



MINUTES FOR STUDY SESSION

PARK COMMISSION

July 2, 2025

Council Chamber, 1175 E Main – 6:00 PM

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

Staff Present: Director Houston, Deputy Director Dials, Executive Assistant Mero

Absent: None

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chair Bachman called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM
- II. **ROLL CALL** – Commissioners Gardiner, Weiner, Bachman, Adams, and Landt all present.
- III. **PUBLIC FORUM** – None
- IV. **PARK ORDINANCE(S) REVISION** – Director Houston

SITUATION – Edits to the Amendment of Ashland Municipal Code (AMC) Chapter 10.68 – Public Parks to include provisions for special use permitted activity.

BACKGROUND – AMC 10.68 does not permit many of the uses that we allow via a special use permit. A special use permit does not allow the Department to permit activities or uses forbidden by the AMC. Staff presented this to the Park Commission on June 4, 2025. Park Commission directed staff to make some edits and bring the item back to a Park Commission study session.

ASSESSMENT – N/A

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS OR SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS – Staff suggests the Park Commission move this item to the July 9, 2025 Park Commission regular business meeting for action.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED – AMC 10.68 – Public Parks, Special Use Permit Policy

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS – If adopted, these changes to the AMC would require some additional staff time for implementation. Once implemented the changes would provide more revenue opportunities for special use permits within the parks system.

ATTACHMENTS – Chapter 10.68 AMC Amendment DRAFT Changes (see packet)
Questions/Discussion:

- Was the fishing item amended? A: Yes.
- What about signs from sponsors at fields? Historically the Commission has approved them
- Public is not aware of ordinances, and they are not enforced.
- If ordinances are not followed and there is a special use permit it can be revoked.
- Most people aren't violating rules in Lithia Park.
- Looked at the amendments through the lens of issuing special use permits and what people have asked for over the years.
- Did legal raise this issue? A: Yes, stemming from the special use permit for the arborist event/climbing trees. Legal has continued to work with DD Dials.
- Do park staff ever try to enforce rules? A: Some more than others.
- Rules need to be listed somewhere. Need to post things.

Director Houston asked if the Commission's direction is to move the item to the Business Meeting July 9. A: Yes.

V. 1.01.001 – POLICY FRAMEWORK POLICY – Director Houston

SITUATION – The Park Commissioners asked for minor edits to address actions taken by the Park Commission and their role with this policy.

BACKGROUND – 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 occurred from May 28 to June 6, 2025. The Department received zero public comments on the draft policy.

At the June 12, 2025 Park Commission regular business meeting, Park Commissioners directed staff to make edits to the policy to clarify the policy decisions (actions) made during regular business meetings and this policy.

ASSESSMENT – The Park Commission acts on a policy decision. That action directs staff, typically the Director, to implement said policy decision. Staff utilizes this policy to determine how to implement the policy decision. An existing policy may need to be updated, a new policy may be needed, or a protocol or procedure may be needed to implement the policy decision.

This policy does not preclude the Park Commission from acting on policy decisions. It only provides the mechanism for said policies to be reviewed for implementation and establishes the framework to manage policies, protocols, and procedures for public review and staff use.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS OR SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS – Staff suggests moving this item to the July 9, 2025 Park Commission regular business meeting to direct staff to place this policy out for public review and comment.

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.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS – N/A

ATTACHMENTS – Policy 1.01.001 – Policy Framework Draft (see packet)

Questions/Discussion:

- Policies Commissioners might make should be funneled through the same framework. This policy does exactly that.
- Noted: Direction Statement Alb. Park Commission actions are not a type of direction addressed in this policy.
- That line could be removed.
- The intent of the policy is to get organized, be able to find policies for staff/public.

VI. COMMUNITY CENTER/PIONEER HALL RENTAL FEE – Director Houston

SITUATION – Review revised Community Center and Pioneer Hall Rental Fee

BACKGROUND – Each year the City reviews and updates the miscellaneous fees and charges book. The Parks Department's review this year included the addition of Pioneer Hall and the Community Center as potentially rentable assets for the next fiscal year. Currently there is no fee identified for the Community Center in the adopted miscellaneous fees and charges book. The fee for Pioneer Hall is \$23.00 per hour for weekdays and \$35.00 per hour for weekends.

The City Council reviewed the miscellaneous fees and charges book. They directed the Park Commission to again review their (Park Commission's) adopted fees for the Community Center and Pioneer Hall. The Council had concerns around the increase in the hourly rental rate and cleaning fee.

Staff presented two alternatives at the June 4, 2025, Park Commission study session. The Park Commission directed staff to bring back two new alternatives for consideration.

ASSESSMENT

Following are the hourly rate options for consideration:

Facility	Current Rate	Adopted Rate	Alternative #1	Alternative #2
	Weekday/Weekend	Weekday/Weekend	Weekday/Weekend	Weekday/Weekend
Pioneer Hall	\$23/\$35	\$60/\$120 +cleaning fee	\$100/\$100 first hour \$40/\$60 thereafter	\$40/\$65
Community Center	Null	\$80/\$160 +cleaning fee	\$120/\$120 first hour \$60/\$80 thereafter	\$50/\$85

Alternative #1 was developed by Commissioner Landt. It provides for a graduated rate that benefits longer rentals by providing a lower rate after the first hour. There is no cleaning fee.

Alternative #2 was developed by staff, utilizing the feedback provided. We utilized the lowest fee adopted for other indoor facilities. It provides no cleaning fee.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS OR SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS – Staff are seeking input on the proposed alternative rates and seek direction on moving an alternative forward or if needed, receiving additional information from the Park Commission.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED – Biannual budget process

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS – Fees for rental, services, and programs assist in reducing general fund support. The next biennium budget has been adopted with identified amounts of fees being generated. The utilization rate and fees charged impact the amount of fee revenue generated.

ATTACHMENTS – N/A

Questions/Discussion:

Commissioner Landt introduced some alternatives that he created. Noted that all three are lower than adopted rates.

Made the point that he raised the amount for the first hour because the costs are the same more or less for one hour or five:

Community Center/Pioneer Hall Fees Worksheet

Estimated Fixed Costs per Rental from Staff

Administration cost	\$70-\$140
Cleaning costs after use	\$65-\$125
Utilities/day	<u>\$10-\$20</u>
Total Estimated Costs	\$145-\$285
Median Estimated Costs	\$215

Usage Information from Staff

Pioneer Hall was not used daily. Maybe 3 to 4 times a week.

Community Center was used daily. 7 days a week. At least once per day.

Typical week day rental lengths: 2-4 hours

Typical weekend rental lengths 4-6 hours

Proposed Rates Alternative 3

Pioneer Hall Week Day Rate

\$125 for first hour, then \$25/hr thereafter

Pioneer Hall Weekend Rate (Friday evening through Sunday)

\$125 for first hour, then \$40/hr thereafter

Community Center Week Day Rate

\$125 for first hour, then \$35/hr thereafter

Community Center Weekend Rate (Friday evening through Sunday)

\$125 for first hour, then \$50/hr thereafter

Comparative Costs for Typical Hours of Rental Length of Alternatives #1 & #2 presented in the Staff Report and #3 presented in worksheet on opposite side

	Weekday 3 hr rental cost alternative #1	Weekday 3 hr rental cost alternative #2	Weekday 3 hr rental cost alternative #3	Weekend 5 hr rental cost alternative #1	Weekend 5 hr rental cost alternative #2	Weekend 5 hr rental cost alternative #3
Pioneer Hall	\$180	\$120	\$175	\$340	\$325	\$285
Community Center	\$240	\$150	\$195	\$440	\$425	\$325

- Explanation requested for difference between min/max hours for weekdays and weekends. A: More staff available on weekdays. More overtime on weekends.
- Need to have staff present to monitor if people are showing up early/staying late, violating the hours of their rental agreement.
- Support for the frontloading on alternatives #1 and #2.
- The majority of Commissioners favor alternative #3.

- V. **LOOKAHEAD REVIEW** – Director Houston went through the items on the Lookahead. Added fourth item to July 9 agenda – East Main Street Park Design. Also noted that there will be an Executive Session at 5:30 PM on July to discuss matters of real estate.
- VI. **ADJOURNMENT** – Chair Bachman adjourned the meeting at 7:34 PM

Respectfully submitted by Nancy Mero Executive Assistant