

City of Ashland
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION
Minutes
March 19, 2018

ATTENDEES

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

Absent: Commissioner Landt; City Council Liaison Mayor Stromberg

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gardiner called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. at The Grove 1195 E. Main.

PUBLIC INPUT

There was none.

TRAIL MASTER PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE REPORT (Information)

McFarland provided an overview of the update process, noting that the Trail Master Plan Update Committee was charged with detailing the progress and changes made since the original Master Plan's adoption in 2006. He stated that the plan called for updates approximately every ten years.

McFarland said updates of the original chapters and development of new chapters were prepared using an online platform through Google Docs. Each member was assigned a chapter or chapters to edit – inserting new information, documenting trail development and/or changes in the wilderness areas with regard to trails. GIS Specialist Lea Richards prepared maps for each chapter, depicting trail corridors and wilderness areas and the trails within them.

McFarland noted that this was the City's first experience using Google Docs as a platform and it was working well. It provided a framework that accommodated a complex series of steps. He displayed a spreadsheet designed to track each chapter through multiple processes as the document moved through to completion. McFarland highlighted a public input form that could be accessed through Google Docs, the APCR website or the City website.

Each Committee member was assigned a chapter or chapters to edit – creating or updating narratives for each of the 17 chapters using Google Docs. Each chapter was forwarded to two editors on the committee known as the final editors. Once the final editors had reviewed the drafts and edited them for consistency, the chapters were moved into a folder. Once all chapters were written and edited, the full document would be formatted for publishing – including maps and photos. Final polishing would be handled by a contractor with specialized expertise in preparing official documents suitable for adoption into Ashland's Comprehensive Plan.

McFarland described steps needed for completing the process, noting that public input would be solicited via an Open House, also referred to as a Listening Post. Once the public comments were addressed or incorporated into the Master Plan, the document would be reviewed and approved by the Trail Master Plan Update Committee one final time, then forwarded to the City of Ashland Planning Department. After a review and approval process at those levels, the Master Plan would be presented to City Council and adopted into the City's Comprehensive Plan.

McFarland said the Trail Master Plan Committee met every two weeks and the schedule was posted on the Google Docs website and on the City of Ashland website. McFarland said he hoped the project could be completed by June. He displayed a timeline from initiation to completion as follows:

Fall 2016	APRC forms TMP Update Committee
Feb 2017	First TMP Update Committee Meeting
April 2018	Final TMP Update Draft finished
May 2018	Final TMP Update Draft submitted to graphic artist Mark Mularz for formatting
June 2018	Open House Public Comment Listening Post
July 2018	Edited Final TMP Update Draft submitted to APRC
Aug 2018	APRC initiates Planning Dept approval process to amend the City of Ashland Comprehensive Plan
Sept-Oct 2018	TMP Update Final Draft submitted to Ashland City Council for adoption as an expedient Comprehensive Plan Amendment/Ordinance package

Commissioner Discussion

In response to a question by Gardiner, McFarland noted that the Listening Post/Open House would most likely be held after the document was prepared for publishing. He stated that the document was editable at any point until adoption into the Comprehensive Plan.

Black shared his experience conducting open houses, indicating that there were several different strategies to decide between. He noted that people would be most interested in viewing the maps and he thought an open house could be held prior to final formatting. He expressed a concern that making changes after the document was prepared for publishing could increase expenses and delay the process. Lewis agreed, noting that the Master Plan would be lengthy and people would need more time to study it before commenting.

Heller asked about significant changes to the trails and substantive changes to the rules governing trails. McFarland noted that trails had been added and corridors expanded since the creation of the original Master Plan document. New wilderness areas such as the Imperatrice Property had been added, as well as Eastside and Westside Forestlands. Gardiner noted that the Bear Creek Greenway was hoping to expand the Greenway further into Ashland and the Master Plan examined the potential for trail development in other areas as well.

There followed further discussion about added sections such as the Cascade Foothills described in the chapter on Regional Trails. How to compare the original Master Plan with the updated version was explored as well as various options for an open house.

Lewis emphasized the dilemma regarding unsanctioned trails, noting that the Trail Master Plan limited discussion of such trails in an effort to discourage unauthorized trail development. He applauded the substantial contributions of Committee members, highlighting their writing skills, knowledge of the trails system and dedication to the project.

ASHLAND POND SIGN

McFarland introduced a proposal for three signs that explained the Ashland Pond restoration project and its history. The project began in 2009 and resulted in a collaborative effort to remove invasive species and replant with native plants and shrubs with the goal of preserving valuable habitat and shade for Ashland Creek.

Draft signage was displayed. McFarland said it conveyed the efforts of student volunteers from Helman School to create habitat for bees, birds and other wildlife. The signs acknowledged the funding provided by Lomakatsi restoration Project, APRC, the City of Ashland, Helman Elementary School PTA and others [see [Ashland Pond Sign](#)].

Lomakatsi had suggested strategic placement of three permanent signs, beginning at the Glendower entrance to Ashland Pond, with the other two placed along the footpath. McFarland displayed a map marking locations for the signs as well as other points of interest.

In addition to the Lomakatsi Restoration project signs, the Signs, Plaques & Memorials Subcommittee was considering a large Monarch Waystation sign, to be located adjacent to the Bear Creek Greenway, and a bench sponsored by the Rogue Valley Audubon Society, for placement along the Ashland Pond footpath.

Commissioner Discussion

➤ *Monarch Waystation*

Discussion followed regarding the proximity of the Monarch Waystation sign to the Bear Creek Greenway. Black recommended contacting the Bear Creek Greenway Foundation regarding any requirements for placing the sign in close proximity to the Greenway. Gardiner agreed to present the idea at the next regularly scheduled Bear Creek Greenway Foundation meeting [see [Monarch Waystation sign](#)].

➤ *Bench Project*

McFarland again noted that members of the Rogue Valley Audubon Society were interested in placing a bench on the Ashland Pond footpath. A location halfway around the pond's trail loop had been proposed. The bench would be placed in a good location for viewing the pond and identifying birds in the area.

Lewis noted that the committee also heard a request for interpretive signs in Lithia Park regarding the American Dipper bird, which nested and bred in clear, flowing waters. The sign or signs would be placed along Ashland Creek within Lithia Park boundaries.

ASPAC RECOMMENDATIONS PREVIEW (Information)

Black introduced the 34 ASPAC [Ashland Senior Program Advisory Committee] recommendations, noting that they had been approved by ASPAC on March 12. He stated that it was important to present the recommendations to the Commissioners for review prior to including them on a Regular Meeting agenda.

Black commented that the recommendations had not been prioritized, with the exception of 4 previously approved recommendations determined critical to the implementation process. The four recommendations previously approved by the Commissioners were:

- Create a standing Senior Program Advisory (SPAC) including an application and appointment process along with bylaws
- Develop a job description for Superintendent for Senior Services Division
- Begin the job search for a Senior Services Superintendent
- Develop and publish an organizational chart on the City website depicting Senior Services as a separate division of APRC

Black stated that the Senior Services budget had yet to be approved and a budget discussion would be held at the APRC Regular Meeting on March 26, 2018.

Black reported that the announcement soliciting applications for the Senior Services Superintendent position had been posted. The open application period would span March 19, 2018, through April 16, 2018. If more time was needed, the application period would be extended. In response to a question by Heller, Black explained that the position had been advertised on the City's website, the Oregon Parks and Recreation website, the National Parks and Recreation website and the League of Oregon Cities website.

Jackie Bachman, ASPAC Chair, was called forward.

Bachman stated that she was pleased to announce the successful conclusion of the Advisory Board's work. She noted that it had been a long journey ending with a unanimous vote approving the recommendations and the authorization to forward the recommendations to APRC for final approval.

Commissioner Discussion

There followed a brief discussion of additional places to post the job applications. Heller suggested posting at a gerontology site. Black indicated a willingness to post the job on as many sites as possible, with a goal toward attracting qualified applicants.

Lewis advised the Commissioners to conduct a thorough review of the 34 recommendations in preparation for a discussion and their approval. He emphasized that a review of the job description was also important in order to learn the specifics of the new superintendent position; Bachman agreed.

Lewis talked about previous suggestions to prioritize recommendations and said he supported the decision to wait for the new Superintendent, who would guide the prioritization process.

Black commented on the Senior Services partnerships that were part of the recommendations. He said the list was long and comprehensive. He said identifying partnerships to provide programs or services for seniors was valuable. Black expressed appreciation for the work, noting that ASPAC had significantly contributed to a successful outcome.

ADJOURNMENT INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

By consensus, Gardiner adjourned into executive session at 6:10 p.m.

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 6:50 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 available upon request.