

**MINUTES FOR STUDY SESSION
ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
September 16, 2019
The Grove, Otte-Peterson Room
1195 E. Main Street**

Present: Commissioners Gardiner (Chair), Landt (Vice-Chair), Bell, Heller, Lewis; Director Black; Senior Services Superintendent Glatt; Parks Superintendent Oxendine, Assistant Sullivan

Absent: City Council Liaison Mayor Stromberg

CALL TO ORDER

Gardiner called the meeting to order at 5:30pm

PUBLIC INPUT

None

SIGNS, PLAQUES, AND MEMORIALS POLICY DISCUSSION

Oxendine reported that staff is seeking input on proposed updates to the Signs, Plaques, and Memorials Policy as recommended by the Current Parks, Conservation, and Maintenance Subcommittee included in the [meeting packet](#).

The discussion included the following points:

- The memorial application program will be made available through an online form and will also include an online map that identifies current memorials sites, available memorial sites and sites where an amenity that could contain a memorial is desirable
- Discussion on the section of the policy regarding an endowment include the following points:
 - The Ashland Parks Foundation (APF) does not currently have any endowments established
 - Endowments are typically created for a specific purpose where the proceeds of the investment are expended for that specific purpose while keeping the principle intact
 - Donations made to APF that are made for a specific project are considered restricted funds and are not an endowments. These restricted funds could be spent entirely on the specified project
 - An endowment for the maintenance of the Japanese Lantern recently approved to be installed in Lithia Park may be created by the donor of the sculpture
 - The justification for altering this section of the policy is because it referenced an endowment fund that does not exist
 - Black stated this is the only APRC policy that references an endowment and that is likely because endowments are gifts from individuals who would typically direct the purpose donation to APRC
- The language in the policy in section VI.B regarding process should clearly state that that Non-Standard Memorials will go to the Current Parks, Conservation, and Maintenance Subcommittee for a recommendation to Commissioners. Commissioners will make a final decision on Non-Standard Memorials
- The following items were discussed regarding Section VIII relating to a 10-year time period and moving plaques to a central location

- The 10-year time period would be instituted for Standard Memorials only
 - Landt suggested retiring the memorials based on the life of the item memorialized rather than a set time frame
 - Oxendine reiterated that the donors would be provided the ability to renew the memorial prior to retiring it after 10 years
 - The possibility of building a wall where memorials would be retired was discussed
 - Landt raised concerns about moving plaques to a central location without donations being made. If a donor would like a memorial in perpetuity, they should be required to make the appropriate donation based on the donation amount of 10 year increments
 - Heller advocated for a wall or central location where plaques can be relocated
 - Black reiterated that one of the intents of a memorial program is to benefit APRC and not become a burden. The time limit and relocation to a central location is a way to move away from indefinite memorials on amenities, such as benches, that require ongoing maintenance at the cost of APRC
 - Landt stated that current plaques could be retired to a central location, but moving forward plaques should not move to a central location, which could add to the overall maintenance burden of the Parks Division
 - There are a limited number of benches in Lithia Park that can be memorialized. Setting a time limit on memorials allows others to place memorials, while providing a benefit to APRC by having donors pay for maintaining amenities in parks
 - Black clarified that the structure of the current memorial program is operating at a loss. This proposal allows a transition out of maintaining memorials in perpetuity, which has been the practice to date
 - Heller stated the proposal to move plaques to a central location allows people of all economic backgrounds an opportunity to memorialize loved ones for extended periods of times rather than only those who are able to afford the cost of rededicating the memorials every ten years
 - Landt stated that of the process moving forward is that the memorial is not in perpetuity. The plaque would remain in place as long as the amenity is in good condition. Once the amenity requires repair or replacement the current memorial could be extended for the price if repair and replacement or made available for another donor
 - Bell stated that some amenities could remain in good repair for upwards of 100 years, which could be problematic
 - Black suggested that language be included that states the plaque will remain in place as long as it is in good repair, which is generally 10 years
 - Bell stated another goal of this program is to standardize amenities and replace existing amenities with more durable models
 - Heller stated that a fixed time frame will allow others in the community opportunities to memorialize loved ones over time as current available memorial sites are adopted
 - Standard Memorial amenities currently include benches, picnic tables, BBQs, drinking fountains and bear cans
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- Gardiner stated it would be more difficult to administer the program without the 10 year time limit
 - Black stated that if the timeframe is longer than 10 years the required donation amount should be reevaluated
 - Landt reiterated that moving plaques to a central location such as a wall could create maintenance issues for the Parks Division into the future

- Lewis stated that many other organization utilize memorial walls and this practice allows for plaques to be cycled out of the park and provides maintenance funds for existing and desired amenities making the program more utilitarian
- Landt recommended that the Section III.H regarding the cost of establishing a memorial should include the the full costs of installing the amenity and plaque as well as maintenance costs associated with the memorial itself and general parks maintenance activities
- There will be instances moving forward where certain plaques that memorialize people that have made a significant contribution to the City of Ashland or the parks system will be memorialized in perpetuity or on amenities not identified as a Standard Memorials. These memorials would be handled as Non-Standard and the specified timeframe outlined for Standard Memorials would not apply. The plaque for Marjorie O’Harra is an example of such a person
- Landt suggested researching other municipalities to identify how other programs are managed and reiterated the need to reduce maintenance costs over time
- For current Standard Memorials, the ten-year time frame would start upon adoption of the policy
- Lewis reiterated that the main reason the review was initially undertaken was to ensure that APR recoups the costs of installing memorials
- Since this policy does not address signs in parks, direction was given to have this policy only pertain to memorials and create a separate sign policy
- The attached Standard Park Memorial Administrative Procedures document is a guiding document for staff that outlines technical specifications for amenities and plaques when installing memorials. This document also lists the costs of memorials for existing and new amenities. All amenities are being geolocated and identified as to whether the amenity meets these guidelines so nonconforming amenities can be updated when next adopted as a memorial
- Section VI.B.1.b should be edited to reference the Standard Park Memorial Administrative Procedures document rather than the stated Standard Park Memorial Guidelines. Review of the memorials for compliance with this policy should also be included

IPM POLICY DISCUSSION

Oxendine opened the discussion on the [Integrated Pest Management Policy \(IPM\)](#), included in the [meeting packet](#), to identify potential changes to be included in the IPM annual review scheduled for September 23, 2019. Oxendine would like to discuss the No Spray Policy referred to in the IPM policy. Staff has been unable to clearly identify this policy. Oxendine stated that in his view, the IPM policy is essentially a no spray policy that allows for exemptions to be granted by Commissioners for special circumstances.

The discussion included the following points:

- Heller stated Bee City groups would like the policy to specifically state neonicotinoids are not being used, which is currently the case
- Black stated that practice of listing specific policy revisions at the end of policies, such as on page 9 of the IPM, will not be used going forward. Any updates to policies will be folded into the language of the policy itself.
- Landt recommended that the policy should clearly state at the beginning of the document that APRC does not use synthetic herbicides unless there has been a specific exemption made by Commissioners
- The current policy uses inconsistent terms when referring to chemically synthetic herbicides/pesticides. This will be addressed in the policy revision by defining the term and using it uniformly
- Landt stated that his reference to a No Spray policy is outlined in the revision made on 2/28/2011. This revision should be edited to state that Commissioners “directed” rather than “authorized” staff...

- The application standards in the Policy use the term “last resort” is inconsistent with the revision made on 2/28/2011. This and other inconsistencies are a result of listing revisions at the end of the policy, which will no longer be used to track revisions
- Staff will work on draft revisions to the IPM policy and will present to the Commissioners at a future date
- Exemptions to the IPM policy will not be listed in the policy itself. Exemptions will be recorded in an addendum. The poison oak exemption has never been used and could be pulled from allowed exemptions

Oxendine will give the annual IPM presentation at the next Regular Meeting. A report on organic pesticides will be included in the presentation.

ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF

In response to an inquiry from Heller, Black stated an update on the Japanese Garden will be made in October

In response to an inquiry from Landt, Black stated the Trails Master Plan will be added to a meeting agenda in the next few months

Sullivan relayed an invitation from Terry Doyle for a site visit and a preview of the sculpture of the Japanese Lantern

Gardiner attended the Forest Lands Commission meeting last Tuesday and reported on a recent rule change at the federal level that allows electric bicycles on trails where regular bicycles are allowed. This rule will not impact APRC managed trails

Black stated he will work on APRC approaching the Forest Lands Commission to make a recommendation to the Park Commissioners on the proposed the low angle mountain bike trail through Lithia Park

Gardiner mentioned an article in the Mail Tribune on the Medford Aquatic Center proposal

Black stated the recommendation from the Pool Ad-Hoc Committee does not address funding. Black will present on this topic at the October Study Session

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:26 pm

Respectfully Submitted

Sean Sullivan

Office Assistant II