motions into one rather than making them individually, Dials clarified the motion made is acceptable. Bachman stated support for the fee schedule to be set for three years, which will provide certainty for renters and stated the increases are reasonable and still less than fair market value. Adams stated support and that the fee increase is a step in the right direction for cost recovery and does not constitute a rapid rate increase.

**Vote:** The vote was all yes

The six motions included in the memo, as approved, are as follows:

- I move to approve the 2023 Calle Guanajuato Boundary Map as presented.
- I move to approve the Lithia Artisans Market use of the front of the park during the regular season of March through November with no use of lawn or grass areas after November 1 or if a ½ inch of rainfall occurs within 3 days of the weekend rental period.
- I move to approve increasing the Calle Guanajuato Commercial Use fees by 9% for the restaurants for 2023, 2024 and 2025 and 7% for the Artisans for 2023 only with no increase in 2024 and 2025 for the regular season.
- I move to approve an eight (8) month season March 13<sup>th</sup>-November 12, 2023, and a nine and a half (9.5) month season March 13-December 31, 2023 giving a choice to restaurants and the Lithia Artisan Market to extend the months of the season of operation with a plan in place by November 1 to remove equipment, chairs, tables, etc. if a flood threatens.
- I move to approve an “off season” agreement for January 1, 2024-March 10, 2024, for any interested restaurants with no fee increase.
- I move to approve the 9 agreements listed in the staff report for Calle Guanajuato for the 2023 Season

#### **e) Discussion of the Process for the Assignment of Subcommittees (Possible Action)**

Landt introduced the item and reviewed the information included in the [meeting packet](#):

- The practice for subcommittee appointments has been for the Chair of the Commissioners to make the appointments
- This appointment season, a Commissioner objected to the process because it did not include consent of the Commissioners.
- Per assistant City Attorney Carmel Zahran, “in the absence of an explicit rule, if something is such a practice that the practice has become the rule, then I would say that practice controls.” In other words, the practice of the Chair making the appointments, in the absence of written rules or contravening practices, is the rule. Thus, the unwritten rule has been followed during the current and past appointment processes.

Landt recommended the following motion:

For future committee/subcommittee appointments, The Chair of the Commissioners, with the consent of a majority of the Commissioners, shall appoint the membership of APRC committees/subcommittees.

**Motion:** Bachman moved that for future committee/subcommittee appointments, The Chair of the Commissioners, with the consent of a majority of the Commissioners, shall appoint the membership of APRC committees and subcommittees. Seconded by Lewis.

#### **Discussion:**

- Bachman stated that it is not uncommon for bodies to operate based on past practices, but it is wise to codify decision making processes
- Lewis stated that it is commendable that there is interest in subcommittees, and it is exciting to have new members. Lewis added that that Chairs have inquired with Commissioners about desired appointments, but that positions are limited
- Adams provided the following motion as an alternative to the motion on the floor
  - The APRC Chairman will appoint Commissioners to each and every subcommittee, work group, or commission. Commissioners interested in a particular subject should inform the chairperson of their interest and the chairperson should take the expression of interest and/or a Commissioner preference into account when making appointment decisions.

Appointment shall be for a total of one year unless otherwise expressly stated. Appointments are generally made on an annual basis in January and the chairperson shall make efforts to rotate assignment if there is more than one Commissioner expressing a preference for a specific appointment. Once completed by the chair, assignments will be presented to Commissioners for consent represented by a majority vote.

**Vote:** Adams voted No. Bachman, Lewis, Eldridge and Landt voted yes.

Motion passed 4-1

#### **f) APRC Lookahead Review (Possible Action)**

The lookahead provided in the [meeting packet](#) was reviewed and the following changes will be made

- The group working on the Lithia Park Master Plan has not met, so this item will need to be pushed back
- The wildfire and maintenance policies will need to be pushed back to allow staff more time to work on them
- The Trails, Parks and Open Space Map Update will be moved up to May 3
- The Master Fees Schedule will be placed on the May 10 meeting for action
- The Glenview/Lithia Hillside Trail proposal will be sent to the Trails Subcommittee for review and a public input session will be scheduled to take place at a Commission meeting as well
  - It was clarified that the Lithia Park Master Plan will include language that would not preclude the approval of a bike trail within the boundaries of Lithia Park post master plan approval
- The Golf Course RFP has been added to the parking lot and will be scheduled as soon as the review process has concluded

Bachman suggested that the lookahead be developed further out into the year than it currently is. Black noted that many of the items are tentative and will be rescheduled as needed and at the direction of Commissioners. Landt stated the Lookahead should be reviewed by Commissioners at Study Sessions rather than the Regular Business Meeting

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

Dials stated the Oak Knoll Golf Course RFP closed on April 3 and two proposals were received. The review committee, comprised of Landt, Lewis, and staff) is in the process of scoring the proposals using the criteria approved by Commissioners.

#### **IX. UPCOMING MEETING DATES**

- a) APRC Study Session—May 3, 2023
  - Electronic Meeting—6 p.m.
- b) Ashland Senior Advisory Committee—May 8, 2023
  - Electronic Meeting—3:30 p.m.
- c) APRC Regular Business Meeting—May 10, 2023
  - Council Chambers—6 p.m.
- d) Bee City USA Subcommittee—May 16, 2023
  - Electronic Meeting—3:00 p.m.

#### **X. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

#### **Executive Session**

Landt called the executive session to order pursuant to ORD 192.660(2)(e) to deliberate with persons designated by the governing body to negotiate real property transactions.

Respectfully submitted  
Sean Sullivan, Business Operations Manager

