

City of Ashland
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION
Minutes
September 17, 2018

ATTENDEES

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

Absent: City Council Liaison Mayor Stromberg

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gardiner called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. at North Mountain Park Nature Center, 620 N. Mountain Avenue.

PUBLIC INPUT

There was none.

JOINT STUDY SESSION WITH COUNCIL (INFORMATION)

Black explained that the Mayor and Ashland City Council were interested in meeting with APRC to discuss senior-related issues. The APRC had agreed that a community meeting could be of value – particularly now that Senior Services Superintendent Isleen Glatt was on board. While the APRC had envisioned an informal work session, the Council planned to convene a more formal process via a joint meeting during the regularly scheduled Council meeting on October 15, 2018, at 5:30 p.m. The meeting would be held in Council Chambers and televised by RVTV.

Black said the meeting would focus on the needs of seniors, with Superintendent Glatt presenting information from experts that would initiate dialogue between the APRC and the Council.

Gardiner described the process to date – reporting that the Senior Services Advisory Committee (S-SAC) had met twice since Glatt was hired. Subcommittees were developed to work on bylaws as well as the presentation for the upcoming joint session. The intent would be to initiate ongoing discussion regarding what seniors needed. In addition, S-SAC set aside the date of November 13, 2018, for a goal setting session that would ultimately result in tentative goals for the Senior Services Division, pending Commissioner approval. Once the bylaws were developed and vetted, they would also be presented to the Commission for approval.

In response to a question by Dyssegard, Black replied that the Committee would be recommending that the name Senior Services Advisory Committee be adopted. He said Glatt conducted an evaluation of the various Committee name iterations and would present her findings at the September 24 Regular Meeting.

Landt commented that APRC had already approved a Committee name. He questioned the need for a change, noting that the new name was being used prior to receiving approval. Black asked that the

new Superintendent be given an opportunity to explain her rationale for the proposed name change. He acknowledged the premature use of the name but said Glatt would request permission for the name change during her presentation.

Heller asked about a survey or other data that would indicate what services the seniors in Ashland might need. Black explained that Superintendent Glatt would most likely talk about best practices rather than specifics for the program in Ashland. Black noted that the joint session was an opportunity to look at the larger needs of the community as it ages and how the senior program fits into the plans for the greater good.

Lewis highlighted the importance of working together as a community on the development of a good senior program and said the joint session could be a first step in that direction. Gardiner agreed, stating that the senior program could provide a broad spectrum of services for the entire Ashland community. He voiced hope that the discussion would promote a greater understanding of APRC's capabilities so that services provided by APRC were not duplicated by other organizations and a unified program could develop that would benefit everyone.

Landt observed that a joint session with Council seemed premature. He stated that there were other important issues that could be addressed in a joint session. Gardiner explained that the goal was to get together in a common meeting so that issues concerning both Council and the APRC could be addressed. He stated that in his opinion, the City believed the meeting would provide an opportunity to work together. Although there might be other issues to discuss, this seemed to be an appropriate time to hear everyone's comments regarding services for seniors before the new Superintendent developed a strategic direction.

There followed additional discussion regarding the purpose of the joint meeting. Landt suggested that other topics related to seniors be included on the agenda so that as much as possible could be accomplished. Black replied that it was too soon to present a strategic plan or actionable items. He explained that a dialogue between the City and the APRC could create a collaborative environment prior to developing specifics.

Landt said he was supportive of a meeting with City Councilors and was hopeful that it would be productive.

Heller stated that he was appreciative of a joint meeting at a time when a more comprehensive senior program was under development. He said the City's consideration would be helpful.

PIONEER HALL RFP UPDATE (INFORMATION)

Dials noted that the City released an RFP (Request for Proposal) soliciting bids to lease Pioneer Hall. The RFP had an expiry of September 19, 2018. Dials highlighted direction received from the Commissioners to explore the possible acquisition of Pioneer Hall and the Ashland Community Center; however, the City's RFP contained no option for the Community Center.

Dials reiterated APRC's commitment to retaining both buildings for recreational purposes by either purchasing them in their current condition or leasing them after being renovated. She reported that

the buildings remained dilapidated and APRC continued to field complaints about their condition. Dials said the City tasked APRC with their maintenance and custodial needs.

Dials indicated that staff planned to reply to the City's RFP with a letter discussing background information regarding Pioneer Hall. She asked for further direction from the Commissioners regarding APRC's response.

Black said a potential donor was willing to work with APRC on renovations upon acquisition of Pioneer Hall. Black said he spoke with the City Administrator about APRC's response to the RFP. During that discussion, he talked about APRC's preference for purchasing the building and was assured that a letter detailing the intent to purchase would be given due consideration.

In response to a question by Landt, Black noted that the background information would most likely be included in the letter to the City. He called for input or further direction from the Commissioners prior to completion of the letter.

Landt noted that the rough draft did not include a request to transfer ownership of the building. He stated that the letter should also include a request to transfer ownership of the Community Center.

Black agreed, noting that because the solicitation addressed by the RFP did not include the Community Center and as APRC did not intend to complete the RFP, he wished to confirm direction from the Commissioners.

Landt suggested that the letter present two options: the first being that APRC would continue leasing Pioneer Hall once the building was renovated by the City ("brought up to a reasonable standard"), with APRC given complete control of the building. He said APRC must be able to operate on a break-even basis. The second option would be a transfer of ownership "as-is." Black noted that once the building or buildings were transferred to APRC, the donor would step in to renovate.

Gardiner said APRC was willing to refurbish Pioneer Hall so that residents could rent the building for special events as well as participate in recreational opportunities on site. With a transfer of ownership, APRC could take responsibility for the building and upgrade the facility. He emphasized that the building's dilapidated state must be corrected.

Lewis noted that the letter's background information would be helpful in making the case that leasing Pioneer Hall in its current condition was untenable. He suggested outlining the issues as APRC viewed them, explaining the necessity for full control of the building so that the building could become more functional. Lewis agreed with the others who stated that the Community Center should be included in the letter to the City.

Landt said it should be made clear that APRC did not have funding for renovations – that just as the City could not afford improvements, neither could APRC without a donor. Any agreement reached should be contingent upon the donor.

There followed a discussion about other civic groups possibly interested in the buildings and/or the City's intention to use the facility as an emergency shelter. Black indicated that using the facility as a

shelter deteriorated the building. Dials noted that even though the City cleaned the building after each use, APRC staff had to follow up with additional efforts. She stated that APRC received many complaints about the condition of the building.

Lewis emphasized that the building was not suitable as a shelter. Landt added that APRC was not willing to participate in continuing with the status quo for Pioneer Hall.

It was agreed that every effort would be made to provide the City with an updated letter by September 19, 2018, or as soon thereafter as possible.

BUTLER-PEROZZI FOUNTAIN DISCUSSION (INFORMATION)

Black briefly reviewed the history of the Butler-Perozzi Fountain and its connection to the late John Fregonese, who spearheaded renovations of the fountain in the 1980s. He noted that in honor of Fregonese, the family started a Go-Fund-Me effort to raise funds for fountain repairs.

Black stated that the water feature was in working order but unknowns included the current condition of the stone and/or the scope of renovations needed. He stated that their son, Scott Fregonese, had relayed that it would be easier to raise money for known renovations rather than a general need. Black commented that Fregonese suggested going out to bid or conducting some other form of evaluation to assess the condition of the fountain and the surrounding infrastructure. Once specifics were known, benefactors would be more amenable to donating necessary funding.

Black reiterated that APRC was in the process of developing a Master Plan for Lithia Park and priorities had not yet been assigned. He stated that in his opinion, the Butler-Perozzi Fountain could become a high priority, given Commissioner support. He indicated that the fountain was historically valuable and of immense interest to the community. Black stated that while it was important to address the fountain within the Lithia Park Master Plan, it might be advisable to move forward given the possibilities for outside funding.

Landt asked about the condition of the marble. Black replied that according to Scott Fregonese, the condition of the marble was not as bad as previously discussed and repairs might be less costly than earlier estimates.

Lewis referred to a previous plan to set aside \$500,000 for repair or replacement of the infrastructure surrounding the fountain – a plan that never came to fruition due to budgetary constraints. He stated that landscape architect Kerry KenCairn had prepared a detailed account of the project, suggesting that the documentation might be available upon request.

Lewis emphasized the need for an historic evaluation. He recommended collaboration with the Historic Commission and other preservationists so that the fountain and its surround could be appropriately restored rather than replaced. Doing so would be cost-effective and would ensure that the intrinsic value was protected. Black noted that the former Superintendent of Parks had begun the work of obtaining an evaluation and there was a possibility that the work could shed some light. Lewis agreed, stating that there were experts in historical construction who could assess the damage and propose

solutions that would preserve what should be saved rather than replicated. He stated that as the third most historically significant structure in Ashland, proceeding carefully was warranted.

Landt asked whether the Fregonese family was interested in restoring the surrounding infrastructure as well as the fountain itself. Black responded that Scott Fregonese had indicated an interest in the waterworks, stucco repairs and landscaping. He agreed that the surrounding infrastructure should be assessed.

Lewis said APRC could assist the Fregonese family in raising funds by offering matching funds or researching available grants and other types of financing.

Gardiner advocated for evaluating the project to determine the estimated costs and the options presented. He noted that prospective donors would most likely find the specifics helpful.

Landt expressed concern about renovating the stairs to Granite Street – stating that over time, the terrain has changed significantly, leaving no room to build the stairs to code. There followed a short technical discussion about the engineering challenges involved.

Lewis volunteered to work with the Fregonese family and act as a liaison for the project – connecting APRC with the experts who could evaluate the project and develop solutions for any construction issues that might arise.

Miller noted that the fountain had been renovated at significant cost 31 years prior. He questioned a financial outlay for historical aspects of the fountain if longevity could not be assured. Lewis replied that historical renovations were often more frugal than replacement. He noted that 31 years ago the cost to restore the fountain had been approximately \$80,000.

Landt stated that the main issue with the infrastructure was the cement surrounding the fountain. He stated that concrete should last 50 years, but because it had not been done correctly it needed to be addressed. Lewis added that the stucco finishing was affected by the weather, requiring periodic maintenance and repair.

TRAIL MASTER PLAN PROGRESS REPORT (INFORMATION)

Dyssegard reported that the Trails Master Plan Update Committee had teleconferenced with consultant Mark Mularz on Friday, September 7, 2018. Mularz had prepared a template for the Master Plan and committee members were pleased with his initial efforts. Since then, Mularz had completed formatting of the 17 Chapters, the Executive Summary and Acknowledgments but still needed additional photos and caption copy.

Dyssegard said she and Committee member Luke Brandy would work on the first round of edits and an edited copy would be available for review at the October 5th Trails Master Plan meeting.

Black noted that Committee members were happy with the look and feel of the document. Lewis agreed, stating that discussion focused on formatting for an online version and a possible smart phone version. He stated that Committee member Jim McGinnis suggested that the smart phone version be developed so that maps were available to people in the field via cell phone. He stated that no decision

had been made to add additional formatting, but it was an impressive technology that was not available ten years prior when the original Trails Master Plan was compiled.

Lewis expressed appreciation for the talents of participating Committee members. He noted that the contracted format editor had received a well-written, well-vetted copy of the Plan. Editors / Committee members David Chapman and Stephen Jensen were responsible for tying together the work of the full Committee, who had written, revised and updated chapters from the 2006 version.

Miller noted that one of the collaborating agencies was the Forest Lands Commission. He suggested that Commission members be listed individually in the Appendix in keeping with other contributing agencies.

There followed a short discussion of next steps. Black noted that the Master Plan would be submitted to the Transportation Commission for any suggestions they might have, then presented to APRC Commissioners and Planning Commissioners for approval and a recommendation for adoption by City Council. Once adopted, the TMP would be incorporated into the City's Comprehensive Plan.

ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS/STAFF

- ***Pickleball***

Heller stated that a pickleball class had been offered through OLLI. The class was well received with approximately 40 people registering. Of those, 16 played nightly for five evenings a week.

- ***Parks Superintendent***

Black introduced the new APRC Parks Superintendent Mike Oxendine, stating that they were pleased to welcome him to the organization.

- ***Jackson County Active Transportation Committee***

Black said he would be attending meetings to develop a Jackson County Active Transportation Plan. He noted that this would be helpful in developing guidelines for biking, walking and other alternative forms of transportation.

- ***Change of Venue***

Landt highlighted the change of venue for the evening's study session, stating that he was appreciative of the signage announcing the change. He noted that while changes were sometimes inevitable, signage could inform the community of alternative locations.

- ***Trash Receptacles***

Landt noted that bear-proof trash receptacles were beginning to appear in park locations. He asked about the plan for the signage informing people that both openings could be used for trash disposal. Landt also asked that the recycling baskets be re-installed on the receptacles to encourage recycling. Black replied that APRC was in the process of installing the receptacles and would be affixing signage as soon as the stickers arrived. Recycling baskets would be attached.

- ***Forest Lands Commission***

Miller said he presented information about the Lithia Park Master Plan at a meeting of the Forest Lands Commission. He asked the Commissioners for feedback regarding possible development of a mountain bike trail on the eastside slope of Lithia Park.

Miller stated that it was generally agreed that building on the slope could be detrimental to the hillside – a logical rationale that was also a consensus of the Forest Lands Commissioners. Chair Frank Betlejewski had advised against it because management of the hillside was problematic.

- ***Ad-Hoc Pool Subcommittee***

Miller said he was contacted by a candidate for the ad-Hoc Pool Subcommittee who had submitted his application in a timely manner. He had turned it in at The Grove but had not heard back. After ascertaining that there was no record of the submittal, Miller said he let the applicant know he could attend all meetings as a member of the public and participate through the public hearing process. He assured the applicant that he would be heard.

Black said two applications had been lost – one submitted through the City Recorder’s office and the other that Miller pointed out, submitted via The Grove. The City forwarded the one application long after the request for submittals expired. There was no record of the other submittal. Black expressed regret that neither applicant was acknowledged. He suggested that one rectifying option under consideration was the need for an Ashland School District liaison. Black stated that the head swim coach at Ashland High School, one of the lost applications, was willing to serve in that capacity.

Landt cautioned against making the ad-Hoc Pool Subcommittee too large. Lewis noted that applicants who had not been selected – regardless of the reason – could re-submit and ask to be on the backup list. He stated that as with all volunteer activities, there was always attrition and therefore a need for additional members.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:55 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.