

City of Ashland
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Regular Meeting Minutes
October 23, 2017

Present: Commissioners Gardiner, Heller, Landt, Lewis, Miller; Director Black; Recreation Superintendent Dials; Interim Parks Superintendent McFarland; Executive Assistant Dyssegard; Assistant Manuel

Also present: APMC Staff, Joe Hyde

Absent: City Council Liaison Mayor Stromberg

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gardiner called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main Street.

APPROVAL OR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF MINUTES

Golf Subcommittee	August 17, 2017	acknowledged
Trails Master Plan Committee	September 8, 2017	acknowledged
Trails Master Plan Committee	September 29, 2017	acknowledged

Study Session – September 18, 2017

Motion: Landt moved to approve the Minutes of September 18, 2017, as presented. Heller seconded.
The vote was all yes

Regular Meeting – September 25, 2017

Motion: Landt moved to approve the Minutes of September 25, 2017 as presented. Miller seconded.
The vote was all yes

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- *Open Forum*

Christine Abbott-Stokes of 215 Nutley Street in Ashland, Oregon, was called forward.

Abbott-Stokes explained that her family moved to Ashland for the schools and the community and her four children attended Briscoe Elementary School. She spoke about her background as a retired teacher with expertise in environmental education and design.

Abbott-Stokes asked that APMC begin the process of converting Briscoe school grounds into a neighborhood green space, starting with an appraisal. She shared the experience of purchasing a portion of the property on Nutley Street that, in her opinion, was approved because they had submitted a proposal early in the process. She advised that the Commissioners be prepared by formulating a plan and an offer to move forward with the purchase of the Briscoe property. Abbott-Stokes stated that the preservation of green space was not just an opportunity, it was a positive statement of intention and value that would preserve a neighborhood park as community space for future generations. Once completed, Lincoln School would provide another similar opportunity.

Sue Wilson of 1056 Dead Indian Memorial Road in Ashland, Oregon, was called forward.

Wilson stated that she would be correcting the inaccurate summary of her public testimony at the APRC Regular Meeting held on September 25, 2017. Wilson presented objections to the use of subjective words instead of objective reporting, the minimization of critical statements made by her about actions taken by APRC and the omission of descriptive commentary that was a part of her testimony. The words “incorrect conclusions, very poor recommendations, false statements, faulty recommendations and negligent actions” were summarized as misleading. Wilson reported that in her opinion, the summary misstated what was said.

Wilson suggested that APRC mirror the method utilized by the City of Ashland Recorder for recording public testimony, with a link to the submitted, written materials. She asked that MP.3 audio files of the APRC Senior Subcommittee meetings be posted on the website along with the Minutes, with all made accessible to the public.

Melissa Mitchell-Hooge of 271 High Street in Ashland, Oregon, was called forward.

Mitchell-Hooge noted that there were currently 281 members and 18 business sponsors belonging to the group called Save our Schools and Playgrounds. A leadership team of ten had been appointed that included former City Administrator Brian Almquist and other strong supporters of the effort.

Mitchell-Hooge urged APRC and the Ashland City Council to negotiate the purchase of the Briscoe property with the Ashland School District. She presented several ideas for use of the buildings and grounds. Mitchell-Hooge discussed the historic nature of the site while noting the possibilities for renovating them into City offices, APRC offices, a Community Center and other uses. She highlighted the opportunity to meet the needs of the City while preserving a neighborhood park and historic structure.

Mitchell-Hooge stated that the Ashland School Board voted on October 9, 2017, to divest itself of the entire property. She commented that preserving the property had entered a critical phase and she recommended quick action toward purchasing the property.

Dennis H. Miller of 725 Terra Avenue, # 32A, in Ashland, Oregon, was called forward.

Miller noted that he had brought slips and falls to the attention of the APRC Commissioners on June 26, 2017, because he experienced a fall and was injured. He said slips and falls were common, particularly for those ages 60 and older.

Miller presented a pamphlet that addressed the topic, stating that he was unable to find copies on display in various businesses and City agencies. He relayed that he had been actively checking local outlets to see if copies of the pamphlet were displayed, and in the process discovered that the pamphlet was in the process of being revised. He noted that it might be some time before an updated version would be available.

Miller asked APRC to pursue the matter and to distribute copies to appropriate locations. He stated that the information was helpful and could possibly reduce the number of injuries.

Miller noted that a local clinic on slips and falls was scheduled for Wednesday October 25, 2017. He applauded the effort but suggested that distribution of the pamphlet would reach a larger audience.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were none.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- ***Bear Cans Update (Information; potential action)***

Black said he was directed by the Commission to find a source of funding for bear proof trash cans. He reviewed the quote for trash cans with two openings – one for garbage and one for recycling. The cost was estimated to be approximately \$870 - \$900 per receptacle.

Black noted that the Lithia Park experienced the most bear activity and concerns about bears were more prevalent there than elsewhere in the APRC system. Currently there were approximately 70 trash receptacles in the Park. APRC staff reduced the number of cans from 88 to 70 after conducting an evaluation identifying locations where trash cans received the most use.

Black presented an option for 25 double cans for distribution within Lithia Park. He highlighted 11 locations where the new cans could be placed as recommended by staff. He suggested that a possible source of funding for the cans could come from the Beach Creek project savings. An estimated \$50,000 surplus was expected – primarily due to work completed by staff and donations from the contractors responsible for the project. Currently project expenses were at approximately \$19,000. \$75,000 had been originally budgeted and some monies should be set aside to cover any unexpected expenses before the project was finalized. New work at two downstream sites along Beach Creek needed to be completed where small erosion problems occurred. In addition, a bridge abutment close to the stream had eroded. There was no longer time during the season to bolster the stream banks but the work was slated for completion next fall. In the meantime, staff had reinforced the bank with sandbags for the winter. It was estimated that repairs would cost approximately \$20,000.

Black noted that there was approximately \$30,000 to purchase 25 of the double bear cans. He indicated that the bear cans could be judiciously spaced for maximum exposure and a reduction in the number of cans targeted by the bears. He stated that it would be difficult to find funding for all 70 cans currently in use.

Heller asked about the prevalence of bears in autumn and whether the number of calls regarding bears had decreased.

Park Technician II Joe Hyde was introduced and asked to reply. Hyde stated that there was a possibility that the bears would focus on unprotected cans. He reported that there were “hot spots” in the Park, particularly at the group sites where larger numbers of people congregated. He added that the bear proof cans would reduce the amount of household garbage deposited in APRC trash cans.

In response to the question by Heller, Hyde noted that bears seemed to be present year-round. He stated that the issue was not as apparent during the off seasons, as with fewer people in the Park, disturbances were less noticeable.

Landt expressed his appreciation for the insights provided by staff. He suggested that setting aside funds from the Beach Creek project might be premature. Landt explained that while there would most likely be left-over funds from that project, the specific dollar amount was unknown. He acknowledged that the estimated \$20,000 for the downstream fix was high, but noted that repairs for the upper section of the creek could be more expensive than anticipated. Landt stated that more information was needed before making a decision to purchase the trash receptacles.

Landt recommended consulting with a firm such as Northwest Biological Consulting, experts on the mediation of streams. In a discussion with the CEO of the company, Landt stated that it was agreed that there was a potential for a breakdown of the overflow channel. If the area flooded, the bridge abutments would be at risk – with serious consequences.

Landt talked about the advantages of waiting for the Lithia Park Master Plan. He noted that Master Plan consultants might recommend specific locations for bear-proof cans. Determining the location for trash cans prior to completion of the Master Plan might result in re-positioning the cans in other areas, a potentially disruptive and cost-prohibitive change.

Landt advised a cautious approach to plans for recycling given the uncertainty surrounding the issue. He stated that China was no longer accepting co-mingled recycling material. Landt noted that according to his information, local disposal/recycling companies were requesting that recycling be sent to the landfills.

Landt indicated that if the situation with China was not resolved, recycling in Ashland and elsewhere might be significantly changed – negating efforts to recycle. He talked about other issues regarding recycled materials and stated that he did not want to give people the false impression that Ashland was recycling if indeed the materials ended up in the landfill. Landt suggested that more research would be appropriate prior to installing permanent recycling containers.

Gardiner highlighted the destruction caused by bears – describing personal experiences with trash spread through Lithia Park. He stated that after decimating the trash in Lithia Park, it was not uncommon for the bears to move on to neighborhood trash cans as well. Neighbors had been asking for resolution to the bear problem for a number of years and in his opinion, it was important to take action promptly to resolve as much of the situation as possible.

Gardiner stated that he understood that Beach Creek was a concern. He commented that the matter could be postponed for a year or two but that he felt it was unfair to the community to do so. Gardiner referred to the current system for recycling bottles and cans, indicating that the trash receptacles did not have to be labeled for recycling.

Landt replied that if the bear-proof trash cans were not used for recycling, then single cans might be more appropriate and more cost effective. Black stated that the cost would be less but not half of the cost for a two-slot container.

Heller commented that to date there had been no communications that the recycling program was changing. He stated that he would prefer that APRC continue their efforts to recycle in the hope that a solution would be found to allow for continued recycling. He advocated for continued collection of bottles and cans until further notice.

Gardiner asked about the cost of installing the bear-proof trash containers. Black noted that the containers would need to be secured to a concrete pad or a post that had been cemented into the ground. Black estimated that the cost to install each unit would be approximately \$330.

Lewis stated that he was in agreement that action should be taken to reduce the damage done by the bears. He suggested that once the Beach Creek repairs were made, the amount of money available to purchase bear-proof containers would be known and the number and types of units could be debated at that time.

Landt indicated that his concerns would be addressed fairly quickly – possibly within the next month or two. He stated that once a consultant assessed the Beach Creek situation and the cost-estimates for the units were

secured, a decision could be made. With regard to recycling, he suggested that a way forward should be apparent fairly soon.

Gardiner reported that the consensus seemed to be to delay the purchase of the bear-proof trash containers until further information was obtained and evaluated. He stated that he would advocate for purchase of the units before spring when bears woke up from hibernation.

Landt relayed that he would support that goal. He advocated for further discussion regarding recycling in Lithia Park as well. He stated that it was his opinion that parks were not optimal places for recycling. Heller relayed that in his opinion, recycling bottles and cans would be a step forward.

Black stated that staff's recommendation would probably be the double-slot units, given that the budget would limit the number of cans in the Park that are bear-proof. He noted that the double units would provide space for 80 gallons of refuse versus 40 gallons for the single units and were cost effective at a price discounted for volume. How to best label the cans for trash or recycling could be discussed prior to installation.

Black committed to getting a more specific estimate for the Beach Creek repairs. He stated that he would review other possible sources of funding as a contingency.

Landt suggested that further evaluation of the optimal locations for the units take place as part of the Lithia Park Master Plan.

Parks Technician Hyde talked about the rationale for the locations proposed by staff. He stated that staff's evaluation included consideration of the food and drink that people brought into the park, where people congregated and where the most concentrated uses were. He advocated for cans along the major pathways and multiple cans where larger numbers of people gather. Hyde explained the technical method for changing locations if it became appropriate to do so, noting that the cost to do so would be minimal.

- ***Pool Update***

Black introduced the update on the proposed competition pool – stating that one of APRC's primary goals of the last biennium was to facilitate a partnership between APRC and a community partner such as the YMCA, SOU, and/or the Ashland School District to build a new competition-style year-round indoor swimming pool for the community.

Black displayed graphics depicting a 25-yard by 25-meter pool. He stated that the current pool was 25-yards by 15-meters. He noted that the current pool was not deep enough for water polo or diving and it was proposed that the new pool accommodate those uses. A small, warm water pool would be located close to the Senior Center.

Black discussed the option of a seasonal cover for the pool that would allow for year-round use. He presented the concept of a covering similar to that used for the Ashland Ice Rink. He reviewed positioning of the cover - stating that placement of the cover might change if larger setbacks were required. He indicated that the entire facility might be moved to the north.

In response to a suggestion by Landt, Black noted that that the north end would house spectator seating. Both the bath house to the east and the deck to the south would be closed during those events.

Black noted that a conceptual budget was estimated at \$3.5 million. He explained that he built in an additional contingency because of increasing costs of building materials and equipment expenses. Cost estimates were based on replacing the current pool with a Myrtha pool – a type of pool that is considered the standard for competition pools. The largest cost would be the pool itself at \$1,475,000, with the second highest cost being the pool cover at \$600,000. Contingency was at \$450,000 and the HVAC system was estimated at \$125,000.

Black briefly discussed potential funding sources. He stated that there were two options for financing with a municipal bond. One option would be to pair the bond request with an Ashland School District bond that would go out for bid in November of 2018. The other would be a City bond slated for May 2018. Black explained the difference between the two as follows:

- The City bond would encompass everyone within Ashland City limits. The bond would be divided up by the valuation of all the properties – depending upon the assessed value of properties in Ashland.
- A School Bond would have a wider reach – taking into account the Phoenix/Talent School District as well as the Ashland School District. This would decrease the cost for Ashland homeowners.

Black commented that the operations budget was an important consideration. APRC would begin with 100 days of use – matching the current use. He stated that over time the hours could be expanded, but the cost to operate a year-round pool would be too costly to act upon right away. Expenses for 100 days of operation would be approximately \$192,000. APRC currently generated approximately 50% of the revenue needed to operate the pool – equating to approximately 80% for cost recovery. Black explained that expenses were currently at \$85,000 per year. With the larger pool, expenses were estimated at \$95,000 per year.

It was anticipated that the Ashland School District and other user groups would use the pool for about 180 partial days. Black said he anticipated the amount of revenue needed as approximately \$74,000 from the School District and \$40,000 from other groups such as the swim clubs. Those groups would want to use the pool year-round. Black stressed that the numbers were conceptual and subject to change. However, the operating costs he was using were realistic in that they included details important to operations.

Black stated that the Ashland School District had been advised of the expense and the revenue requirements. He noted that without commitments from the District and other users, the pool would not be feasible.

Black indicated that expansion of the parking lot at Walker School would facilitate increased use of the pool.

Public input

Mort Pearle of 491 Courtney St., Ashland was called forward.

Pearle presented a series of questions regarding the proposed competition pool. He asked whether expanding the current pool had been considered given that the existing pool serves other purposes such as recreational swimming and accommodations for seniors. He commented that the warm pool would be too small for serious recreational use – especially for seniors in need of warmer water. Pearle highlighted some of what he considered the unknowns – asking about the number of people who currently use the pool, the projected increase of use and other details. He talked about staffing for extended hours and parking facilities and the projected rate of use by percentage.

Pearle reviewed amenities offered with a new pool that was currently planned for the community of Bend, Oregon.

Commissioner Discussion

In response to a question by Landt, Black explained the \$325,000 needed for a civil engineer and the \$300,000 estimated for the demolition work. Permits and plans were quoted at \$300,000. Black explained other details such as the rationale for an HVAC system that had been recommended by the tenting consultant. With the cover in place, the pool would heat the air. Black noted that for more even heat, the air must be kept moving throughout the pool area. He stated that the HVAC system was a series of portable units that would be installed on pads. The units could be removed when the cover was not in place during the summer months. Miller added that HVAC systems also manage condensation.

Landt asked about the longevity for the covering. Black stated that the covering had a 20 or 30-year lifespan, with a much longer timeframe for the frame. He stated that there was a caveat for longevity, however, because that assumed that the cover would not be dismantled for each summer season. Landt noted that the cost to replace the cover would be approximately \$80,000 per year. Based upon the longevity of the product, approximately \$3000 per year should be set aside to defray the cost of a new cover when the time arrived.

NEW BUSINESS

- ***Park Patrol & CAP Officer Annual Update (Information)***

Black introduced the CAP (Central Area Patrol) officers and described the ways in which APRC partners with the Ashland Police Department. He noted that APRC pays a portion of the cost to operate the CAP program. In addition, APRC funds a number of Park Patrol seasonal employees while the Police Department manages the hiring and other operations of the program. Seasonal Park Patrol are tasked with law enforcement duties related to the Park such as enforcement of the no-dog-rule, littering, smoking and other violations of Park rules.

CAP Officer Matt Carpenter noted that the Park patrol operates during the summer season – from mid-May through mid-September. For the 2017 season, there were five Park Patrol officers. Carpenter spoke briefly about the hiring process, stating that the process includes criminal history checks, background checks and other measures.

Carpenter stated that Park Patrol is charged with canvassing the area from Lithia Park through to the downtown, the Skate Park and on to Ashland Creek Park. There were also occasional patrols of the Central Bike Path. Two officers provided coverage during the week, with three or four officers on duty on weekends.

CAP Officer Jason Billings stated that the 2017 summer season was successful overall due to increased collaboration with APRC staff and integrated problem-solving. Billings noted that there had been no major criminal events in Lithia Park during the 2017 season.

Carpenter stated that the cadets and Park Patrol staff were intensively trained in police procedures – including tactical communications and defensive methods. They became familiar with municipal rules and APRC regulations. Training focused on interacting with the public, managing disturbances and procedures for issuing citations. Carpenter relayed that Commissioner Gardiner initiated an orientation tour of Lithia Park and introduced APRC staff.

Billings highlighted two specific camping sweeps conducted by six officers and seven Park Patrol employees. The sweeps were held in different areas of the Park and resulted in approximately 25 citations and five or six arrests. A second sweep of the areas a month later resulted in half the number of citations and arrests – an indication that the sweeps were effective. The goal for the 2018 season would be to increase the number of sweeps to three.

Carpenter reported that there were 35 citations issued by Park Patrol, with more issued by the police.

Gardiner applauded the orientation and training that officers Carpenter and Billings provided. He stated that they led by example, detailing the types of people that the Patrol might confront and how to best interact for positive results.

Lewis talked about the meal offered in the Park each Thursday and concerns heard from citizens. He noted issues that included wandering dogs, smoking in the Park and inebriation. Carpenter replied that they were aware of the meals held at the Enders Shelter and at Pioneer Hall. He stated that participants came to the Park early and exhibited behaviors from smoking marijuana to drinking. Four Park Patrol members patrolled the area and encouraged people to smoke outside the Park and to keep dogs on sidewalks.

Lewis also mentioned the camping issues at Ashland Creek Park, stating that camping there was widespread. He asked whether the Park Patrol could police that area as well. Billings noted that graveyard patrols issued citations in the area. He stated that citations or warnings were not always effective – that there was a threshold where citations failed to be effective.

Carpenter commented that APRC fielded complaints that were usually after-the-fact. He talked about developing a partnership with the community in reporting incidents directly. He highlighted a police app for smart phones that offered a quick call button for emergencies. He stated that use of the smart phone link reduced response times significantly. Pictures of violations could also be forwarded via the app, such as abandoned vehicles.

Carpenter complimented APRC staff on their responsiveness with Park Patrol – stating that they would leave their work to help out when necessary. Areas that the police targeted that were particularly problematic included areas in Lithia Park where people hung out. One such area was the corner of Granite Street and High. There had been intoxication issues, harassment issues and blocking sidewalk issues. Landscaping was often destroyed or damaged. Carpenter suggested that APRC could reduce the damage by instituting an APRC rule prohibiting damage to plantings and the flower beds. That could dissuade people from congregating in those areas. If adopted, the Park Patrol could educate the public about the new rule and issue citations for repeat offenders.

Hyde added that an Ordinance prohibiting damage to the flower beds and landscaping would be helpful to APRC staff as well, decreasing issues such as broken irrigation heads and destruction of the shrubs and flowers. He stated that people were known to tie hammocks to rhododendrons, tear branches from trees and other destructive actions.

Black noted that the Commissioners had the authority to create rules. If a new rule were to be proposed, the rationale for the Ordinance had to be documented. In addition, it had to be non-discriminatory. He talked about limiting the number of signs explaining the rule. Gardiner agreed, noting that the signs could be posted at the entrances to the Park.

Landt suggested that the proposed rules be vetted by APRC's Legal staff prior to bringing the Ordinance to the Commissioners for final approval.

Officer Carpenter stated that the Ordinance would give officers the ability to issue a citation if the violator or violators refused to comply. The citation would be issued as a last resort. Landt characterized the rule as common-sense – that it was reasonable to infer that trampling shrubs was probably not acceptable. He suggested further discussion when the Ordinance was before the Commissioners, as to whether any signage would be necessary.

Landt relayed that when walking in the Park earlier in the day, he had noted that the number of people in the Park was similar to summer rates of occupancy. He had observed dogs in the Park, people climbing the trees and breaking branches. He stated that it was apparent that law enforcement was needed during the shoulder seasons as well as in the summer.

Carpenter noted that Ashland PD had four year-round cadets. Allowances for four Park Patrol interns would be ideal. He remarked that there were college students who were interested in law enforcement careers and Park Patrol would provide experience. He suggested that APRC initiate discussion with the Police Chief to determine whether the Park Patrol budget could be used creatively to channel additional cadets into the Park during the shoulder seasons.

Heller highlighted the Ashland PD request for six additional officers. He stated that in his opinion, the same population was causing disturbances in the downtown and in the Park as well. Carpenter replied that this was his third year as a CAP officer and that an additional officer was added for a total of two full-time officers for the downtown area and Lithia Park. He stated that both areas were a priority for the Police Department. Black explained that the additional officers were requested as support for the police. He indicated that while another CAP Officer might not be granted, the police would improve their response rates when a problem did arise and APRC would benefit from that.

Carpenter added that all police officers were trained to respond to issues in the Park. As an example of shared duties, police would assist with sweeps of the Park and the traffic officer worked with APRC employees to respond to complaints of people camping in the area.

SUBCOMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS

- ***Senior Center Update (Information)***

Dials noted that the Ad-hoc Senior Advisory Subcommittee (ASPAC) met for the first time on Tuesday October 10, 2017. The meeting was facilitated by Consultant Jon Lange, who assisted the group to stay on task and collectively move forward.

The Subcommittee was comprised of eleven members: five citizen members, two Parks Commissioners, a City Councilor and three field experts.

Dials acknowledged those members present, stating that Jackie Bachman – a citizen member – was elected Chair of ASPAC. Marion Moore – also a citizen member - was confirmed as Vice-chair. Peggy Byrnes was also present as a member at large.

Dials reported that at the October meeting, ASPAC members brainstormed topics and issues for future discussion. Needed information, such as the demographics of Ashland's community, were identified as helpful in making informed decisions and final recommendations to the Commissioners. The current budget for the Senior Program, the existing partnerships and opportunities for new partnerships would be explored and regional and national social services identified. Sufficient access to those services would also be reviewed.

Feedback after the meeting included improvements to the meeting room. Onlookers also called for opportunities to give public input – a matter that was under discussion.

Dials stated that the next meeting would be held on November 13, 2017, in Council Chambers. She indicated that the venue had just been secured and meeting notices would be changed accordingly. Black noted that APRC was in the process of securing video services and doing everything possible to arrange for the meetings to be televised.

Landt asked about opportunities for public input. Dials replied that ASPAC had discussed dedicating two sessions specifically for public input. Discussion at the first meeting focused on ways to best communicate with one another and with the public and how best to facilitate public input. Such matters would continue to be discussed in future meetings.

Dials explained that the Senior Center was open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. She stated that employees Natalie Mettler and Lori Ainsworth were working at the Center. She talked briefly about their roles. In addition, Superintendent Dials said she personally visited the Center on a regular basis and worked there as needed.

Dials talked about the regular foot care clinics, SHIBA appointments for assistance with Medicare and an AAPRP driving class. She stated that a Slips and Falls Clinic would be offered this week at The Grove from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. The clinic was open to the public. It would be held again at a later date at the Senior Center.

Dials said Food & Friends serves meals daily from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Senior Center and also delivers meals via Meals on Wheels.

Dials reported that Senior Center staff were receiving training. Dials has been attending the OLLI series on aging at the SOU Campbell Center.

Dials noted that the update was a snapshot of current activities and the evolving planning process for the Senior Program.

Public Input

Claudia Ballard of Ashland, OR, called forward.

Ballard talked about her perceptions regarding Director Black and APRC processes, noting that in her opinion, the “chickens were sometimes counted before they hatched.” She stated that the presentation about the proposed competition pool was a case in point. Ballard indicated that Black reported details about the project before all the pieces were in place. She noted that one of the things that the \$49,000 Performance Audit stated was that an orderly process included looking for partners, then gathering the details so that everything was in place prior to asking for funding. Ballard stated that her understanding of the process of change that the Senior Center was experiencing seemed to exemplify the counting of chickens before they were hatched.

Ballard commented that ASPAC was perceived to be a kind of appeasement – a response to the anger of a community that wasn’t being heard. Ballard commented that she didn’t understand why former Senior Center staff were removed.

Ballard told the story of the dislocation felt by her mother – who at 93 was torn about the situation as it was today. She stated that the remedial actions taken by APRC seemed to be a kind of cover-up – one that did not address the atmosphere of sadness at the Center. Ballard concluded by stating that there was a pervading feeling that the process of change initiated by APRC was not done properly.

- **Team Ashland Update (Information)**

Black reported that Thursday, October 26, 2017, at 5:30 p.m. at the Oak Knoll Golf Course, a Team Ashland meeting would be held. He explained that Interim City Administrator John Karns had instituted Team Ashland as a way to showcase the various departments and divisions of the City of Ashland. Public Works had completed their presentation as had City Administration. This Thursday would be APRC's time to present their work. Black stated that there would be a static display of APRC equipment and four rotating stations for attendees. Divisions within APRC would be described and there would be an overview of the projects currently underway. The presentation would include a review of the APRC Budget.

- **CIP Update**

- 1. Golf Course Drainage Improvements**

McFarland explained the progress made to date. He noted that four new isolation valves had been installed throughout the system so that sections of the irrigation system could be isolated and repaired without shutting down the entire system. McFarland stated that the valves were a major improvement that would conserve water and improve efficiencies.

Two fairways experiencing drainage issues were revamped. Drainage channels were designed to carry water away from the fairways, making for better play when in the rough. In response to a question by Heller, McFarland noted that the fix was similar to that of a French drain in that a trench was prepared with perforated pipe that sent the water to stormwater runoff drains. Y connections were added for potential irrigation add-ons if necessary.

- 2. Trailer Donation by Ashland Rotary**

The Ashland Rotary donated a trailer that would be utilized at the Ashland Ice Rink to store ice skates and house concessions. Jim Hagemann, an APRC seasonal staff member, was retrofitting the trailer for the specialized uses needed at the Ice Rink.

Black stated that the permanent structure would save APRC more than \$5,000 per year for trailer rental.

- 3. Miscellaneous Construction projects**

McFarland noted that the bike polo storage shed was under construction. Once completed, it would allow bike polo enthusiasts to store their equipment at Hunter Park.

- 4. North Mountain Bridge**

McFarland displayed a picture of the North Mountain Park Bridge. He noted that the creek bank had been treated with sandbags along the toe of the bank designed to offer protection for the winter. McFarland stated that the Creekside footings were still intact – and placed approximately two feet back from the damaged creek bed.

- 5. Beach Creek Repairs**

The Beach Creek site had been repaired for erosion control and the area has been re-seeded. McFarland reported that it was anticipated that the improvements would protect the site until permanent repairs could be made.

- 6. Update on the Trails Master Plan**

McFarland noted that the Committee had been meeting for the past nine months. During that time, the existing chapters including maps and designated corridors were reviewed. The Committee has also identified approximately six new chapters that would be added. Once discussion was concluded, members would be tasked with writing

assignments to incorporate new information into existing chapters and craft new language for the chapters not yet included in the Master Plan.

7. Staffing Update

Black highlighted a change in staffing that was initiated due to the retirement of McFarland as Supervisor of Forestry. The project manager added at the beginning of the last biennium had vacated that position and taken on the role of Supervisor of Forestry and Outer Parks, a lateral move.

ITEMS FOR COMMISSIONERS

- ***Pickleball Update***

Heller stated that the painting of additional courts in Lithia Park, authorized at the prior Regular Meeting, was well received by the pickleball community. A storage bin was installed as well and the pickleball group contributed four nets in addition to the two nets that were moved from Helman.

- ***Slips and Falls Pamphlet***

Landt asked that staff research the Slips and Falls pamphlet for placement in the Senior Center. He stated that the pamphlet would add helpful information to the resources available for seniors. Black agreed, stating that additionally, classes would be held on the topic at the Grove and the Senior Center. He noted that the Fire Department offered a class as well.

- ***Joint Meeting with the Ashland School Board***

Gardiner announced that he had invited the Ashland School Board to participate in a joint meeting, to be held at the January Study Session. He proposed that the Briscoe and Lincoln Schools be a topic of discussion. Other possible agenda items could be the proposed competition pool and the establishment of a partnership for operating the pool.

Heller suggested that community use of the school's facilities be added to the agenda as well. He stated that he had fielded comments about the lack of availability of the gym.

Gardiner advocated for a joint meeting that would be informational only.

- ***Park Views Letter***

Gardiner reported that he and Commissioner Landt were working on a letter to the public regarding the Senior Program. He proposed that the letter come from the Commission as a whole.

Landt indicated that there was only one significant change that he would recommend - one that he believed would be a positive statement and acknowledgment. He stated that a sentence be inserted that stated "We accept responsibility for not being as clear in our communications as hindsight would show we should have been. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that we Commissioners along with staff have responded to public feedback by ensuring no disruption in vital services."

Landt explained that this statement was an acknowledgement that as in every situation, the right is not on one side or another, it is on both sides and the responsibilities are on both sides as well.

Gardiner suggested changing the "should" to "could". In response to a request by Heller, Gardiner explained his perspective. Gardiner stated that he differed somewhat from the interpretation presented by Landt, that in his opinion, the two Commissioners who served on ASPAC fulfilled their duties to the best of their abilities. He stated

that there was a process for public input at every meeting – and the fact that there was little or no testimony did not make the Commissioners remiss. That said, Gardiner went on to say that hindsight gives a perspective that there were actually several ways to manage the process. Gardiner stated that there were more moving parts than just the two Commissioners at the meetings. He noted that the outcomes depended upon all who served on ASPAC and who gave input as to how that input was received or given. He acknowledged that in hindsight, it became apparent that the citizens wanted a different outcome.

Gardiner stated that he was encouraged by the current process with ASPAC. He affirmed a desire for a positive outcome.

Lewis asked that the sentence reading “we have and will continue to shoulder this responsibility unless the City relieves us” be softened to read “we have and will continue to honor this responsibility unless the City relieves us.”

It was agreed by consensus that the letter with the proposed changes be forwarded to the Ashland Daily Tidings.

Gardiner called for a volunteer to contribute a Park Views column for December.

UPCOMING MEETING DATES

Study Session, November 20, 2017 @ The Grove 1195 E. Main – 7:00 p.m.

Regular Meeting, November 27, 2017 @ Council Chambers 1175 E. Main – 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

By consensus, Gardiner adjourned into executive session at 9:38 p.m. pursuant to Executive Session: *Real Estate Discussion and Disposition*, ORS 192.660 (2)(e)

ADJOURNMENT OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION

By consensus, Gardiner adjourned out of executive session at 10:15 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:15 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 and Regular meetings are digitally recorded and are available upon online.