

City of Ashland
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Signs, Plaques & Memorials Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
March 14, 2017

ATTENDEES

Present: Commissioners Heller and Lewis; Interim Parks Superintendent McFarland; Executive Assistant Dyssegard; Park Tech II Hyde

Absent: None

CALL TO ORDER

Interim Superintendent McFarland called the meeting to order at 2:33 p.m. at the Parks Admin Office, 340 S. Pioneer.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There was none.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was none.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

McFarland requested the removal of the item "Rich's Trail Naming Request." The group agreed to remove the item. McFarland explained that this topic related to a trail above Lithia Park (near Bandersnatch) developed in cooperation with Ashland Woodland and Trails Association (AWTA) and a specific member by the name of Rich. McFarland said AWTA had recently set a new policy for naming trails.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Applegate Trail Marker Request

Bob Black of Trails West, Inc., was introduced and invited to speak.

Black said Trails West, Inc., founded in 1970, is a volunteer non-profit historical organization of Emigrant Trail enthusiasts who research, identify, mark and aid in the preservation of trails used by pioneers and gold seekers to reach California and southern Oregon during the mid-19th century. Over 700 markers had been placed along 2,000 miles of trail, from southern Idaho, across Nevada, into California and southern Oregon. Trails West also publishes two types of trail guides to aid those interested in historical trail routes. 20 markers are intended for placement in summer 2017 and 20-30 more in summer 2018. Upon their completion, the project will be finished. Through surveys, Trails West identified one Applegate Trail route marker located at the current Ashland Creek Park on Hersey Street.

The T-shaped signs, measuring six feet tall by 18" wide, are fabricated from 90-lb railroad rail steel and weigh approximately 200 pounds [markers are four feet tall once placed in the ground]. The Ashland Creek Park sign would be designated as Marker A-75 with GPS coordinates 42° 12.130' latitude and 122° 42.744' longitude. Engraved aluminum faceplates attached to the top crossbar feature quotes from pioneer diaries for each specific location. If approved, the sign at Ashland Creek Park would read: "Make 10 miles and camp at a considerable sized creek [Ashland Creek], the best camp we have had for several [days]. Road very good. High mountains around.' By Virgil K. Pringle, October 11, 1846." If approved, all materials and labor will be provided free of charge

by Trails West. McFarland said APRC staff would be able to assist with the sign installation, tentatively set for Friday, June 23.

Discussion and Conclusion

Heller asked whether the marker would be visible to bikers at night and not pose a safety hazard. Black talked about the proposed location and said it would be off the walkway. McFarland suggested grinding down the edges of the marker and adding a reflector to make it more visible at night; Black said it could be done.

The group discussed the process for accepting the project, which included filling out the application, approving it at the subcommittee level, notifying APRC Commissioners at a future business meeting and planning and attending the installation on June 23.

Commissioners Lewis and Heller approved the project as outlined and discussed. Lewis said he would provide a brief report to the Commissioners at their next business meeting. The group thanked Black for his efforts and provided him with a completed Emigrant Trail Marker Placement Request application signed by APRC Director Michael Black.

2. Memorial Pollinator Garden Suggestions

Dyssegard said a memorial donation of \$5,000 was offered by the father of a deceased Ashland resident. He initially requested a bench in Lithia Park but was open to other thoughts. After speaking with other APRC staff, it was discovered that a pollinator garden was suggested by the Bee City USA (BCU) Subcommittee for placement outside the main entryway to The Grove. Upon hearing of that option, the donor expressed some interest but felt that another location closer to Lithia Park might work better for his family. Staff told the donor that two pollinator gardens could possibly be placed for a total of \$5,000: one at The Grove and the other at the front entrance of the Community Center. Once the pollinator gardens were in place, plaques could be installed at each location: one plaque about the BCU pollinator friendliness and a second memorializing the deceased loved one.

Discussion and Conclusion

Hyde talked about using pollinator friendly and deer-resistant plants in front of the Community Center. He said a large number of homeless people frequently circulated around Pioneer Hall and the Community Center and he would not want the plants trampled upon. He suggested installing rocks underneath the pollinator friendly beds. Another suggestion was to plant a lavender garden at Ashland Creek Park on Hersey Street in a location currently planted with star thistle. He said lavender is both a great pollinator for bees and deer resistant.

Lewis suggested giving the donor more than two options. Heller suggested talking to the family openly about the large homeless problem around the Community Center. McFarland said Ashland Creek Park went through a long public process before the plans were set in place. If changes were made, staff would need to review the master plan and make sure any changes aligned with it. Hyde suggested using many different varieties of lavender and marking them, thereby creating a lavender demonstration garden that could also be a memorial bed. Heller said star thistle was a deterrent for those wishing to trample vegetation. Taking it out and planting lavender could be a drawback for keeping people out of the vegetation.

Four donation options were discussed:

1. The Grove entrance – pollinator garden
2. Community Center entrance – pollinator garden
3. Ashland Creek Park – lavender demonstration area / pollinator garden
4. Cotton Memorial – “large timber” picnic tables

Hyde estimated that the Community Center plants would cost between \$1,200 and \$2,000. Since the Community Center is a City-owned building, Lewis suggested running any plans by Acting City Administrator John Karns first. Hyde suggested having BCU volunteers help with the pollinator gardens, allowing them a sense of ownership in terms of design, planting and weeding. Heller said he heard that BCU was excited about The Grove option and they

might be interested in helping with planting and maintenance. Since a BCU Subcommittee meeting was scheduled for the next day, Heller said he would check with them and let McFarland know the outcome of the discussion.

3. Brainstorming Discussion about APRC Memorial Options in Lithia Park

McFarland said there were no benches or picnic tables remaining for memorials in Lithia Park. He said staff tried to direct donors to the other seventeen parks in Ashland but most wanted Lithia. Staff would be open to hearing other thoughts for capturing donation dollars while providing value for donors wishing to honor their loved ones. Options discussed included:

- A giving wall in Lithia Park
- Memorial bricks around the Butler-Perozzi Fountain
- Cotton Memorial – reconstruction of 20-foot picnic tables (\$2,000 per table)

Discussion

It was noted that the upcoming Lithia Park Master Plan would hopefully include a discussion about memorials. Until the plan was completed, no large amenities could be added such as memorial walls or a brick system. The Cotton Memorial picnic tables were discussed as the best short-term option for potential donors.

Additional Discussion

Dyssegard said the subcommittee might wish to review their policy on signs, plaques and memorials as some of the points were out of date. She offered to send the policy to them by email.

SET NEXT MEETING DATE

The subcommittee agreed to meet every six months, with the next meeting occurring in September 2017.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Dyssegard, Executive Assistant
Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission