

**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO
VACANT ELECTED POSITION
ASHLAND PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSIONER¹**

Please type or print answers to the following questions and submit to the City Recorder at City Hall, 20 E Main Street, or email melissa.huhtala@ashland.or.us. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the City Recorder at 541.552.2084 (p) or 541.613.0194 (c). **Attach additional sheets if necessary.**

Name _____

Address _____

Occupation _____ Phone: Home _____

Work _____

Email _____

1. What do you think are the biggest issues facing the Parks and Recreation Commission currently?

Access to the outdoor spaces, especially those managed by the Parks and Recreation Commission, so clearly enhances the quality of life to many Ashland residents and visitors to the area. I think the biggest issues facing the Parks and Recreation Commission are the challenges around accessibility. I use the word accessible with several separate, but related, ideas in mind. First, I like to imagine a focus of the commission being on the availability of the spaces to the public. What draws people to a particular park, what is its capacity, how well maintained is a trail? These are important issues that I imagine require the continued attention of the commissioners. Second, I think focusing on issues of physical accessibility, where possible, is an area for growth. Third, there are opportunities for continued access to outdoor education (this is one of my favorite things about many of the parks/trails). Public involvement in educational opportunities will increase outdoor opportunities that the APRC provides whilst increasing the public's knowledge of local ecology, geology, hydrology, etc.

2. Do you have experience working with local government, paid or volunteer?

If yes, please describe:

I have indirect experience with local government. As an environmental consultant, I worked with the local town and state (commonwealth) governments in Massachusetts. Here in Ashland, Oregon, I work with the Jackson County Watermeters office to monitor part of the watershed as well as the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality.

3. Do you have past non-governmental volunteer experience?

If yes, please describe:

While I was studying at the University of Oregon (2010-2016) I volunteered for the local non-profit outdoor education organization Nearby Nature. I led weekly nature walks for local schools who visited Alton Baker park. I also served on Nearby Nature's board of directors for 2 years and since moving from Eugene, Oregon I have been a member of their advisory board.



¹ Article XIX of the City Charter establishes the position of Park Commissioner as an elected position. Article XXII establishes the Recreation Commission and states that the positions of Recreation Commissioner shall be filled by the elected Park Commissioners.

4. What is your educational background?

Please describe:

My educational background is in Geology. I have a PhD in biogeochemistry from the University of Oregon (Department of Earth Sciences) and a Masters degree in Hydrogeology from Illinois State University. I did postdoctoral research at Cornell University.

I also have experience in environmental policy. In 2017, I worked in Washington, D.C. for the Science Policy division of the American Geophysical Union and from 2017-2019 I worked with the USDA researching agricultural best practices for both water conservation and arsenic attenuation in rice paddies.

5. Why are you interested in this position?

I am interested in this position because I want to find a way to serve my community in the best way I can. I love the outdoors and have dedicated much of my life to studying it and educating others about natural processes. If I can volunteer my time in a way to help others experience and appreciate nature, I would feel like I would be making an important difference for the community in which I live. Thanks for your consideration.

February 15, 2022

Date

Signature

