

Background

Measure 15-210 would move management of the Parks Director from elected Park & Recreation Commissioners to an unelected City Manager. This would create confusion and conflict as the City Charter still gives “management and control” of parks to APRC Commissioners. But if measure 15-210 passed, the Parks Director and staff would be under the direction of the City Manager, who reports to the City Council. Given recent City Council’s recent questionable involvement in minor APRC business, increased conflicts would seem to be inevitable. The Parks Director would be in the untenable position of having two bosses, ostensibly directed by APRC Commissioners, but would be hired, fired and paid by the City Manager. And,

Discord would likely become the norm in future years as Commissioners, Councils and the City Manager all tried to have their say and way. Measure 15-210 attempts to solve a problem that would be more appropriately resolved by a Memorandum of Understanding than by a change to the City’s constitution, the Charter.

Measure 15-211 would allow $\frac{3}{4}$ of food and beverage tax revenue to go to virtually anything that the City Manager recommends to City Council. APRC Commissioners have supported directing $\frac{3}{4}$ of F&B revenue to APRC operating expenses, replacing property taxes dollar for dollar. APRC Commissioner Landt believes this to be a wiser use of the F&B revenues that the voters originally approved to support parks.

Resolution of APRC Commissioners

14 Sept 2022

Whereas, the Ashland Parks Commission was established by a vote of the electorate in 1908; and,

Whereas, said Parks Commission has had control and management of over park land, resources and staffing since 1908; and,

Whereas, said Parks Commission has built and maintained a first-class Park and Recreation system for the citizens of Ashland with the help of thousands of volunteers; and,

Whereas, passage of Measure 15-210 would be a significant step in ending APRC's role in managing Parks operations; and

Whereas, passage of Measure 15-210 would lead to confusion and conflict between APRC Commissioners, City Council and the City Manager; and

Whereas, passage of Measure 15-211 would likely exacerbate the APRC's already difficult budget environment; and,

Whereas, the APRC Commissioners believe they are the proper elected body to carry out the mission of preserving and improving Ashland's public lands;

Be it Resolved that the APRC opposes both Measures 15-210 and 15-211.