

IMPORTANT: Any citizen may orally address the Parks Commission on non-agenda items during the Public Forum. Any citizen may submit written comments to the Commission on any item on the Agenda, unless it is the subject of a public hearing and the record is closed. Time permitting, the Presiding Officer may allow oral testimony. If you wish to speak, please out the Speaker Request Form located near the entrance to the Council Chambers. The chair will recognize you and inform you as to the amount of time allotted to you, if any. The time granted will be dependent to some extent on the nature of the item under discussion, the number of people who wish to speak, and the length of the agenda.



AGENDA FOR REGULAR MEETING

ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION September 25, 2017 Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main Street

7:00 p.m.

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. APPROVAL OR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF MINUTES
 - a. Senior Program Subcommittee—May 3, 2017
 - b. Senior Program Subcommittee—May 17, 2017
 - c. Trail Master Plan Committee—June 16, 2017
 - d. Regular Meeting—July 24, 2017
 - e. Senior Program Subcommittee—August 8, 2017
 - f. Special Meeting—August 9, 2017
- III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
 - a. Open Forum
- IV. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA
- V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
- VI. NEW BUSINESS
 - a. Tennis and Pickleball Courts (Action)
 - b. Ad Hoc Committee Makeup (Action)
 - c. Golf Course End-of-Season Report (Information)
 - d. North Mountain Park Nature Play Area Discussion (Information)
- VII. SUBCOMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS
- VIII. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS
- IX. UPCOMING MEETING DATES
 - a. Study Session—October 16, 2017
 - The Grove, 1195 E. Main—5:30 p.m.
 - b. Regular Meeting—October 23, 2017
 - Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main Street—7:00 p.m.
- X. EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO ORS 192.660 (2)(e)
- XI. ADJOURNMENT

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Administrator's office at (541) 488-6002 (TTY phone number (800) 735-2900). Notification 72 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title I). Parks Commission meetings are broadcast live on Channel 9, or on CHARTER CABLE CHANNEL 180. Visit the City of Ashland's website at www.ashland.or.us.

City of Ashland
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
SENIOR PROGRAM SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
May 3, 2017

Present: Commissioners Gardiner and Lewis; Director Black; Superintendent Dials; Senior Program Manager Dodson; Executive Assistant Dyssegard; Senior Program Advisory Board Members, Volunteers and Participants

Absent: None

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gardiner called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m. in The Grove, Otte-Peterson Room, 1195 E. Main Street in Ashland.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT (for items not on the agenda)

There was none.

III. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were none.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

a. Review Subcommittee Goals

Black reviewed the goals of the Senior Program Subcommittee:

1. Through the gathering of information, gain a greater understanding of the Senior Program and the function it serves the citizens of Ashland;
2. Explore new ways of marketing and program innovation to ensure that the greatest number of citizens are benefited by the Senior Program;
3. Evaluate the organizational structure of the program and ensure that the organization of the Senior Program and the goals for innovation are aligned for efficiency and service delivery;
4. Seek advocates of the Senior Program and new ways to increase community involvement through volunteerism; and,
5. Evaluate the current Senior Program policies and create an official subcommittee of the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission reporting directly to the Commissioners to ensure collaboration and governance.

b. Report on Survey of Senior Community

APRC Director Black said a small group of APCR staff met in April to discuss a senior community survey. He asked Senior Program Manager Dodson to provide an update. Dodson reported speaking with SOURCE, an SOU agency, and learning that a 2013 City survey by SOURCE, for the "road diet," cost over \$13,000 and required an intergovernmental agreement. It was hoped that a hybrid version could be arranged for the senior survey, costing half or less and utilizing APCR staff for assistance. Black said using staff might cut the price in half. Lewis said a "menu" of survey options from SOURCE would be helpful; Black and others agreed. Dodson said another meeting with SOURCE and APCR staff was set for Monday, May 8. Black said staff was asked to issue the survey sooner rather than later. Distribution methods were discussed: City of Ashland utility bills, direct mailings and others. Black said the Ashland Parks Foundation could possibly offset a portion of the survey cost.

V. NEW BUSINESS

a. History of Senior Program and Involvement in the Community

Referencing the original founding documents, Dodson reviewed the history of the Senior Program. She said it began in 1973 as a social service organization with a mission of serving low income, frail and elderly persons. It was stated that Ashland's senior demographics changed over time: current offerings included information and referrals, some risk intervention (less than before), social services, senior advocacy and transportation assistance such as facilitation of RVTD Valley Lift vouchers. It was reported that the Senior Center was transferred from the City to APRC in 2006.

Black said Ashland seniors appeared to have grown more affluent over time; Lewis noted that many professionals moved to Ashland over the years.

Staff discussed the building (housing the Senior Center) in terms of its uses and alterations over time.

Dodson said some seniors still needed the traditionally provided social service piece; however, wellness currently posed a larger need. Lewis agreed and said the wellness, recreation and social components appeared to have taken precedence. Gardiner said Dodson was pointing out that Senior Center staff continued to provide the same offerings as before; however, the seniors' needs had changed. He asked how Senior Program staff could best fill any voids; Dodson said the survey would help answer those questions. Lewis suggested adding programs and services that would draw additional people to the center.

b. Volunteerism at the Senior Center

Volunteers were discussed in terms of their growth in number and contributions. When asked, Dodson said she could not operate without volunteer assistance. Volunteers helped with blood pressure clinics and meal deliveries through Food & Friends, to name just two offerings. Volunteerism was invaluable for seniors as it kept them contributing. Black said volunteer intake and management was handled through the APRC Volunteer Coordinator, including volunteers for the Senior Program. Volunteer hours were tracked for APRC overall and separately for Food & Friends. Black said 4,382 volunteer hours were logged for Food & Friends alone in 2016, with 500 hours reported for the Senior Program. Combined, those hours were equivalent to several full-time employees.

Public Input

Mike Hersh, Food & Friends volunteer, said the meals delivery program allowed delivery persons to check on seniors living alone or in difficult circumstances. They were then able to report to Dodson with any problems or concerns.

Black said the number of volunteer hours reported to the Volunteer Coordinator in 2016 was 500; however, the actual number was likely between 900-1,200.

Dodson said Food & Friends operated out of the Senior Center free of charge, a significant contribution by APRC. Black said without the support of the community and City of Ashland, it would be difficult for them to operate their program. Discussion continued about Rogue Valley Council of Governments (RVCOG) operating both the meal prep and meal deliveries (Meals on Wheels) for Food & Friends. Gardiner asked if APRC financially benefited from those efforts; Black stated that the citizens benefited but not APRC.

With regard to recreation programs offered at the center and whether instructors were volunteers or paid for their services, Dodson said they were volunteers, which kept costs low for senior participants. She reported that the T'ai Chi, Yoga and Somatics programs were doing well and growing in number of participants. Black asked whether volunteer instructors spoke directly to Dodson about their program offerings or worked with the APRC Volunteer Coordinator for processing into the system. Dodson replied "both." Black said the Volunteer Coordinator needed to be made aware of every possible volunteer option within the APRC system so volunteers knew what was available.

Dodson said the program could always use more volunteers. Black said volunteers at the center kept seniors actively involved while providing invaluable assistance.

c. Cost Recovery Review

Black said APRC Commissioners, through their biennial goal setting process, decided on subsidy levels for all APRC programs and services. Nearly every APRC offering was subsidized at some level. Commissioners highly valued subsidies for senior programs and swim lessons as they were considered valuable community resources. As an example, the Daniel Meyer Pool had been subsidized at 60% while golf received a lower subsidy. Gardiner said APRC was tasked with managing funds allocated during each biennium and cost recoveries needed to improve. He spoke about the Citizens' Budget Committee and their suggestion that APRC become entrepreneurial. He voiced support for looking at each program in terms of lowering costs and improving recovery rates.

Two suggestions for improving Senior Center cost recoveries included charging a minimal fee for use of the center (as little as \$10/year) and charging back the City for administrative services and offerings facilitated by Senior Program staff. It was pointed out that upon transfer from the City to APRC in 2006, no funds were provided by the City. Without APRC, the City would have to pay for the services provided by Senior Program staff. Dials pointed out that funds held in the Senior Program category within the Ashland Parks Foundation accounts were not included in past cost recovery figures. Discussion continued about the semi-annual grant period for the Ashland Parks Foundation (APF) and how the Senior Program could request a grant through APF for assisting seniors in paying a minimal annual membership fee. It was suggested that grants and staff time, including time spent on maintenance for the center and assistance from the Volunteer Coordinator, be factored into future cost recovery analyses.

Dodson spoke about seniors' reluctance to ask for financial assistance. She said they were proud and did not use services or programs they could not afford. Lewis said many seniors would be able to afford a \$10 annual fee.

Black talked about Medford Parks and Recreation programs and services, including bingo, donations received through their foundation and their overall revenues and expenses. Black said the money they generated through annual membership fees was a small portion of their budget. He said the Medford Senior Center served a larger population and relied on volunteers for assistance.

Black and Dodson talked about making it easy to donate to the Ashland Senior Program (into the Ashland Parks Foundation) by including a "Donate Now" button on the Senior Program website. The button would then redirect people to the Ashland Parks Foundation website where they could easily make donations to the Senior Program.

Options for attracting more seniors to the Center and increasing revenues included:

- A "Senior Café" meals program, including a salad bar option.
- Asking the City to reimburse APRC for Senior Program facilitation of City programs, including bus passes, Valley Lift vouchers and three utility programs.
- Asking the City to partially reduce their Central Service Fee to APRC for the (above) facilitation.

Gardiner talked about attending an ORPA workshop in which senior class options were brainstormed, both educational and informational. He asked how APRC could expand its offerings to attract more seniors. Lewis asked Dodson to suggest options that could work, as she knew the goings-on at the center. Dodson talked about several new and upcoming class offerings. Gardiner noted Dodson's 2017 APF request for a grant to help pay for the Senior Program survey. Dodson was asked if she needed a new Senior Program van. Dials said the Senior Program currently used a donated van (shared with the Adapted Program). Black referenced the \$29,000 of donated funds currently set aside in the Ashland Parks Foundation account for the Senior Program and said that would not be enough to pay for a new van.

d. Ashland Parks Foundation, Funds Dedicated to the Senior Program

The group agreed that the topic was covered (above).

VI. NEXT STEPS / SET FUTURE MEETING DATE

Dodson asked what the subcommittee and staff wanted her to do next. Black suggested setting up the “Donate Now” button on the Senior Program site and reporting about it at the next meeting. He asked her to do some brainstorming about program innovations (new programming) and provide suggestions about how to acquire a new van.

The group agreed to meet in two weeks: May 17, 2017, at the Senior Center.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Dyssegard, Executive Assistant
Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission

City of Ashland
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
SENIOR PROGRAM SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
May 17, 2017

Present: Commissioners Gardiner and Lewis; Director Black; Superintendent Dials; Senior Program Manager Dodson; Executive Assistant Dyssegard; additional Senior Program staff and supporters

Absent: None

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gardiner called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. at the Ashland Senior Center, 1699 Homes Ave in Ashland.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT (for items not on the agenda)

There was none.

III. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

Accomplishments of the Senior Program—added to the agenda and addressed as the first item of business.

Dodson reported on Senior Program staff accomplishments since the last Senior Program Subcommittee meeting on May 3. A partial list included:

- Senior Program survey meetings with 1) APRC staff and 2) SOURCE
- Bingo research
- “Local Talent” series (Topic: “Wonders of Thailand and Cambodia”—approx. 15 participants)
- Cinco de Mayo celebration
- Sewing / clothing repair class
- AARP Safe Driving class
- Senior Center community garden plots lined up for the 2017 season
- Grant writing volunteer identified
- Donate button discussed for Senior Center / APF websites
- Food & Friends fundraiser discussed for later in 2017

Gardiner thanked Dodson for her list of accomplishments and asked that future lists be provided in advance of subcommittee meetings. Black asked how the volunteer grant writer had been recruited; Dodson said a Senior Program participant volunteered after hearing of the need. Gardiner added that since the last meeting, APRC’s 2017-19 biennial budget presentation was provided to the Citizens’ Budget Committee; it appeared to go well.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

a. Review Subcommittee Goals

The five goals of the Senior Program Subcommittee were briefly referenced:

1. Through the gathering of information, gain a greater understanding of the Senior Program and the function it serves the citizens of Ashland;
2. Explore new ways of marketing and program innovation to ensure that the greatest number of citizens are benefited by the Senior Program;

3. Evaluate the organizational structure of the program and ensure that the organization of the Senior Program and the goals for innovation are aligned for efficiency and service delivery;
4. Seek advocates of the Senior Program and new ways to increase community involvement through volunteerism; and,
5. Evaluate the current Senior Program policies and create an official subcommittee of the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission reporting directly to the Commissioners to ensure collaboration and governance.

b. Update on Community Survey about the Ashland Senior Program

Black said two senior survey meetings were held since May 3. Participants included APRC staff and former and current SOURCE staff, including SOURCE Director Eva Skuratowicz. Discussion points included:

- Define how survey information would be used
- Determine the audience
- Discuss public perception of goals and outcomes
- Determine if it will be a random sampling or a targeted audience or a combination of both
- Create a process to eliminate duplications
- Consider timing and distribution
- Review survey options; random, targeted, active (door-to-door)
- Consider cost estimates

Discussion continued about the value of random surveys, use of focus groups and distribution methods: City utility bill mailer, Winter-Spring recreation guide and City of Ashland website. Black estimated that Ashland's ZIP code of 97520 had 12,000 households (homes both inside and outside City limits).

Options for offsetting costs included use of internal staff and the use of funds set aside in the Ashland Parks Foundation account earmarked for the Senior Center.

It was requested that the survey move forward quickly. Black said staff would put draft questions together based on samples from other communities. Dodson spoke about an impressive senior survey she reviewed / center she visited in Santa Clara, CA. She said their center was free to residents living within city limits.

In terms of senior population levels, Black said the information was accessible via census figures. Gardiner said the goal was to reach out to younger seniors (55+) and attract additional clientele. Black said Ashland had a significantly high number of seniors ages 55 and older: for the 97520 ZIP code (all-inclusive, both inside and outside city limits, total population of approximately 25,000), the number was around 12,000. Dodson asked how the current Senior Center building could accommodate large numbers of additional participants, given space restrictions. Dials suggested staggering programming to eliminate overcrowding.

Dodson mentioned a potential upcoming tax bond for the proposed pool project (replacing the Daniel Meyer Pool with a larger community pool). She said SOURCE Director Skuratowicz told Dodson that knowing how survey information would be used could help in structuring survey questions. She said Skuratowicz mentioned that information gathered could be used for grant writing and assist with the issuance of a bond. A staff-level informal meeting with Skuratowicz for the purpose of information gathering was suggested.

V. NEW BUSINESS

a. Review Revenue & Cost Recovery Options

Black referenced the Willamalane Adult Activity Center's cost recovery pyramid and goals / targets and the monetized / non-monetized benefits provided to their community. Cost recoveries ranged from 0% for non-monetized / non-programmed park and recreation facilities and support services (*community benefits*) to 200% for concessions and vending, merchandise, overnight or extended trips and others (*individual benefits*).

Dodson said she reviewed several ways APRC could increase revenues to the Senior Center. Two options included a donate button on the Parks Foundation and Senior Program sites (with associated marketing and promotional efforts) and bingo. She said the Medford Senior Center bingo program generated \$30-40,000 per year before expenses but required 5-6 volunteers to operate (one for State gambling paperwork alone, per session). The program operated 3x week, drew 20-25 people per session and cost between \$10-50 per person per session. It required a regular space and was not limited to seniors but was open to anyone 18 or older.

Public Input

Mike Hersh, 932 Morton Street in Ashland, asked for a definition of cost recovery according to APRC: was it simply money in a register? If the actions of the Senior Center saved needy seniors some money, wasn't that part of cost recovery? He said those 65 and over were the seniors needing services. If seniors under 65 received services and were willing to pay for them, that could help subsidize services for seniors 65 and older, those most in need of services. He said it was important to carefully define cost recovery. He suggested telling Council how much money was saved for elderly seniors; he said APRC should care about the City rather than the Parks Commission itself.

Pieter Smeenk, 325 Ridge Road in Ashland, said cost recovery was a good thing but needed to be relevant to revenues and expenses. He explained what was outlined about cost recoveries in the 100+-page Senior Center book distributed earlier in the year.

Black said APRC was doing its best to define goals and determine what justified a cost recovery. He said there was room for the Senior Center to have a higher level of cost recovery. If funds were saved in one category through cost recovery, higher subsidies could be provided in other categories.

Gardiner said nearly every APRC program or service offering received subsidies (except for the Calle Guanajuato lease program, which was self-sustaining); however, the Senior Program received the highest level of subsidy (99%). Gardiner asked how more funds could be generated from this program, more value provided to the community as a result and a higher recovery achieved. He asked the group to look at potential opportunities. He said once the Senior Program was evaluated, just as all other APRC programs were evaluated for cost recovery, the group could begin trying to increase recovery levels. The Ashland Parks Foundation could be used as a grant resource for senior scholarships if fees were charged for programs or a membership fee was implemented. Dodson said seniors would not ask for services or programs they could not pay for. Gardiner asked her to not shut down efforts currently under discussion (to increase programming while also increasing cost recovery levels). Dials said there were examples where senior centers received revenues without doing much work (travel program bookings and others).

Dodson asked about the cost recovery rate of parks in the APRC system: were people charged for using parks? Black replied that parks were for every user in the City. Programs and services for special groups, however, typically generated some cost recovery. While he was not trying to diminish the senior population, it was considered a special group. Dodson referred back to the Senior Program mission statement. She said helping seniors remain active kept them healthy and out of nursing homes.

Referencing the comments made by Hersh, Lewis said Hersh regularly spoke about the Food & Friends Program in terms of its connection with the Ashland Senior Program; however, the two programs were different. Food & Friends operated *out of* the Senior Center building but was a separate organization. Lewis clarified that APRC was trying to get more programming into the building. The group acknowledged that those who enjoy lunches at the center sometimes stay longer to enjoy a Senior Program offering. It was stated that the Senior Program needs to increase programming to draw in additional participants or decrease staffing levels.

Addressing Dodson, Gardiner urged her to understand how Commissioners were trying to expand programming and meet more seniors' needs. He asked her, as manager of the center, to advocate on behalf of the commissioners with Senior Program constituents. He said there was a chance for expansion of the Senior Center; everything was on the table at this time.

Black spoke about three other senior program agencies in Oregon: McMinnville, Bend and Willamalane. He provided an overview of their populations, structure, staffing, revenue and sources, programs, expenses, cost recovery, meals programs, social services and other details. Dials spoke about an annual Willamalane fundraiser that included a silent auction raising approximately \$20,000 per year. Speaking about the other agencies, Black noted that most of their programs and services had cost recovery levels, from booking fees for trips to a café-style lunches to a woodshop. He said there were more needs and desires in Ashland than APRC could provide. He and Dials talked about a “pass program” that other agencies had implemented, allowing parks system users to access other organizational offerings. Black said program offerings needed to fulfill identified needs within the Ashland senior community. Dodson said a survey would help with sorting out those needs. When asked what Dodson thought could work in terms of expanded programming to generate cost recoveries, Dodson said bingo might work, but at The Grove.

Dodson asked whether the current “recreational immunity” status for Senior Program instructors would be jeopardized, should higher recovery rates be required (with regard to instructors’ exemption from providing liability insurance coverage). Black said APRC hadn’t been challenged on grounds of recreational immunity. He reiterated his request for new programming ideas to generate revenues.

Gardiner said the City and others looked to APRC staff and Commissioners for justification about financial support for programs and services throughout the APRC system. He said staff and commissioners needed to serve as advocates for services and programs provided. Lewis spoke about “cost-to-benefit” ratio and suggested gaining more benefit for APRC’s costs; specifically, more people receiving services at the Senior Center. Dodson replied that the building would need to be improved or expanded to accommodate an additional volume of customers. Black said there were many options to consider and it was important to get moving: make lists of ideas, borrow ideas from other agencies, determine how to get things done. Dials spoke about the Salem Senior Center and their “50 plus” program. She offered to give Dodson more information about that. Black said a list of options could include “progress” and “outcome” columns associated with each item, as well as timelines, to make it easier to report back to the commissioners.

Black strongly encouraged Dodson to come up with a list of options for expanded programming toward cost recovery; Dodson said she came up with new ideas all the time. Gardiner clarified that he wanted Dodson to create a list of programs to generate cost recoveries. Dodson asked if the Senior Program’s model was moving from a donation-based system to a cost recovery-based system. Black said it was possible to have cost recoveries at the Senior Program. He said an expansion of senior offerings could reach a broader senior audience while providing a higher level of recovery.

When asked about speaking with the City about returning the Senior Program to their budget rather than APRC’s budget, Black said the option was still on the table as well as all other options.

b. Next Steps Discussion

Gardiner said next steps included creating a Senior Program Advisory Committee.

Dodson asked for clarification about the Parks Commission’s vision about continuing to provide a Senior Program for the purpose of / value associated with caring for seniors in Ashland. Black stated that the purpose would continue to be to provide services to the senior community in Ashland. Gardiner added that the point of recent Senior Subcommittee meetings was to creatively expand the existing program. Lewis said expansion of services for the senior community at the center was important. He said APRC needed to justify funds spent on each program and service. He suggested expanding programs and services rather than decreasing them. Dodson referred back to the survey and asked if a shorter version, going out quickly and coming back quickly, could be generated. Lewis expressed support for the idea.

Black said the Senior Program was supported by APRC and APRC had fiscal responsibilities around tax dollars spent on each program and service it provided. He said it was okay to talk about generating revenues while simultaneously supporting the Senior Program and all other APRC programs.

Gardiner expressed disappointment about Dodson's question regarding APRC's interest in providing for seniors in Ashland. He said the group had just spent 2-1/2 hours talking about how to expand programming; this showed obvious support for the Senior Program by APRC and the Parks Commissioners. He suggested moving forward in a constructive way. He again asked for Dodson's support in achieving the goals as stated above.

Dodson asked that the subcommittee not personalize the discussion as it made her feel that she had done something wrong and she felt she had not done something wrong. Black emphasized that the meetings were not about an individual but about the larger Senior Program. He said the APRC Recreation Superintendent was frequently asked similar questions about cost recoveries, given her role as a senior staff person in charge of programs and services.

VI. SET FUTURE MEETING DATE

The group agreed to meet again, within the first two weeks of June.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Dyssegard, Executive Assistant
Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission

McFarland proposed separating the data relevant to the Trail Master Plan Update from other detail, recording information into two tables – one for Master Plan updates and one to capture the wealth of knowledge collected from Committee members regarding future plans for easements, trail connectivity and other pertinent details. As an example, it was noted that an unused APRC easement below Waterline could be better utilized as a resource in a possible trade or future acquisition. The Trail Master Plan update spreadsheet for the TID Corridor would record the need for additional connectivity in that area, while the APRC Notes spreadsheet would make note of the possible resource.

Black said the details could be an important springboard for workplans, which could be included as an appendix to the Master Plan document. Workplan items also could be used by APRC to create goals for future trail connectivity.

To move the process forward, McFarland said information could be shared outside the meeting via an electronic spreadsheet. Groups of two or more Committee members could review chapters where little change was expected or where it would be important to capture community values. He cited **Chapter 13 Trail Standards and Basic Design Elements** as an example, where collaborative efforts would ensure that APRC, the City of Ashland and Ashland Woodland & Trails Association (AWTA) were in agreement with the updated Trails Master Plan.

McFarland highlighted other topics that would require review and revision such as the Chapter entitled Trail Safety and Etiquette. He noted that new safety requirements had been generated since the original Trail Master Plan was developed, particularly with the changes to Oregon’s recreational immunity laws.

Chapman relayed that in the past, local Forest Service and APRC representatives conducted periodic meetings of stakeholders that included discussions about current challenges and opportunities. He proposed reinstating the periodic meetings as a continuation of the update process once the Trail Master Plan Update was finalized.

Black offered to work collaboratively with the Ashland Planning Department on the integration of the Trail Master Plan Update into the City’s Comprehensive Plan (Chapter 15). He stated that facilitation of the process early-on would forestall any unexpected surprises once the Update was completed. McGinnis noted that it would be helpful to determine which elements of the Climate Energy Plan might be integrated into the Comprehensive Plan as well.

Chapter Assignments:

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| • <i>Chapter 13 Trail Standards and Basic Design Elements</i> | McFarland, Heycke |
| • <i>New Chapter Ashland Forestlands Network</i> | Chambers, McGinnis |
| • <i>Trail Safety and Etiquette</i> | McFarland |
| • <i>Coordination with the City Comprehensive Plan</i> | Black |
| • <i>Regional Trails</i> | Jensen? |

Discussion focused on the inclusion of lands outside Ashland's City limits. It was tentatively agreed that the Imperatrice Property would become a new corridor with potential connectivity to Grizzly Peak while also providing opportunities for a myriad of trails.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was none.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

a. Review and Discuss Trail Corridors

➤ Roca Creek

Richards highlighted SOU's plan for an arboretum, located in the lower Roca corridor. McFarland outlined the Roca Creek Corridor, noting that it extended from the TID Ditch Trail in the Pinecrest Terrace / Elkader Street areas, through the SOU campus to E. Main, traveling south to Bear Creek. Roca Creek is underground throughout much of the campus.

Chapman stated that SOU should be encouraged to develop a trail route through the campus. McGinnis offered to invite an SOU representative to the next Trail Master Plan Update meeting to discuss possibilities for trail connectivity.

Richards suggested the addition of Paradise Creek to the Roca Creek Corridor with a combined buffer. Further discussion focused on approaching Willow Wind School with a plan to skirt the school property and mitigate any potential impact with fencing. McGinnis noted that doing so would separate the trail from the creek in that area.

It was agreed that the width of the Corridor would be extended from Wightman Street south to incorporate East Main to the Bear Creek Corridor. Gardiner noted that the Bear Creek Greenway had a goal to eventually connect to Emigrant Lake. McGinnis commented that plans for a trail along Bear Creek along the south side was more problematic than following the creek on the north side where impacts could be more easily mitigated.

➤ Clay Creek

Chambers talked about a trail at the end of Clay Street that connects with the Mountain Ranch development. He stated that the Mountain Ranch HOA might not be willing to provide public access to their trail and an alternative might be developing for connectivity with other neighborhoods as well as for the Oredson-Todd Woods trailhead. The Green Meadows HOA neighborhood was also protective of their greenbelt area. There followed a brief discussion about the value of retaining the Clay Creek Corridor. McFarland advocated for leaving the corridor in the Trail Master Plan as a placeholder for future trail development. He stated that if the area continued to be referenced in the Trail Master Plan and on the corridor map it would strengthen the development of any future opportunities that might arise.

➤ **Clay/Hamilton Combined**

Chapman highlighted the close proximity of the Clay Creek Corridor to the Hamilton Creek Corridor, stating that in his opinion, the focus should be on developing the Hamilton Creek Corridor. Gardiner commented that should an easement opportunity arise along Clay Creek, it could be lost if not referenced in the Trail Master Plan (with consequent adoption into the Comprehensive Plan). McFarland suggested that once referenced, the corridors could be prioritized with emphasis on other more viable corridors. McGinnis proposed combining the Clay Creek and Hamilton Creek corridors so that Cemetery Creek could be factored in as well. He indicated that doing so would create greater flexibility as residential properties developed. Gardiner reviewed the number of existing APRC properties along Clay Street, stating that growth in the area could enhance connectivity. Further discussion included examination of the Normal Neighborhood Plan, the YMCA Park and the undeveloped Clay Street Dog Park. Heycke commented that it might make more sense to have an East/West Corridor from Walker Street to Clay Street. Chambers separated the movement of people through recreational trails from more functional trails used between neighborhoods and to residential services.

➤ **Side Corridors**

It was agreed that the Agenda for the next meeting would include a discussion about how to resolve the issue of side corridors. Also open for discussion at that time would be the chapter addressing the Central Area Bike Path.

VIII. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Manuel, Minute-Taker
Trail Master Plan Update Committee
Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission

City of Ashland
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Regular Meeting Minutes
July 24, 2017

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

Absent: Commissioner Lewis

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Study Session—June 19, 2017

Motion: Landt moved to approve the Study Session Minutes of June 19, 2017, as presented. Heller seconded.

Miller amended the Minutes as follows:

Page 4, Paragraph 3 *“measurement would be 25 meters by 25 feet”*
Should be: *“measurement would be 25 meters by 25 yards”*

Motion: Landt moved to approve the Minutes of June 19, 2017, as amended. Heller seconded.
The vote was all yes

Regular Meeting—June 26, 2017

Motion: Miller moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of June, 26, 2017, as presented. Landt seconded.
The vote was all yes

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- *Open Forum*

Noel Chatroux of 75 Nursery St. in Ashland was called forward.

Chatroux thanked the Commissioners for adopting a resolution in June 2017 that supported efforts to ensure that the fields and playgrounds of Briscoe and Lincoln schools remained designated as neighborhood parks and open spaces.

Chatroux noted that he was representing Save Our Schools and Playgrounds. He indicated that the City of Ashland was considering a plan to utilize Briscoe Elementary as office space for the City of Ashland. Chatroux reported that Save Our Schools and Playgrounds did not object to using the buildings for that purpose but there were concerns about provisions for adequate parking.

Chatroux submitted four conceptual diagrams depicting potential options for parking, noting that the drawings were intended to facilitate discussion. He stated that paving a portion of the playing fields was the least desirable option.

Chatroux highlighted the commitment made by members of Save Our Schools and Playgrounds to assist APRC in keeping the fields open. He also noted that the citizens' group had devoted 10.5 hours to weeding the Briscoe and Lincoln playgrounds and would continue doing so as needed.

Celine Buchek 355 High Street in Ashland was called forward.

Buchek detailed the original effort to secure the playing fields and playgrounds of Briscoe and Lincoln schools, noting the collaboration of the entities involved in the negotiations at the time. She applauded APRC's focus on the City's Comprehensive Plan regarding the mandate to set aside the school grounds as neighborhood parks and open spaces.

Buchek said multi-generations of families remained vested in preserving the fields and playgrounds. She stressed the importance of retaining such green spaces. She stated that there were alternatives to using the fields as parking spaces, noting the potential for shared parking at a nearby church as an example.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were none.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

- ***Tennis Court Discussion (Information)***

Black introduced the topic, noting that pickleball was growing in popularity and there was a dilemma in sharing the courts with tennis players. He relayed that the current use as pickleball courts was restricted, resulting in more pickleball players than places to play.

Black stated that the eastern side of the tennis courts at Lithia Park were designated for pickleball while the other courts at that location were designated for use as tennis courts. He indicated that there were times when a tennis court was available and could be utilized by pickleball players who were waiting to play should the Commissioners expand the number of pickleball courts.

Black noted that courts at Helman School could be used as pickleball courts as well as tennis courts but public use was limited to times when school was not in session.

Discussion

Heller noted that he and others enjoyed both sports – tennis and pickleball. He acknowledged that tennis players were somewhat constrained as well, as tennis courts at Southern Oregon University were no longer available.

Heller reviewed statistics relating to pickleball nationwide, noting that pickleball was becoming an established sport. He stated that SFIA (Sports and Fitness Industry Association) estimated that there were 2.46 million pickleball players as of 2015. ASBA (American Sports Builders Association) estimated that there were 2 million players in 2016. It was projected that the number of players would increase to three million by 2018. Places to play the sport were also growing at an estimated 67% per year. Heller stated that until dedicated courts could become a reality, additional flexibility in places to play would be helpful. He said there were times when courts were available at other locations such as those at Hunter Park.

Black noted that one tennis court could accommodate up to four pickleball courts. He said pickleball lines were added to a court at Helman School. Heller expressed concern about lack of shade at the school and advocated for expanding the Lithia Park courts as an alternative.

There followed a brief discussion about the pros and cons of the sites. Black asked the Commissioners to consider whether an expansion of pickleball sites was warranted and, if so, how many courts should be made available and where they should be located. He noted that \$55,000 had been set aside for resurfacing both tennis courts and pickleball.

- ***Open Forum***

Dale Swire of 233 Clay St. in Ashland was called forward.

Swire noted that as a former fitness educator, he was respectful of the choices people made to recreate and maintain fitness. He stated that the issue in Ashland was how to provide adequate and appropriate space for both tennis and pickleball.

Swire contrasted tennis and pickleball, noting that pickleball was a new sport while tennis was a well-established sport. He indicated that in his opinion, pickleball had not yet earned status as a trend, and must earn its place. Swire discussed the locations of available courts, highlighting the loss of the SOU courts and the need to accommodate the high school tennis team, summer youth classes, the annual Big Al's tennis tournament and recreational play.

Swire suggested that a court or two be set aside for pickleballers and other sports such as bike polo, so that tennis players could play on courts that were exclusively designated for tennis.

Dave Ferguson of 995 B St. in Ashland was called forward.

Ferguson spoke about his experiences as a newcomer to Ashland. He stated that there were many things to do in Ashland, making it easier to become involved. He talked about the most welcoming people – tennis players – noting that they included all ages. Over the past thirty years, tennis community members had developed into an informal group of like-minded sports enthusiasts. He championed Ashland's emphasis on health and fitness, noting that players often participated well into their 80s. Ferguson stated that in his opinion, providing places to play tennis was an ideal use of public space.

Sally Jones of 881 S. Mountain Avenue in Ashland was called forward.

Jones stated that as a former physical education teacher, she was all about maximizing activities. She commented that in her opinion, both groups – tennis players and pickleball players – could be accommodated.

Jones expressed a concern about the increased need for additional courts due to the closure of the University's courts. She said a needs assessment could be conducted to determine how many courts were needed to accommodate pickleballers as well as tennis players. Jones stated that striping the tennis courts for pickleball was disruptive and suggested that pickleball courts be located in one area, such as at the Lithia Park location.

Gail Patton of Ashland was called forward.

Patton noted that Ashland had a large group of serious tennis players in addition to recreational players. She relayed that some players also enjoyed pickleball. Patton noted that 50% of the courts in Ashland had been lost – downsizing from 26 courts to 12 only. She emphasized that the existing courts were often in bad shape and that alternative uses for the courts was a contributing factor. Patton suggested that a multi-use court with space for two pickleball courts could be built at the newly renovated Garfield Park, with Hunter Park designated for tennis only.

Patton explained that pickleball lines should be painted in a lighter color of the court's surface and asked that the stripes at Helman School be removed and painted appropriately. She stated that the condition of the courts was detrimental to the success of the nationwide tournament held each year in Ashland.

Sharon Laskos of 1420 Fielder St. in Ashland was called forward.

Laskos advocated for separate facilities for tennis players and pickleballers. She stated that pickleball lines were confusing and distracting for tennis players. She asked that an email from Chip Blackmon - a certified pickleball and tennis pro for the Ashland Tennis Club – be admitted into the record as follows:

"It has been my experience, as a certified tennis and pickleball instructor, that when putting down pickleball lines on a tennis court, we always use a lighter version of the color of the interior tennis court. This is the best way to see the pickleball lines while not overpowering the tennis court lines. With pickleball growing as a sport, they now have a US Open for pickleball and we will need to be responsible to both groups of players until they can build standalone pickleball courts."

Bruce Barnes of 132 Blue Heron Ln. in Ashland was called forward.

Barnes introduced himself as "one of those over 80 guys" who plays tennis. He stated that the courts were often full and people waited for a turn to play. He noted that APRC conducted tennis lessons for youth, ensuring continued growth of the sport and increased need for tennis courts in Ashland.

Luther (Louie) Lyman of 321 Clay # 101 in Ashland was called forward.

Lyman reported that he had observed courts at Helman School that were empty of pickleball players based on observations conducted on Sunday, July 23, 2017, at approximately 10:00 a.m. Later in the day, the courts were half full. He suggested that the lack of shade at Helman might be one reason the courts were not fully utilized.

Lyman talked about the restricted times for use at Helman, (use is permitted only when school is not in session), and lack of storage for nets. He noted that the University's courts were gated and not maintained although three were potentially usable. Lyman talked with the Athletic Director at SOU who relayed that the University had not yet made a decision regarding the use of the tennis courts, although there had been some contact with APRC regarding them. Lyman encouraged APRC to continue to negotiate use of the courts – particularly when one of the courts would be ideal for pickleball. He relayed that the courts were gated, a constraint that could be addressed while discussing use of the courts.

Discussion

Heller responded to some of the concerns relayed during Open Forum. He stated that a storage locker had been delivered at Helman School that day, which would facilitate storing equipment at the courts.

Black relayed that the courts at Helman School were there as a result of negotiations with APRC. He stated that educators at the school had proposed alternative uses for the space, resulting in the negotiations. APRC renewed a commitment to maintain the courts for use as intended, an essential part of the negotiations. He stated that the pickleball lines has been painted to match school colors.

Heller agreed with public comments regarding the inclusivity of the tennis and pickleball groups in Ashland. He stated that both sports promote healthy social interactions as well as enhancing physical well-being.

Heller stated that he was encouraged by public commentary that leaned toward more pickleball in Lithia Park. He noted that APRC would continue talks with SOU, particularly now that colleges across the nation were beginning to facilitate intercollegiate pickleball tournaments. Heller cautioned that it might be some time before SOU made a decision about use of the courts.

Heller stated that he would be amenable to painting more courts in Lithia Park for pickleball, noting that it was the least invasive option. He noted that while the sport of pickleball was growing rapidly, tennis was a venerable sport with an incredible history and he supported the tennis community as well as pickleball players.

Landt suggested that pickleball statistics be balanced with equivalent statistics about tennis to provide an apples-to-apples comparison. A member of the audience noted that the number of tennis players from 2014 to date had expanded from 14 million players to 18 million. Black recommended using the same source of information for context. He stated that there were actions that could be taken to add to anecdotal information.

Black stated that discussion should focus on wait times to determine whether an expansion of pickleball courts would be appropriate. He talked about wait times for other sports such as basketball, and the limited number of courts for that particular sport. Black asked whether an empty court should be made available to pickleball players, if one was available.

Landt highlighted the suggestion by former Parks Commissioner Sally Jones to conduct a needs-assessment, noting that the information gathered would be helpful. He indicated that there were other factors to consider as well such as the availability of courts at certain times of the day versus availability at ideal times to play. He talked about the scheduling of soccer teams, which had assigned fields throughout the day because the number of teams wishing to play soccer outpaced the preferred times for play. Landt noted that there would be several options to consider once the assessment was completed.

Gardiner asked about the cost of building a dedicated pickleball court. He noted that there was \$55,000 set aside for pickleball in the CIP (Capital Improvement Plan).

In response to a question by Gardiner, Black clarified that the \$55,000 was for resurfacing tennis and pickleball courts. According to the latest bid received, the cost to resurface one court was approximately \$11,000. There followed a brief discussion about the number of courts in need of resurfacing, the number of courts requiring re-striping and the overall condition of the courts at Lithia Park.

Gardiner reiterated that the Helman court had been prepared for pickleball players. Heller commented that the addition of a new storage unit for sports equipment might encourage pickleballers to use the Helman courts.

Landt explained the *permaculture principle* – a tool espoused by APRC to raise efficiencies and provide more value for the community. He stated that using a facility for more than one purpose was a cost-effective way to meet that standard. Landt acknowledged that there were exceptions to the general rule, such as the use of Hunter Park for tennis tournaments. In that case, the addition of pickleball lines would be confusing and counterproductive.

Gardiner highlighted partnerships with other entities that maximized the sports infrastructure. He noted that Helman School, as an example, was open to the public only when school was not in session. Gardiner acknowledged that when partners reduced sports facilities, there was increased pressure on the public infrastructure that remained in place. He cited closure of the SOU swimming pool as an example. Gardiner stressed that APRC continually looked for solutions to alleviate those pressure but noted that there were costs involved as well as the depletion of resources.

Landt noted that it was his preference to be operationally conservative. He intimated that a step-by-step approach would ensure that all the courts are being used to capacity. If pickleball courts remained a priority, then striping an additional court or two at Lithia Park might be appropriate.

Heller replied that the reason all courts were not fully utilized was that weather affected active play, particularly in the heat of the summer. He stated that the courts at Lithia Park were shaded and there were benches for players to sit while waiting to play.

There followed a discussion about a needs assessment and how to gather information in a timely manner. Black suggested that APRC staff could collect data regarding the use and the times when people were waiting for an available court. Landt suggested that the data collected should be comprehensive and include all hours of the day.

Once the information was reviewed, Black suggested that the Commissioners focus on the demand for pickleball and whether there was adequate space within the APRC system for expansion of pickleball courts.

Miller asked about ways to shade existing courts. Black acknowledged the possibility with the caveat that funds were limited and must include tennis improvements as well. Landt called for a future discussion at a biennial goal setting session about shade structures. He asked staff to place the topic on APRC's list of topics (i.e., the parking lot) that had not been voted on but were considered important to consider for possible future implementation.

- ***CIP Update (Information)***
 - *Ashland Creek Park*

McFarland reviewed the status of current projects beginning with Ashland Creek Park. He stated that APRC staff had laid a new patio slab and installed a shade structure over new picnic tables. In response to a question by Landt, McFarland noted that the picnic tables were in excess of those needed for Garfield Park and therefore did not affect the project's budget, which represented a cost savings.

- *Garfield Park*

McFarland stated that finishing touches were in progress. He said a new retaining wall had been poured, adding to the aesthetics. Black noted that the additional retaining wall was serving a dual purpose as a seating wall.

- *Oak Knoll Golf Course*

McFarland displayed a photo of attractive new yardage and greens signage. He noted that there had been an irrigation failure at the first hole that was currently under repair. Irrigation improvements were a top priority and sprinkler heads would be upgraded to a more rugged and versatile type of equipment. The main advantage was that the inner workings could be replaced if necessary without replacing the entire unit.

Landt led a discussion regarding head-to-head coverage. McFarland noted that head to head coverage would be possible with the new equipment – conserving water while increasing efficiencies. Black explained that the Golf Course irrigation improvements would become part of a master plan, as opposed to replacing heads in a haphazard manner.

In response to a question by Heller, McFarland noted that irrigation came primarily from a pond holding TID irrigation water, with a pump delivering water to the irrigation system.

➤ *Second Dog Park*

McFarland reported that a survey of the area had been completed and the planning process would begin soon. Black stated that the Real Estate Subcommittee would need to meet soon to discuss new developments regarding the Dog Park. He explained that an agreement with the YMCA included a recreational component, necessitating a multi-faceted park rather than a dedicated dog park. An evaluation of the uses for the property would be an important first step.

➤ *Ashland Pond Easements*

McFarland noted that a survey for public easements (that would provide access to Ashland Pond) was underway.

➤ *Verde Village Bike Path*

Development of the bike path for Verde Village was reported as underway. Fencing had been installed as well as silt barriers that would extend to the Dog Park. McFarland reported that the project was roughed in.

Landt asked about plans for a retaining wall in areas where there was a substantial grade change. McFarland stated that he would contact the developers to ascertain the plans for the area.

➤ *Beach Creek Repairs*

McFarland commented that APRC was working with the engineer and the contractor to repair the outflow area below the pipe. He stated that the original project had been permitted because the area was designated a non-historical fish habitat, according to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

In response to a question by Landt, McFarland stated that the partial failure downstream would be a separate project. He stated that the repairs downstream had more complications and would require a specific permit. Landt replied that another wet winter could destroy the pedestrian bridge resulting in higher repair costs. Black indicated that the process for obtaining the permit would begin soon. McFarland stated that he would research whether a temporary solution could be found to forestall further damage. He explained that Public Works was working with the entities involved for permission to clean the sediment trap that would protect the bridge.

In response to a question by Black, McFarland clarified that preparations included measuring rocks that had been washed downstream and were in line with the contract specs required by Public Works Engineering. The results would support findings regarding cause and effect of the catastrophic failure.

Black noted that APRC was participating in a process to determine how the fix would proceed. APRC was striving to collaborate with the designer, contractor and staff to arrive at an agreeable solution.

SUBCOMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS

- *Lithia Park Master Plan*

Black reported that the Lithia Park Subcommittee was in the process of reviewing the three proposals received in response to the RFP (request for proposal) for the Lithia Park Master Plan. An interview had been scheduled with the applicant scoring the highest on the criteria matrix. A walk-around had been scheduled as well. Once the review was completed, the subcommittee would present recommendations to the Commissioners.

- *Ribbon Cutting*

Dyssegard extended an invitation for a Garfield Park ribbon cutting ceremony scheduled for Thursday, July 27 at 1:00 p.m. The Chamber of Commerce would be on hand to assist with the ribbon cutting and dessert would be served along with family friendly activities. This event would celebrate the recently completed improvements at Garfield Park.

- ***Golf Course Meeting***

Gardiner announced that a Golf Course Subcommittee meeting was scheduled for Thursday, August 17.

ITEMS FOR COMMISSIONERS

Gardiner stated that the July "Park Views" article was not submitted to the Ashland Daily Tidings, as the topic was not yet ready for release.

UPCOMING MEETING DATES

Study Session, August 21, 2017 @ The Grove, 1195 E. Main, 5:30 p.m.

Regular Meeting, August 28, 2017 @ Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main, 7:00 p.m.

Gardiner noted that the Study Session might be canceled due to lack of a quorum, since that was the day of the solar eclipse.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Manuel, Assistant
Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission

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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.

City of Ashland
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
SENIOR PROGRAM SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
August 8, 2017

Present: Commissioners Gardiner and Lewis; Director Black; Superintendent Dials; Executive Assistant Dyssegard

Absent: Senior Program Manager Dodson

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gardiner called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. at The Grove, Otte-Peterson Room, 1195 E. Main Street in Ashland.

Gardiner stated that the meeting was the sixth and final meeting of the Subcommittee. The agenda for the meeting would be to review the recommendations.

PUBLIC COMMENT (for items not on the agenda)

There was none.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were none.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Receive and Take Action on Recommendations for Senior Center Program of APRC

Black noted that the recommendations presented at this time, were based on the work completed by the Senior Subcommittee – whose members were tasked with evaluating the Senior Center. He stated that there were no plans to close the Senior Center. The Center was in need of re-organization in order to meet new goals and fiscal requirements.

Black talked about the 2016 Performance Audit, noting that the report included departmental reviews along with information and recommendations. The Audit assessed the Senior Center, concluding that: *“Opportunities were available to increase programming that appeals to underserved groups, such as Active Baby Boomers and Retirees, as well as Senior Citizens and the Elderly.”*

Black explained that the statement became the key in developing an action plan that would focus on expanding senior programs to meet the growing needs of Ashland’s seniors. The Audit report further stated that *“While the current Senior Center program provides some recreational experiences for its participants, the project team believes that there are opportunities to expand the recreation and leisure experiences offered at the Center and therefore has identified senior citizens and the elderly population as an underserved group. The project team believes that recreational opportunities at the Center will increase participation in the program, establish it as a full-service Center and provide greater service to the Senior and Elderly in Ashland.”*

“The project team believes, as well, that these recreational opportunities can be provided by staff and volunteers and it is critical that additional revenues be generated to support the Center. There are a number of strategies that should be pursued by Center staff to generate added support for the Senior Center, such as research and apply for grant opportunities, create an annual membership fee, establish a Senior Center fundraising program, work with the Ashland Parks Foundation (APF) to develop a Senior Center partnership/sponsorship, creating a task force to establish committees to further explore the potential for individual program strategies....”

Black highlighted an objective adopted by APRC in 2015 that committed to an evaluation of ways to expand the services and support alternative use of the Senior Center to meet community needs.

Black reported that the goals developed by the Senior Center Subcommittee were as follows:

1. Through the gathering of information, gain a greater understanding of the Senior Program and the function it serves for the citizens of Ashland;
2. Explore new ways of marketing and program innovation to ensure that the greatest number of citizens are benefited by the Senior Program;
3. Evaluate the organizational structure of the program and ensure that the organization of the Senior Program and the goals for innovation are aligned for efficiency and service delivery;
4. Seek advocates of the Senior Program and new ways to increase community involvement through volunteerism;
5. Evaluate the current Senior Program policies and create an official subcommittee of the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission reporting directly to the Commissioners to ensure collaboration and governance.

Black noted that it had been determined that the current Senior Program would not be sufficient to move the program to the next level. The current budget reflected the necessity that the Center must earn 20% of the Center’s budget over the next two years for a total of \$75,000. He stated that if the program could not meet that goal, then it was possible that drastic action would need to be taken to ensure that the Center did not go over budget. This could include a full closure of the program. The goal of 20% of budget was less than other similar Oregon communities that contributed approximately 47% for their programs.

Black stated that taking action promptly would give the Center the best opportunity to meet the fiscal requirements as well as expand its programs. He explained that an expanded program would result in increased revenue as well as ensure that more Ashland seniors were able to participate in the Center’s programs.

He proposed the following recommendations:

1. Form an official Subcommittee of the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission to provide oversight and guidance to the Senior Program.
2. Move the Ashland Senior Program back to the Recreation Division with a focus on creating more programming for more of the 55+ population and for achieving cost recovery goals.
3. Reduce operations and staffing at the Senior Center to a bare minimum for at least three months (one fiscal quarter) in order to meet the following objectives:
 - i. Fiscal savings. Due to the need to reduce costs during this fiscal year to meet the adopted budget, reducing staff for a period would be necessary. This reduction would only affect the drop-in traffic

and office hours. The Food & Friends program could continue to function, as well as any recreation programs that were scheduled through the program guide.

- Social service programs—such as ALIEAP, bus passes and HEAT—would continue to function through a combination of efforts from the City of Ashland staff and Ashland Parks and Recreation staff.
- ii. Reorganize the Senior Program. Revamp the structure and programs of the Senior Program, with the goal of increasing services and cost recovery as predominant factors.
 - iii. Move the major functions of the Senior Program to the Grove, with a goal of creating a “multi-generational center, keeping scheduled classes and Food and Friends program at current Senior Center.
4. Cost Recovery – it had been demonstrated, through the comparable cities analysis, that there is a potential to recover some of the cost of operating a senior program. Elsewhere, within APRC, all programs have some level of cost recovery, aside from unreserved areas in City parks. Based on the research, and the need within the APRC budget to collect some revenue on each program, a reasonable schedule for the Commission to adopt for cost recovery for the senior program would be as follows:
- i. Year One (FY 2018) – 15% or \$25,000.
 - ii. Year Two (FY 2019) – 28% or \$50,000.
 - iii. Each Year Following FY 2019 – at least 28% or at least \$50,000.
 - iv. Request at least full-cost recovery from the City for providing the outreach and coordination of the ALIEP program, bus passes and other utility-related services or discuss other options with the City for providing those services.
 - v. Request that RVCOG begin reimbursing APRC for the use of the Senior Center for Food & Friends, or distribute the funds from the donations to APRC.
5. Perform multiple open house events and conduct a survey of the citizens of Ashland covering all aspects of the Senior Program under the direction of the Recreation Superintendent and Senior Center staff.

PUBLIC INPUT

Christine Ducey of 515 Walnut St. Ashland, OR. was called forward.

Ducey spoke about the way the Senior Center creates community in the senior population. She quoted a report from a study completed recently that said “loneliness and isolation contributes more to early death than obesity.” She stressed the importance of the Center intimating, that the Center provides a sense of community and acts as a venue for one-on-one interaction.

Rich Rohde of 124 Ohio St. Ashland, OR. was called forward.

Rohde stated that he served on the Ashland Housing and Human Services Commission and has spent over six years with the McKenzie River Gathering Foundation. He expressed concern about human services in Ashland, stating that the quality of Mr. Black’s report was unacceptable. He suggested that most of the goals seemed to be about cost-recovery and recommended collaborating with other organizations with experience in human services on a 360 evaluation prior to completing improved recommendations.

Susanne Severeid of Ashland, OR. was called forward.

Severeid stated that she had worked and volunteered at the Senior Center for over a year. She noted that many of the services provided by the Senior Center could not be quantified on a financial statement. Severeid reported that

the Senior Center had been in existence for 43 years, and staff had long experience in working with the seniors. The depth of personal knowledge about the individuals served had in some cases lasted for decades.

Severeid indicated that many of the seniors served were low-income people and for some the suggested donation of \$2.75 per meal was more than they could pay. Severeid noted the lack of fees for use of other APRC services – listing as examples APRC parks, trails and bikeways.

Severeid objected to the short notice and availability of Black's report, noting that there had been little opportunity to prepare an informed response. She stated that in her opinion, the effort to obtain public comment was insufficient.

Severeid questioned whether the 150-page report provided by the Senior Center had been taken into consideration. She reported that Director Black had apparently rebuffed repeated invitations to come and see the program firsthand.

Sharon Laws of 968 Hillview Dr. Ashland, OR. was called forward.

Laws relayed that she had served as the Director of Ashland's Senior Program for 17 ½ years. She stated that the program was originally a social program, evolving through the years in response to senior needs. Recreational, educational and health-related programs were additions to the original program. Laws stressed the importance of the human component, noting that caring for seniors was a moral responsibility. She commented that in her opinion, the citizens of Ashland were committed to providing all aspects of care to Ashland's seniors.

Lonelle of Ray Ln. Ashland OR. was called forward.

Lonelle stated that she had worked in senior programs for the past 30 years and had coordinated the original meals on wheels program. She indicated that the rules and regulations for conducting a meals program was not addressed in Black's report. Lonelle noted that during the time she had served, there had been restrictions for collecting fees for meals.

Lonelle noted that the lack of a kitchen at The Grove would present obstacles to providing lunches. In addition, there might be an applicable rule regarding serving lunch there. She stated that if the lunch program was eliminated, the detrimental effects would be apparent. Transportation (appropriate for seniors) could also become an issue. Lonelle recommended further research to better understand the needs of seniors and the programs that respond to those needs.

Mike Hersh of 932 Morton St. Ashland, OR. was called forward.

Hersh stated that he had been a volunteer at the Center for approximately 16 years. Hersh emphasized the importance of providing services to the seniors who need them most – particularly the elderly. He referred to Black's report regarding the goals for the Senior Center, suggesting that goal number five—holding open houses and conducting a survey of Ashland residents—should be the first step taken, prior to any other action. He stated that the Senior Center and its programs and services should be under the jurisdiction of the City Council.

Maureen Battistella of 395 Hemlock Ln. Ashland, OR. was called forward.

Battistella talked about the focus on cost recovery, stating that those served were the poorest in the community. The services provided were part of a safety net for those who were unable to provide for themselves.

Battistella noted that Ashland residents pay a significant portion of their taxes to APRC and she thanked APRC for their care of Ashland's parks and recreational services. She indicated that taxes should also be used to support people, not just to secure and care for open spaces.

Battistella addressed the possibility for new leadership to move senior services and programs forward, suggesting that such an issue should be addressed by the City's Human Resources Department. She pointed out that the tone of APRC's recommendations for new leadership seemed to be unkind and display a lack of collaboration. Battistella stated that there was no evidence that geriatric experts had been consulted or that organizations that contribute to

senior care were contacted for their advice and assistance. Planning should include those elements before any actions were taken. Battistella asked that a formal evaluation of the needs of the community and the senior program take place prior to the development of any plan.

Kit Crumb of 2305 Ashland St. Ashland, OR. was called forward.

Crumb noted that he was the former administrator of a retirement center. He stated that he represented the seniors who were not able to provide for their needs—those who were shut-ins without basic resources. He indicated that those people should be considered without an assigned cost.

Peggy Duvall of 165 Meade St. Ashland, OR. was called forward.

Duvall stated that she has paid taxes for 33 years without complaint, especially in support of education. She expressed the hope that she had helped to subsidize the educations of the Commissioners so that when their time came to provide leadership, they would be able to thoughtfully respond. Duvall stated that it was now the elderly's turn to be subsidized.

Duvall talked about the process of change that the Commissioners had instigated. She stated that the seniors were informed about the proposed changes on Monday, with commentary permitted on Tuesday and a decision planned for Wednesday. She noted that Senior Center staff had already been let go – an indication that a decision had already been made.

Bert Harris of 1826 Fremont St. Ashland, OR. was called forward.

Harris noted that he had attended programs at the Center for twenty years. Seniors there were family and as such should be able to gather free of charge. He stated that he had to be frugal in order to provide his basic needs – including the 96 square feet he resided in.

Sue Wilson of 1056 Dead Indian Rd. Ashland, OR. was called forward.

Wilson stated that she volunteers at the Center two days per week.

Wilson objected to the process of soliciting input from the public, then limiting it to a minute each. She stated that it was disrespectful and short sighted. She criticized the contention that staffing was sufficient, stating that Center staff worked very hard and fulfilling the needs on a reduced basis would be insufficient to meet critical care objectives. She stressed that losing the intellectual capital provided by staff would be detrimental to the program and the people it served.

Wilson stated that the proposed move to The Grove showed a disconnect regarding seniors and their needs. The Meals on Wheels program might no longer be able to provide meals if asked to pay for space.

Candy Barnhill of 947 Cyprus Loop Ashland, OR. was called forward.

Barnhill stated that she had worked and volunteered at the Senior Center. She presented a brief history of the Center and the focus the originators had to provide tools for seniors to increase well-being and maintain independence.

Barnhill reported that Christine Dobson has been managing that process for over fourteen years. She and others before her had initiated, expanded and diversified the services provided to seniors. It was now a highly respected resource, providing a unique skillset. As an example, she noted that the Center's staff provided valuable assistance to families living in Ashland but caring for aging family members elsewhere.

The Center's staff remained true to the original mission regardless of changing times and decreasing budgetary support. Barnhill suggested that a better course of action would be to empower Dodson as a manager and leader in providing senior services.

Jan Robertson 32 Ravenwood Pl. Ashland, OR. was called forward.

Robertson explained the financial benefit of volunteers. She detailed the many duties she takes on as a volunteer and challenged those present to join her in helping with the chores involved with serving meals and running multiple programs.

David Hill of 235 Terrace St. Ashland, OR. was called forward.

Hill stated that he represented St. Vincent DePaul. He stated that in his opinion, the proposed changes represented a drastic and amoral shift of resources away from those who needed such services in order to survive.

Mort Perle of 491 Courtney St. Ashland, OR. was called forward.

Perle challenged the necessity for a cost recovery goal for the Senior Center. He stated that it seemed inconsistent with other services provided by APRC such as tennis courts that remained free of charge for users. He stated that APRC built and maintained playgrounds, suggesting that the children be asked to contribute towards the service. He suggested that seniors should not be targeted for funding goals.

Willow Morningsky of 132 6th St. Ashland, OR. was called forward.

Morningsky suggested that Ashland emulate Sun City with their transportation alternatives so that seniors could provide transportation for themselves when vehicular transportation was no longer available. She spoke about the terror of those who cannot leave their homes and those who see their powers slipping - leaving them vulnerable to the vicissitudes of life.

She shared an experience where a young person exhibited disrespect and a lack of understanding regarding seniors. She stressed that the elderly deserve more than that. She proposed a process of mediation that might bridge the gap between seniors with specific needs and those who provide them.

John Hawksley of 1230 Ashland Mine Rd. Ashland, OR. was called forward.

Hawksley supported the value of additional public input. He suggested that the information presented did not address a myriad of questions that would promote understanding. He stated that additional public input might change the conclusions and recommendations presented by APRC.

Barb Settles of 333 Idaho, Ashland, OR. was called forward.

Settle stated that Ashland itself was under scrutiny over the Senior Center controversy. She advocated for a respectful dialogue.

Corey McEnroe was called forward.

Nine-year old McEnroe stated that many of his friends were older. He stated his appreciation for those who are adults: i.e. seniors.

DISCUSSION

Black stated that he was legally bound by the City of Ashland and APRC to meet APRC budgetary requirements. He explained that his purpose in addressing the Senior Center was to find a creative way to continue to provide the highest level of services given budgetary constraints.

He referred to the commentary regarding Parks, noting that his responsibilities included budgetary constraints there as well. He noted that he accepted those responsibilities as the downside to being an administrator. Black stated that he had not yet laid off staff at the Senior Center; however, if the Commissioners accept his recommendations, then the layoffs would occur.

Black's initial conversation with Food & Friends about contributing to the cost of the meals program led to a better understanding of the constraints for both organizations. Food & Friends had agreed to assist with maintenance costs by performing janitorial duties from time to time. He stated that APRC's budget was so tight that he also helped with janitorial maintenance as did all APRC staff.

Black stated that the recommendations presented today represented his best shot at preserving programs and creating the revenues that were needed to run them.

Lewis stated that he had volunteered in Ashland for the last 30 years and, as such, was appreciative of the people who supported the Center and its services. He assured those present that the Senior Center would not be closed; rather, APRC would work toward improving senior services. He stated that change was scary but inevitable.

Lewis stressed the importance of the Performance Audit, noting that it was a comprehensive review of all APRC divisions with a series of recommendations to improve efficiencies throughout the organization. The Audit was completed by an independent consulting group at a cost of \$49,000.

Lewis stressed that the Audit uncovered the need to reach a larger group of seniors. Reviewing the demographics in Ashland, it was noted that those 55 and older were a large segment of the community. Many people were already volunteering and, after many meetings, it became obvious that reorganization of the Senior Center and senior programs was essential. He referred to the six Subcommittee meetings that allowed for in-depth discussions. During the restructuring, there would be no loss of essential services and at-risk seniors would not be turned away. Lewis noted that APRC was determined to complete the process by creating a more efficient, progressive and inclusive Senior Center. Lewis asked everyone to see these changes as an opportunity to improve the Senior Center and the services it provided. He invited those present to help make things better.

Gardiner noted that the Subcommittee would end the session with a vote that would result in a recommendation for consideration of the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission. He thanked those present for their civility.

Gardiner stated that the Subcommittee's process has been much longer than was commonly known. He noted that all Subcommittee meetings were open to the public and publicly noticed. At those meetings, people had been welcomed and invited to contribute.

Gardiner highlighted many constructive comments from the commentary shared at the meeting. He stated he would vote for the proposed recommendations by taking into account the feedback given. He stated that he was convinced that the recommendations would allow APRC to move forward in their efforts to expand the Senior Center and its programs.

Motion: Gardiner moved that the Subcommittee support the recommendations presented by Director Black and forward the recommendations to the Commissioners for final approval. Lewis seconded.

The vote was all yes.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Manuel, Minute-taker
Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission

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.

City of Ashland
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
August 9, 2017

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

Absent: Commissioner Heller; Assistant Manuel

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gardiner called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main Street.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were none.

ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS

There were none.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were none.

REVIEW AND APPROVE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SENIOR CENTER SUBCOMMITTEE

Black reviewed the historical context for plans to expand senior programs beginning in 2015. He noted that the adopted goals for APRC (Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission) for that year included the following:

- *“Evaluate the expanded and alternative use of the Senior Center to meet community needs.”*

A comprehensive Performance Audit of APRC was conducted by an outside consultant and subsequently adopted in 2016. All APRC divisions were evaluated, with benchmarks established. The Performance Review for the Senior Center highlighted the following:

- *“Opportunities were available to increase programming that appeals to underserved groups, such as Active Baby Boomers and Retirees, as well as Senior Citizens and the Elderly.”*

In early 2017, a Senior Center Subcommittee was established with the following goals:

- *Gain a greater understanding of the Senior Program and the function it serves (for) the citizens of Ashland. Explore new ways of marketing and program innovation to ensure that the greatest number of citizens are benefited by the Senior Program.*
- *Evaluate the organizational structure of the program to ensure that the organization of the Senior Center and the goals for innovation are aligned for efficiency and service delivery.*

- *Seek advocates of the Senior Program and new ways to increase community involvement through volunteerism.*
- *Evaluate the current Senior Program policies and create an official subcommittee of the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission reporting directly to the Commissioners to ensure collaboration and governance.*

After the goals were established, a six-month evaluation followed.

Black stated that public discussion held the previous day at the final Senior Program Subcommittee meeting seemed to emphasize cost recovery rather than the needs of the seniors. He noted that the evaluation process focused on establishing goals that would enhance and expand senior programming and services.

Black said he revised the recommendations to better explain the cost recovery model. He relayed that APRC's programs are not offered to the community toward generating a profit. Parks and Rec programs are subsidized by Ashland taxpayers. The cost recovery model is applicable to those groups who use services that others do not; therefore, they receive a disproportionate benefit. Examples include programs offered at the ice rink, swimming pool and golf course. The norm is to establish cost recovery goals that are a percentage of the true cost of the service or program. Users contribute, creating more balanced programs that benefit the community as a whole.

Black noted that the priority for the Senior Center was to expand senior outreach and offer more robust programming. In discussing ways to reach those goals, the Senior Program Subcommittee completed a series of recommendations. Those recommendations were revised to better reflect public input and a broader view, Revised recommendations were outlined as follows:

Revised Recommendations

1. Form an official Subcommittee of the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission to provide oversight and guidance to the Senior Program.
2. Switch operational oversight and management of the Ashland Senior Program to APRC's Recreation Division.
3. Move the physical oversight and management of the Senior Program to The Grove, with the goal of creating a "multi-generational" center, keeping a presence at the current center through scheduled classes and the Food & Friends meals program.
4. For a period of three months or so, temporarily cut back on center operating hours and some functions; focus on redesigning the Senior Program to make it more robust and inclusive.
 - *Ensure that throughout the transition, core services are preserved and the center is open and accessible to seniors for scheduled appointments and classes and for drop-in-visits on a slightly more limited basis than the current schedule.*
 - *During the transition period, develop a plan for invigorating and expanding senior programming; present it to the Commissioners for review.*

- *Perform multiple open house events and conduct a survey of Ashland citizens covering all aspects of the Senior Program.*
 - *To accomplish the transition to a new Senior Program, lay off current staff (1.7 FTE) and temporarily reassign duties among other APRC employees to maintain core services.*
5. Implement the plan for increasing recreation and other program offerings to better serve the senior population; revise Senior Program functions, staffing and job descriptions accordingly.
 6. Through the process of reorganization and review, explore options to increase revenue to offset some of the costs associated with the expense of running the Senior Program.

PUBLIC INPUT

Jackie Bachman of 943 B. Street in Ashland was called forward.

Bachman talked about her experience with the Senior Center as it is today. She detailed the programs currently offered to seniors and expressed concern about the proposed move to The Grove. In addition, Bachman voiced concerned about increased fees and additional financial obligations such as requirements for teachers at the center to meet the City's insurance requirements.

Bachman characterized the current status of the center as warm and inclusive, invigorated and caring.

Bachman stated that her biggest concern was the process of approval for the recommendations, indicating that public input was insufficient and the Senior Program had not been adequately represented. Bachman asked that a vote to approve APRC recommendations be postponed pending additional public participation and input.

Anne Bellegia of 472 Thimbleberry Lane in Ashland was called forward

Bellegia stated that her views stemmed from active participation with groups that serve seniors, including the Rogue Valley Senior Council. While noting that she was not representing the organizations mentioned, she stated that her opinions were formed by those experiences.

Bellegia relayed that seniors are a large segment of the population in Ashland and she was appreciative of the APRC goal to expand programs for seniors with the caveat that there were additional points to consider when contemplating changes that would affect seniors and the programs designed for them.

Bellegia questioned the expectations for increased revenue through a cost-recovery program. She referred to the lifelong learning programs sponsored by OLLI (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute) at SOU, sharing financial data that indicated that the price points for seniors in the Valley were significantly different from APRC expectations.

Bellegia commented that in her opinion, considering senior programs as recreational offerings overlooked the need for place that the Senior Center provides. She stated that social isolation is a significant factor in the rates of morbidity and mortality for seniors. Studies show that social isolation is twice as detrimental to healthy

outcomes as alcoholism, smoking and obesity. The establishment of a place that is comfortable for seniors is an important factor in reducing the impacts of social isolation.

Bellegia highlighted the costs of long-term health care, intimating that independent living saves taxpayer and family assets and promotes well-being for loved ones and their communities.

Claudia Ballard of 170 Reiten Drive in Ashland was called forward.

Ballard asked that the Commissioners table the vote to give the Ashland community more time to review the proposed recommendations for Ashland's Senior Center. She stated that a review of the results of the Performance Audit would be helpful as well as other documentation to understand the rationale for the changes proposed. Ballard reported that the Senior Center recommendations had become available to the public at 4:00 p.m. Monday, August 7, 2017 – too quickly for a measured response.

Ballard stated that the portion of the APRC budget dedicated to the Senior Center and its programs was approximately one-sixth of the APRC budget as a whole: \$175,000 of \$11,000,000. She proposed returning oversight of the Center and its programs to Ashland's City Council, stating that the Council's goals were in better alignment with provisions for senior care.

Patricia Greenough of 70 Garfield St. in Ashland was called forward.

Greenough noted the lag time between the Performance Audit and the subsequent reorganization of the Senior Center. She stated that during that time, grants could have been sought to support the Center.

Greenough shared her personal story, and the impact that sudden change has on the aging. She stated that it takes time for the elderly to adjust to change. She correlated the Center to a home for seniors – a place where people can meet for quiet conversations – stimulating the mind and creating a sense of connectivity.

Greenough talked about the loss of current Senior Center staff and the proposed relocation of the Center. She commented that seniors needed a place to go that was less stressful, where seniors could be themselves and interact with their peers.

Sandra Sawyer of 585 Thorton Way in Ashland was called forward.

Sawyer asked that the Commissioners table the vote, indicating that the changes to the Senior Center were unknown to those most concerned until recently. She asked for additional time for research, discussion and negotiation, stating that there were alternatives to the proposed recommendations that should be taken into consideration.

Gwen Davies of 860 Harmony Ln. in Ashland was called forward.

Davies highlighted 40 years of residency in Ashland as well as her work as a medical social worker specializing in assisting the disabled and the elderly.

Davies commented that the public should have been more intimately involved in the process. She contrasted the lack of information and last-minute involvement to similar processes in years past when multiple public meetings were held, collaboration was valued and public outreach was paramount.

Davies advocated against a vote on the recommendations and institution of a process that would allow proper commentary from those affected by the Commissioners' decisions. She stated that seniors were taxpayers and as such were within their rights to request additional hearings.

David Hill of 236 Terrace St. in Ashland was called forward.

Hill commended the Commissioners on their stewardship of Ashland's parks and open spaces. He suggested that entertainment and recreational services should remain separate from the more serious need for senior services. Hill stated that APRC was known for the services they provide for the community as a whole – services that are very different from meeting the needs of seniors. He advocated for a return of Senior Program oversight to the City of Ashland.

Ann Magill of 1022 Eureka St. in Ashland was called forward.

Magill affirmed the ways in which seniors in Ashland display fiduciary responsibility – citing support for education as an example. She relayed her experience as a volunteer for Food & Friends, stating that the communal meal served at the Center was important to many seniors. Magill questioned whether The Grove would be able to provide a similar service – noting that to her knowledge there was no kitchen at the facility.

Magill stated that she too supported oversight by the City of Ashland. She highlighted the expertise of current staff, objecting to the recommendation to remove them, and suggested that the Commissioners take time to see how the current senior staff interacts with seniors and administers to their needs.

Diane Cooper of 183 E. Hersey St. in Ashland was called forward.

Cooper stated that while she was a newcomer to Ashland, her perspective regarding the Senior Center was formed over thirty years of working as a licensed clinical social worker. She urged the Commissioners to refrain from disrupting the seniors by moving the Center as proposed and recommended that the Commissioners arrange for oversight that included experts in geriatrics as well as staffers who have geriatric expertise. She suggested that there be continued discussion pertaining to the proposed closing of the Senior Center.

Wes Brain of 298 Garfield St. in Ashland was called forward.

After asking a question about the occupancy of the room, Brain explained that he had lived in Ashland since 1956. He stated that he was appreciative of the services provided for Ashland's seniors. He expressed concern about the gentrification of Ashland, noting that many young people and seniors could not afford to live in Ashland.

Brain asked that the vote be tabled pending a more democratic process.

Will Churchill at 642 Sutton Place in Ashland was called forward.

Churchill referenced APRC's recommendations, noting that there seemed to be an issue with the manager of the Senior Center, Chris Dodson. He stated that it was apparent to him that Chris always busy assisting seniors, handling paperwork and answering the phone. He stated that in his opinion, Chris performed her duties and interacted with seniors with care and compassion.

Churchill expressed concern about conducting the Special Meeting when Chris was out of town on vacation, indicating that the managerial issues stated in the report were nebulous and reflected a disconnect between APRC and the Senior Program Manager.

Jean Maxwell of 950 Harmony Ln. in Ashland was called forward.

Maxwell detailed her experience as a teacher at SOU who supervised practicum students whose practicum experiences included working at the Senior Center. She stated that students who interacted with the Senior Center were uniformly impressed with its management. The importance of the Center as a culturally rooted place was apparent as was the care, support and advocacy of the former and current managers.

Maxwell talked about her experience as a member of the Senior Council, stating that the professionalism of staff was intrinsic and appreciated.

Brenda Gould of 298 Garfield St. in Ashland was called forward.

Gould recounted that she and others have had positive experiences at the Center – a perspective that is different from the information provided in the recommendations. She stated that she would like to see the Commissioners accommodate the senior community by holding additional meetings regarding the issues surrounding the Senior Center. Gould noted that Ashlanders valued transparency and for her and her husband as well as other seniors, a larger discussion should take place.

Susanne Severeid of in Ashland was called forward.

Severeid expressed the hope that the Commissioners who were not at the meeting on August 8, 2017, had reviewed the public comments received. She stated that it was clear that the citizens of Ashland had much to say, noting that the senior programs in Ashland were much more than line items on a financial statement.

Severeid highlighted two of the Senior Center's volunteers – Mildred who is in her 80's and Verne who is 96. The two volunteers serve meals for Ashland's Meals on Wheels program, receiving awards for outstanding volunteerism from President Obama. The awards represented 4000 hours of unpaid volunteer work.

Severeid referred to the meeting held the previous day, highlighting commentary from Director Black that indicated that one way to cut costs would be to ask the volunteers to clean the restrooms. Severeid asked the Commissioners to evaluate their position on this issue in terms of respect for the elderly. She stated that recommendations to dismantle the Senior Center and its programs were detrimental to the most vulnerable seniors in Ashland.

David Savage of 328 Wimer St. in Ashland was called forward.

Savage stated that he was most concerned about the treatment of Senior Center staff. He referenced a portion of the memo written by Director Black dated August 9, 2017. Objecting to the characterization of manager Chris Dodson, Savage stated that Senior Center staff and volunteers meet the needs of vulnerable seniors.

Amy Cuddy of 1782 Homes Ave. in Ashland was called forward.

Cuddy talked about the difference between recreational activities and senior care. She relayed that the Senior Center functions as a resource for the community – specializing in senior care. Cuddy expressed her gratitude

for Chris Dodson who advised her personally when Cuddy had questions about how to best care for her aging mother.

Cuddy shared her level of expertise with charitable organizations. She noted that public service organizations seldom receive grants for operations that are the responsibility of municipalities. She cautioned APRC against looking to those types of organizations to assist with senior care in Ashland.

Cuddy advocated for additional discussion to include a wider variety of perspectives. She highlighted the incongruity of the APRC's all-male decision-makers that were acting on behalf of Ashland's seniors, most of whom are women.

Evelyn Kinsella of 2860 State Street in Medford was called forward.

Kinsella noted her role as the manager of the Food & Friends meals program for Rogue Valley Council of Governments (RVCOG). She stated that the program oversees meals for seniors – in homes throughout the Valley as well as in the Centers. She noted that 59% of those served by the meals program were over 80 years of age.

Kinsella addressed the comparatives specified in Director Black's memorandum dated August 9, 2017. She stated that when canvassing the Centers listed in the memo, she found that all of the centers listed were rent-free and the meals provided were sponsored by governmental agencies. The RVCOG agency provides meals in Ashland as well as for others in Jackson County. Kinsella stated that if RVCOG were assessed a fee for their services, the program in Ashland would be impacted. She asked that the Commissioners consider the ramifications should cost recovery goals affect the Food & Friends and Meals on Wheels programs.

Javan Reid of 573 Scenic Dr. in Ashland was called forward.

Reid advocated for additional public hearings due to the number of people who had not been heard. He suggested that there were other avenues to pursue to raise revenue such as a special tax or conducting fundraisers to better support senior programs, volunteering to assist APRC in obtaining the funds needed for the Senior Center. Reid argued against closing the Center and urged consideration of alternative sources of funding.

Candy Barnhill of 947 Cypress Pt. Loop in Ashland was called forward.

Barnhill emphasized the mission of the Ashland Senior Program, underscoring the focus on building a support system for older Ashland residents that enables them to live more independently as contributing members of the community. She talked about the differences between a social services program and programs that are strictly recreational. She noted the founding fathers' original plan was to locate and inform isolated seniors about health and wellness programs designed to help them maintain their independent status.

Barnhill stated that the Ashland Senior Program was currently administered by appropriately trained staff whose challenges included maintaining services under increasing budgetary constraints. She indicated that the Senior Program operated under a donation model, as opposed to a cost-recovery model, intimating that the model was developed early on. Barnhill stated that the donation model was more suited to seniors with limited incomes.

Barnhill described programs with a holistic wellness component, designed to optimize self-sufficiency and provide avenues for greater socialization and connectedness to society. Since its inception in 1973, the Senior Center had become a highly-regarded resource because of that focus.

Barnhill advocated for City of Ashland administration rather than APRC administration. She stated that the program began under the City's aegis with a meals program and was moved to APRC in 2006. Barnhill recommended that the program be administered by the City, utilizing funds from Ashland's unrestricted revenue.

Barnhill noted plans by APRC to reorganize the Senior Program into recreational classes, administered by the Recreation Division. She highlighted the difference between social services with a high community value and recreational classes. She indicated that the recommendations reflected minimal public input, stating that such an important decision should be decided by the citizens of Ashland, with sufficient input from those who use the services regularly.

Barnhill stated that there was \$29,000 of donated funds earmarked for the Senior Program within the Ashland Parks Foundation accounts. She questioned whether that funding would remain dedicated to the Senior Program. Barnhill asked APRC to revise the recommendations to reflect public sentiment and to give the citizens of Ashland an opportunity to vote on the preferred outcome for the Senior Center and its programs.

Art Tetrault of 509 YMCA Way in Ashland was called forward.

Tetrault stated that the Ashland Senior Program provided a way forward for him. He stated that one visit was not sufficient to understand all available offerings. From meals for seniors who could no longer provide for themselves to a venue where people helped one another, the Senior Center was working well. Tetrault noted that the current location of the Senior Center was appropriate and that transferring to The Grove would be a hardship for many seniors.

Tetrault cautioned the Commissioners against reorganizing a program that was working.

Peggy Duvall of 165 Meade St. in Ashland was called forward.

Duvall focused on alternative perspectives – looking at the location and position of the building, for example. She stated that the current Senior Center was close to the street with easy access to the Center. She stated that it was a more manageable site for the elderly who find navigating problematic.

Duvall indicated that seniors would be happy to assist APRC in efforts to raise money. She stated that incomes for many seniors are fixed, limiting the ability to pay, but seniors are also willing to help – providing energy and enthusiasm about fundraising opportunities.

Sue Crader of 2957 Barber Street in Ashland was called forward.

Crader stated that her area of expertise was non-profit management – grant writing, fundraising and staffing. She noted that the operations of the Senior Center with its myriad programs and services was outstanding given the Center's small budget. She talked about the factors that make a Center work when funding is limited, such as dependence upon volunteers.

Crader indicated that her interpretation of the recommendations provided by Director Black was that it was a proposal to cut staff and increase revenue. She commented that in her experience the two were diametrically opposed and that more time was needed to properly implement a fundraising plan. Staffing was needed to implement and manage program changes properly – to move and develop alternative programs. In addition, the well-being and safety of seniors must be attended to concurrently.

Crader urged the Commissioners to table the recommendations until the changes proposed could be implemented respectfully and funded properly, with the seniors receiving care and adequate support.

Discussion among Commissioners

Lewis noted that he had attended the six Senior Program Subcommittee meetings where an in-depth review was conducted. Recommendations from the Performance Audit were a part of the discussion, about how best to integrate the Senior Center and its programs into the APRC system.

Lewis stated that the recommendations included the following:

- Ensure that throughout the transition, core services are preserved and the Center is open and accessible to seniors for scheduled appointments and classes and for drop-in visits on a slightly more limited basis during the transition period.

Lewis said APRC was asked by Council to take control of Ashland Senior Program operations and programming back in 2006. To integrate the Senior Program properly, APRC had to evaluate all of its policies and programs. The Senior Program was one of many APRC divisions that was reviewed by APRC management. Lewis reflected upon the responsibilities APRC Commissioners addressed as good stewards of the public trust. He noted that as elected officials, Commissioners acted as proxies for the citizens of Ashland. Part of their obligation was to listen to constituents by holding public meetings that allowed for a better understanding of all points of view.

Landt clarified that the Senior Program was managed by the Recreation Division Superintendent until approximately two years prior. He asked about the feasibility of an Ad hoc Senior Advisory Board Committee during the transition period. In response to a question by Black, Landt stated that his vision for the Ad hoc committee would be to engage those seniors who would be interested in assisting with the transition. Black asked whether the ad hoc committee would work with Commissioners to develop job descriptions, create programs and assist with attaining the goals set out in the recommendations. Landt explained that in his opinion, the ad hoc committee would assist APRC during the transition period by providing feedback as the transition unfolded. Black replied that APRC would welcome interested citizens.

In response to a question by Black, Landt clarified that an Advisory Subcommittee would function in an advisory capacity for the short term as new programs evolved.

Gardiner stated that he had originally proposed convening the Senior Center Subcommittee so that APRC could become more familiar with the Center and its workings. He stated that APRC was incorporating many of the Performance Audit recommendations into all APRC divisions. He acknowledged the difficult decisions that the Commissioners must make to improve efficiencies. Gardiner stressed that the Commissioners were

committed to the Senior Program and services and he invited those with an interest to work with them to move the programs forward.

Landt suggested that the recommendations be amended as follows:

1. Form an official Subcommittee of the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission to provide oversight and guidance to the Senior Program during the transition period.
2. Switch operational oversight and management of the Ashland Senior Program back to the Recreation Division.
3. Move the physical oversight and management of the Senior Program to The Grove, with a goal of creating a “multi-generational” center, keeping a presence at the current Center through scheduled classes and Food & Friends.
4. For a period of three or so months, focus on redesigning the Senior Program to make it more robust and more inclusive:
 - a) Ensure that throughout the transition, core services are preserved and the Center is open and accessible to seniors for scheduled visits and classes and for drop-in visits.
 - b) During the transition period, develop a plan for invigorating and expanding the Senior Program and present it to the Commissioners for review.
 - i. Perform multiple open house events and conduct a survey of the citizens of Ashland covering all aspects of the Senior Program.
 - ii. Create an ad hoc Senior Advisory Committee selected from program participants and related professional field experts.
 - c) To accomplish transition to a new Senior Program, lay off current staff (1.7 FTE) and temporarily reassign duties among other APCR employees to maintain core services.
5. Implement the plan for increasing recreation and other program offerings to better serve the senior population, and revise Senior Center functions, staffing and job descriptions accordingly.
6. Throughout the process of reorganization and review, explore options to increase revenue to offset some of the costs associated with the expense of running the Senior Program.

There followed a brief discussion that involved clarifying the physical oversight. Landt suggested removal of the third recommendation as the move to the Grove was understood.

Further Discussion:

In response to a question by Gardiner, Landt clarified that the ad hoc committee would remain in place until the Senior Program transition was completed.

Miller noted that the testimony had convinced him that the Senior Program was valued by the community. He stated that he would vote in favor of the recommendations because he was convinced that the recommended changes would result in an increase in the number of seniors served, and that the programs offered would be enriched.

Motion: Landt moved to approve the recommendations as presented and amended (removal of Recommendation # 3). Lewis seconded.

The vote was all yes by roll call vote.

ADJOURNMENT INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

By consensus, Gardiner adjourned into Executive Session at 6:55 p.m.

Executive Session pursuant to ORS 192.660 (2)(h) and ORS 192.660 (2) (e)

ADJOURNMENT OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION

By consensus, Gardiner adjourned out of executive session at 7:50 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Manuel, Minute-Taker
Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission

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.

ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

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COMMISSIONERS:

Mike Gardiner
Joel Heller
Rick Landt
Jim Lewis
Matt Miller



Michael A. Black, AICP
Director

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PARKS COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

TO: Ashland Parks and Recreation Commissioners

FROM: Michael Black, APRC Director

DATE: September 20, 2017

SUBJECT: Topics for Discussion at Regular Meeting, September 25, 2017

I. Tennis and Pickleball Courts

At the Study Session on September 18th, staff and commissioners discussed pickleball court usage at both Lithia Park and Helman courts, as the Ashland community has seen an increased number of pickleball players. There was discussion about the current use and “wait time” for players at Lithia and some of the reasons pickleball players are not using the Helman School courts. Reasons for lack of use at Helman include: inability to use courts during school hours, the color of the court lines and lack of shade. After discussion, the Commissioners directed staff to come back with a recommendation to address the need for up to two more pickleball courts in Lithia Park.

The Lithia Park court that is lined for pickleball currently has designated times of:

Spring and Summer: Wednesdays 9am – Noon, Fridays and Sundays, 7pm -11pm

Fall and Winter: Wednesdays: 1pm-4pm, Fridays & Sundays 4pm-7pm

Staff recommends painting an additional tennis court with two additional pickleball courts in Lithia Park and leaving it open as a “first-come, first served” court. This would mean that there would be no time restriction for either sport. The cost to paint two additional pickleball courts on one tennis court is approximately \$2000 (\$1000 per pickleball court). Costs would be covered out of the Parks Operations Budget. Staff could also research other lower cost alternatives such as taping, stenciling or markers. Staff is seeking direction from the Parks and Recreation Commission on this matter.

Proposed Motion: I move to approve the installation of two pickleball courts on the upper tennis court in Lithia Park. The product used would be the most cost-effective available, as determined by APRC staff.

II. Golf Course End-of-Season Report

Golf Course Coordinator Tom Cronin will give a brief Powerpoint presentation on the Summer 2017 season. The focus will be on advertising and promotions, events and programs, cost recovery and maintenance projects completed.

III. North Mountain Park Nature Play Area Discussion

Nature Center Manager Libby VanWyhe will give a brief overview of the proposed Nature Play Area at North Mountain Park. She will also invite the public and Commissioners to an upcoming meeting on October 18th for the purpose of gathering public input.

ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

340 S PIONEER STREET • ASHLAND, OREGON 97520

COMMISSIONERS:

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PARKS COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Date: September 20, 2017

To: Ashland Parks and Recreation Commissioners

From: Michael Black, APRC Director

Subject: Creation of the Ad Hoc Senior Program Advisory Committee

BACKGROUND

For the past several years, the Senior Program (the “*Program*”) of the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission (“*APRC*”) has been under review through several means, including the 2016 APRC Performance Audit Report performed by Matrix Consulting Group and the Senior Program Subcommittee (the “*Subcommittee*”) which was formed on October 24, 2016. The Subcommittee was formed “*to review the programs and activities of the Senior Program, to determine best practices for the center based on the desired outcomes of the Commissioners of APRC and to create goals and objectives for implementing those outcomes.*”

The Subcommittee began its evaluation of the Senior Program by establishing the following goals for its efforts:

1. *Through the gathering of information, gain a greater understanding of the senior program and the function it serves for the citizens of Ashland;*
2. *Explore new ways of marketing and program innovation to ensure that the greatest number of citizens are benefited by the senior program;*
3. *Evaluate the organizational structure of the program and ensure that the organization of the senior program and the goals for innovation are aligned for efficiency and service delivery;*
4. *Seek advocates of the senior program and new ways to increase community involvement through volunteerism; and,*
5. *Evaluate the current senior program policies and create an official subcommittee of the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission reporting directly the Commissioners to ensure collaboration and governance.*

The Subcommittee met on the following dates to review information related to the Program and the aforementioned goals:

1. January 24, 2017
2. March 28, 2017
3. April 17, 2017
4. May 3, 2017
5. May 17, 2017
6. August 8, 2017

At the final meeting (August 8, 2017), recommendations for action from the APRC Director was presented to the Subcommittee, which was adopted and sent to the full Parks Commission for review.

The Parks Commissioners reviewed the recommendations of the Subcommittee on the 9th of August, 2017, in a public meeting. The following recommendations were adopted by a unanimous vote of the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commissioners:

- *Form an official Subcommittee of the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission to provide oversight and guidance to the Senior Program.*
- *Switch operational oversight and management of the Ashland Senior Program back to the Recreation Division.*
- *For a period of three or so months, focus on re-designing the Senior Program to make it more robust and more inclusive:*
 - *Ensure that throughout the transition, core services are preserved and the Center is open and accessible for seniors for scheduled appointments and classes and for drop-in visits.*
 - *During the transition period, develop a plan for invigorating and expanding the Senior Program and present it to the Commissioners for review.*
 - *Perform multiple open house events and conduct a survey of the Ashland citizens covering all aspects of the Senior Program.*
 - *Create an ad hoc Senior Advisory Committee selected from program participants and related professional field experts.*
 - *To accomplish transition to a new Senior Program, lay off current staff (1.7 FTE) and temporarily reassign duties among other APRC employees to maintain core services.*
- *Implement the plan for increasing recreation and other program offerings to better serve the senior population, and revise Senior Center functions, staffing and job descriptions accordingly.*
- *Throughout the process of reorganization and review, explore options to increase revenue to offset some of the costs associated with the expense of running the Senior Program*

In order to move forward with the progress of the reorganization of the senior program, it is time to create the ad hoc Senior Program Advisory Committee as mentioned above. The following document details the makeup and charge of the committee and provides the basic guidance for the committee.

The committee, which will be created by a motion of the Commissioners, will hold public meetings that will be noticed as necessary by legal requirements and meeting minutes/recordings will be kept.

REQUESTED ACTION

Create the ad hoc Senior Advisory Committee and adopt the accompanying bylaws by motion.

SUGGESTED MOTION

I move to approve the creation of the ad hoc Senior Advisory Committee as outlined in the accompanying bylaws.

PROPOSED BYLAWS of the AD HOC SENIOR PROGRAM AVISORY COMMITTEE

Purpose and Charge

As the ad hoc Senior Program Advisory Committee (the “ASPAC”), lead the visioning of an expanded and improved Senior Program, review information via presentations and discussions at committee meetings and make a recommendation to the Parks and Recreation Commissioners regarding the implementation of the following objectives:

- *Reposition operational oversight and management of the Ashland Senior Program back to the Recreation Division of APRC*
- *For a period of three to five months, focus on re-designing the Senior Program to make it more robust and more inclusive:*
 - *Ensure that throughout the transition, core services are preserved and the Center is open and accessible for seniors for scheduled appointments and classes and for drop-in visits.*
 - *During the transition period, develop a plan for invigorating and expanding the Senior Program and present it to the Commissioners for review.*
 - *Perform multiple open house events and conduct a survey of the Ashland citizens covering all aspects of the Senior Program.*
- *Implement the plan for increasing recreation and other program offerings to better serve the senior population, and revise Senior Center functions, staffing and job descriptions accordingly.*
- *Throughout the process of reorganization and review, explore options to increase revenue to offset a portion of the costs associated with the expense of operating and maintaining the Senior Program*

The ASPAC will serve the Commissioners of APRC in making recommendations on the aforementioned objectives. The ASPAC will be appointed by the Chair of APRC and will serve for a period of about three – five months while reviewing information and forming its recommendations. At the point when the ASPAC officially make its recommendation to the Commissioners, the ASPAC’s duties shall be fulfilled. APRC may provide a facilitator to help manage meeting topics and organize the ASPAC’s agendas and final recommendation.

Appointments and Makeup of ASPAC

The Commission Chair shall have the authority to appoint the members of the ASPAC. The makeup of the members shall be as follows:

1. APRC Commissioner
2. APRC Commissioner
3. City Councilor
4. Ashland at Home Representative
5. OLLI Representative
6. RVCOG Representative

7. Citizen Member
8. Citizen Member
9. Citizen Member

Staff Liaisons

1. APRC Recreation Superintendent, Rachel Dials
2. APRC Director, Michael Black
3. City Administrative Staff Representative (as needed)

Election of Officers and Scheduling

Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. At the first meeting, the ASPAC will elect a chair and vice chair by motion. The chairperson will convene and preside over meetings of the ASPAC. The chairperson must be a member of the ASPAC. The vice chairperson will act as chair pro-tem in the absence of the chair and must be a member of the ASPAC.

Agendas and Scheduling. The chairperson will work with staff representatives and the facilitator, if one is used, to organize meeting agendas and propose schedules for meeting.