



MINUTES FOR REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

PARK COMMISSION

June 11, 2025

Council Chamber, 1175 E Main – 6:00 PM

Commissioners Present: Adams, Bachman (Chair), Landt, Weiner

Staff Present: Director Houston, Senior Services Superintendent Mettler, Environmental

Education Manager Came, Senior Administrative Analyst Terry, Executive Assistant Mero

Absent: Deputy Director Dials, Commissioner Gardiner

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Bachman called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM
- II. **ROLL CALL** – Commissioners Weiner, Bachman, Adams, and Landt present, Commissioner Gardiner absent.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Park Commission Special Meeting April 28, 2025
2. Joint Study Session with City Council May 7, 2025
3. Park Commission Regular Business Meeting May 14, 2025

Commissioner Landt noted a mistake in the minutes from the May 7 Joint Study Session. Councilor Dahle was attributed a statement that he would like to see Director Houston report to the Council four times a month. In fact, Dahle said he would like to see Director Houston report to the Council four times a year.

Motion: I move to approve the minutes from the May 7 Joint Session as corrected.

Motion: Landt

Second: Adams

Vote:

<u>Landt</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Weiner</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Bachman</u>	<u>Yes</u>
<u>Adams</u>	<u>Yes</u>				

Chair Bachman asked for unanimous consent to approve the minutes from the April 28 and May 14 Meetings. No objections, minutes approved by unanimous consent.

- IV. **ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA** – None
- V. **PUBLIC FORUM** – None

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Recreation Division Advisory Committee Minutes from November 21, 2024

Chair Bachman asked for unanimous consent to acknowledge the minutes. Unanimous consent was given, minutes acknowledged.

VII. DIRECTORS REPORT

Topics Covered:

- Administration
 - Hired four park technicians
 - Budget was approved Council \$15.8 ML for Park Ops, \$6.2 ML for Parks Capital
 - Transitioning Customer Service to the Grove from the Senior Center and Nature Center
 - Seeking volunteers to keep exhibit room at Nature Center open
- Golf – Numbers are up from last year for rounds of golf played/range ball buckets
- Senior Services – various events offered
- Environmental Education – Celebrated Bird Day with over 200 attendees
- Volunteers hard at work in a number of parks
- Kids day at the Japanese Garden – well attended and enjoyed
- Presented a list of over 50 preventative/deferred maintenance tasks completed
- Levels of Service Modifications
 - Irrigation reductions in some areas
 - Mutt mitt/trash can diet
 - Reductions in mowing/landscaping
 - Airport mowing will be taken over by Public Works/contracted out.
- PROS Plan

Questions/Discussion:

- Is there a goal for how many buckets of balls/rounds of golf? A: Not precisely. There is a goal of increased revenue.
- Is there still a pass available for the range for unlimited access? A: Not in the time Houston has been here. Working on an alternative special offer.
- Concern over trash can/mutt mitt diet. Suggestion of a pilot park. A: Already reducing in areas, monitoring results.
- Is the PROS Plan on schedule? A: Yes
- What is being cut/kept? Reduced hours at Splash Pad, Community Gardens will remain open – looking for new operational agreement with the gardeners, Nature Center shifting more to an Environmental Education platform. Assessing all coordinator and management positions, East Main Park is moving forward, Hunter Courts moving forward, Butler-Perozzi restoration moving forward.

- We're paying the \$5 fee, why are reductions still being made? A: The dollar we have today won't go as far as the dollar we have tomorrow. The five-dollar fee is to make up the reduction of 5% that we were asked to make and to cover the adds we needed, rec. coordinator to operate the CC and PH, full time admin asst at the Senior Center.
- Will the layoff at the Nature Center stick? A: Yes

VIII. **BUSINESS**

1. Third Quarter FY25 Financial Update – Sr. Administrative Analyst Terry

BACKGROUND – The Finance Department provides a quarterly review of financial statements. On May 19, 2025, Finance Director Mariane Berry presented to City Council the statements ending in Quarter 3 (Q3) of Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25). The Parks and Recreation Department now presents specific Department details for the same period.

ASSESSMENT – The third quarter of FY25 ended on March 31, 2025. Of the \$8,443,046 allocated in General Funds (GF) for FY25, \$5,497,080 or 65.10% of the total has been expended. An additional \$445,159 is encumbered.

The Parks Capital Improvement (CIP) Fund had a balance of \$3,973,971 at the beginning of the current biennium. At the end of Q3 FY25, the balance was \$3,311,958 with \$492,686 encumbered.

The Parks System Development Charges (SDC) Fund ended FY24 with a balance of \$417,860. As of the end of Q3 2025, the fund stands at \$462,060.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED – Goal #1 Best Management Practices

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS – Staff continue to collaborate on Departmental priorities and project goals to best execute the appropriated funds. In addition, the Parks Department has communicated to the Finance Department an estimated end-of-biennium GF balance of \$457,356.49.

Questions/Discussion:

- How do these numbers compare to pre-Covid? A: Will get the information and send it to the Commissioners.
- Question about the lower revenue for the pool. A: Occurred when we changed online vendors.

ATTACHMENTS – Q3 2025 GF Operations Expenses/Balances Table (see packet)

2. Oregon Parks Forever/Kids in Parks – Track Trails Partnership – Environmental Education Manager Came

SUMMARY – Kids in Parks has created a national network of trails that engage kids and families in activities that get them outdoors and connected to nature. Ashland Parks and Recreation has partnered with Kids in Parks, joining more than 30 other TRACK Trail locations throughout Oregon, including trail sites established in Portland, Salem, Estacada, Dallas, LaGrande, Newport, Trail, Medford, and more.

TRACK Trails are a type of environmental scavenger hunt for young children and their families to get unplugged and active outdoors. At the new trailhead in Lithia Park, families will find a series of self-guided brochures and smartphone activities. Kids who participate in the program can register their TRACK Trail adventures at www.KidsInParks.com to earn a series of prizes. With their first hike, kids will earn a Passport Booklet, custom sticker from the trail they visited, and a collectible prize card. In addition, kids can keep an online dashboard to track their outdoor adventures, earn badges, log miles walked, and more.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED – Creating partnerships and expanding interpretive programming to more Ashland parks.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS – Oregon Parks Forever is supporting an effort by the Kids In Parks program at the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation to bring at least 50 TRACK Trails to Oregon parks. They are funding:

1. Development and manufacturing of a trailhead sign for each trail chosen.
2. Printing of the first 8,000 brochures for each trail.
3. Webpage, prize acquisition, custom sticker, and fulfillment by Kids In Parks for three years.

For future years, the agency will be responsible for printing additional brochures as needed. Printing currently ranges \$300-\$500 per 2,000. Replacement costs are dependent upon whether the topic is a “standard” or custom brochure.

PROPOSED ACTIONS OR MOTION(s) – N/A

ATTACHMENTS – N/A

- Track Trails brochures aimed at youth sixth grade and younger. However, adults enjoy them as well.
- First set of brochures are free. Additional will cost.
- We can develop new brochures in conjunction with Track Trails.

Questions/Discussion:

- Kudos on the program and the choice of the American Dipper on the sticker.
- Suggestion to inform the School District about the program.

3. Advisory Committee Charges – Senior Services Superintendent Mettler

SUMMARY – The Park Commission tasked staff with developing a charge for the advisory committees. With input from the advisory committee officers, staff are proposing the following charges for Ashland Senior Advisory Committee (ASAC) and Recreation Division Advisory Committee:

- ASAC
 - Work with staff to interpret and implement PROS Plan Senior Services related items.
 - Advise staff on policies related to Senior Services.
- RDAC:
 - Work with staff on the PROS Plan Recreation Division related items.
 - Advise staff on policies related to the Recreation Division.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED – Consistent with City Ordinance on advisory committees and Park Commission Policies.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS – N/A

PROPOSED ACTIONS OR MOTION(s) – Move to adopt the charges for ASAC and RDAC.

ATTACHMENTS – N/A

Questions/Discussion:

- Advisory Committees advise the Commission but work with Staff? A: Want to have a committee staff liaison present to the Commission. The Committee will devise the recommendations/proposals.
- Trying to understand the ‘why’ of the charges. They seem obvious. Is it to kind of check the box for the City’s Ordinance that we don’t technically have to follow but are trying to follow? A: RDAC and ASAC didn’t have deliverables. This is the first step in moving toward deliverables. Need them for the PROS Plan.

- If the point of this is to give the committees deliverables, this does not accomplish that. Should spend some time and come up with real deliverables.
- New charges can be developed in the future.

Motion: I move to approve the charges for the ASAC and RDAC as presented by staff tonight to advise Park Commission via staff on policies related to Senior Services and Recreation.

Motion: Landt

Second: Weiner

Vote:

<u>Landt</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Weiner</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Bachman</u>	<u>Yes</u>
<u>Adams</u>	<u>No</u>				

4. 1.01.001 – Policy Framework Adoption – Director Houston

SUMMARY – The Department is establishing a new format and process for developing and adopting Department policies. This policy establishes the framework for this new format and process. At the April 9, 2025 Park Commission regular business meeting, Park Commissioners directed staff to put this draft policy out for public review/comment.

Public review was offered from May 28 to June 6, 2025. The Department received zero public comments on the draft policy.

- From feedback, changing the wording in the policy framework document:

1. Purpose

A. Define the reason for this policy. This policy establishes the framework and process for establishing policies, protocols, and procedures hereafter collectively referred to as Direction for the Parks and Recreation Department (Department).

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED – This policy establishes the framework for policies, directing the Department on how to develop and adopt policies, procedures, and protocols, collectively called Direction(s).

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS – The policy will require staff time to implement. This staff time is within the current budget.

PROPOSED ACTIONS OR MOTION(S) – Move to adopt policy 1.01.001 – Policy Framework.

ATTACHMENTS – Policy 1.01.001 – Policy Framework

Questions/Discussion:

- Historically, most policies are proposed by Commissioners. The way the policy is written doesn't include the steps that would occur if the Commission were to propose a policy.
- Policies originating from the Commission would not go through the proposed process. Important that the public can have input and then find the information.
- This policy is for staff/staff policy. Not a commission policy.
- Elected body can create policy on how to guide policy.
- Needs to be reworked. Not addressing the two ways policies could come before the Commission.
- Suggested to bring it back to another Study Session.

Motion: I move that we table the policy on policies indefinitely.

Motion: Landt

Second: Adams

Vote:

<u>Landt</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Weiner</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Bachman</u>	<u>Yes</u>
<u>Adams</u>	<u>Yes</u>				

5. Butler-Perozzi Fountain

SUMMARY - The Ashland Parks Foundation (Foundation) brought forward the project to restore the Butler-Perozzi Fountain. At the initial proposal, the Foundation committed to raising the funds to do the restoration but asked the Department to be the project manager due to insufficient Foundation capacity at that time.

Since then, they have successfully raised \$600,000 for the restoration work (with an additional \$200,000 endowment for future repairs) and the Department has a 100% plan set and specifications to restore the fountain. Due to the engineering cost estimate increases, the Department and Foundation have been exploring alternatives to ensure the work is completed as planned and within our resource limits.

This work has resulted in the Foundation identifying local resources to support the project and construction management of the restoration work. The Department and the City attorney's office have reviewed the proposal. It offers a path forward that aligns with the history of the fountain's creation (local resources), would meet the specifications outlined for the restoration, and is within the available resources.

Staff is supportive of developing an agreement with the Foundation to authorize the Foundation to manage the construction phase of the fountain restoration project. This agreement is a Department operational action, as such the agreement would not be signed or approved by the Park Commission.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED – This project is identified on the current Department Work Plan and the adopted Capital Improvement Plan.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS – This proposal would reduce the capital expenditure for the FY 26-27 budget. This agreement would not permit any city funds from being used on the project.

PROPOSED ACTIONS OR MOTION(S) – No action is requested. Staff are seeking input on the proposed agreement.

ATTACHMENTS – N/A

Questions/Discussion:

- Would the City Manager need to approve this move as it is a contract? A: Legal needs to spend some time on this question. They are working on it.
- The Commission should have a formal vote on it, despite the statement in the Agenda Brief saying otherwise.
- Support for the idea to keep work local, utilize local talent for the restoration.

IX. **ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS/STAFF** – None

X. **UPCOMING MEETING DATES**

1. Park Commission Study Session July 2, Council Chamber 6:00 PM
2. Park Commission Regular Business Meeting July 9, Council Chamber 6:00 PM
3. Chamber of Commerce Meet and Greet – PROS survey July 11, Pioneer Hall 7:30 – 9:30 AM
4. Ashland Senior Advisory Committee July 14, Senior Center, 3:30 PM
5. Trails Advisory Committee July 15, Lithia Cabin 4:30 PM
6. Recreation Division Advisory Committee July 17, the Grove 4:00 PM

XI. **ADJOURNMENT** – Bachman adjourned the meeting at 7:33 PM

Respectfully submitted by Nancy Mero, Executive Assistant