



**MINUTES FOR STUDY SESSION**  
**PARK COMMISSION**  
**February 4, 2026**  
**Council Chamber, 1175 E Main – 6:00 PM**

Commissioners Present: Landt, Weiner, Bachman (Chair), Adams, Gardiner (Vice Chair)  
Staff Present: Acting Director Dials, Senior Division Manager Mettler, Parks Division  
Manager Caldwell, Deputy City Attorney Zahran, Executive Assistant Mero  
Absent: None

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chair Bachman called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM
- II. **ROLL CALL** – Commissioners Landt, Weiner, Bachman, Adams, and Gardiner present
- III. **PUBLIC FORUM** – None
- IV. **VOLUNTEERS IN PARKS ANNUAL REPORT** – Volunteer and Events Coordinator Shelton

**SITUATION** – Annual report on the Volunteer in Parks Program, highlighting achievements and notable changes year to year.

**BACKGROUND** – The Commission requests an update on the Volunteer in Parks Program each year.

**ASSESSMENT** – 2025 saw an increase in volunteer hours, a decrease in the total number of volunteers, and the addition of tracking court mandated community service to the VIP Annual Report.

**POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED** – N/A

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS** – None

**ATTACHMENTS** – Volunteer in Parks Program Annual Report

**PREPARED BY:** Sulaiman Shelton, Volunteer and Events Coordinator

# Volunteer in Parks Program 2025 Annual Report



Volunteer Program

## 2025 Volunteer in Parks Program

- Parks and Trails
- Recreation
- Senior Services
- North Mountain Park



Volunteer Program

## 2025 Volunteer in Parks Program

Total Hours: 12,993.5

Total Volunteers: 847





Volunteer Program

### 2020 – 2025

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total Hours	6,979	5,892	10,055	12,048	12,300	12,993.5



Volunteer Program

### What Changed?

- Fewer student groups  
-100 volunteers
- Rogue World Music Festival ends, Salmon Festival pivots
- No ice rink volunteer roles in 2025-26 season



## Parks Work Parties

- Increase from **34** in 2024 to **50** in 2025



- Shelton gave commentary on the change in the number of volunteer hours. During the Pandemic years numbers dropped significantly. They have been rebuilding ever since.
- Doing a better job of tracking hours.
- Many additional volunteers at the Japanese Garden.

### Questions/Discussion:

- Court mandated hours: people having to serve court mandated community service get to choose where they work so hours served in Ashland vary.
- Is there a number at which you will be at capacity? A: I don't have a number but there is a limit based on staff capacity. Volunteers need to feel supported to keep them coming back.
- How do you market volunteer opportunities? A: Website, digital playguide, social media, flyers to local schools and other organizations.
- Is there a waiting list for adopt-a-park opportunities? A: Not currently but there also aren't any parks needing to be adopted.
- What's required? A: Three to four work parties a year. Adopters mentioned on the website and a sign is placed at the park.
- How many docents at the Japanese Garden? A: In the low 30's. Two openings currently. The docents commit to two hours per week.
- Implementing a drop-in maintenance program at the Japanese Garden sometime soon.
- Do longstanding volunteers become mentors/lead for new volunteers? A: Yes.
- How do we capture the volunteer hours outside of what Sulaiman organizes/supervises. A: Building relationships with groups like DEVO and RVMBA. They have been sending him hours. There are still people doing work on their own that aren't captured.

### **V. BUTLER-PEROZZI FOUNTAIN UPDATE** – Mike Gardiner President Ashland Parks Foundation

**SITUATION** – Mike Gardiner, President of the Ashland Parks Foundation will give a presentation and update on the Butler Perozzi Fountain project slated to begin this spring.

**PREPARED BY:** Rachel Dials, Acting Parks Director

APF working diligently with the contractor and the City to bring the event to fruition.

- Have 100% drawings from the architect.
- In process of signing a new and improved contract with the City, covering everything from project maintenance to insurance.
- Have a signed contract with Outlier Construction.
- Waiting for the notice to proceed.
- Kevin Caldwell is the contact/project manager for the City.
- Dale Shostrum is APF's project manager.
- Hope to have all documents in place by the end of February.

- Waiting on State Historic Preservation Office's (SHPO) acknowledgement because this part of Lithia park is a state or national historical place.
- No longer a restoration because of costs and the longevity of the fountain. The fountain will be totally replaced with new materials along with the terrace and stairway. It could last centuries with the new materials.
- George Kramer, a local historian, put together the report for SHPO.
- There will be a display depicting the original fountain. Only one part of the existing fountain is original anyway (Part of the pedestal).
- Projected start is Mid-March to Mid-April. Work expected to take four to six months.
- Just purchased the marble from Danby VT. Has to be milled and drilled. The fountain will be put together at Jack Langford's studio in Phoenix. Public invited to the studio to view the progress.

**VI. EAST MAIN STREET COMMUNITY PARK UPDATE** – Acting Parks Director Dials

**SITUATION** – Staff will give a presentation and update on East Main Street Community Park Phase 1 and next steps.


**PREPARED BY:** Rachel Dials, Acting Parks Director


East Main Park

## East Main Park Phase 1 Project Update

### Bid Process: November 2025

- Missing components in the construction drawings
  - Electric, documents not detailed
- Lead to confusion with potential bidders
- Lack of coordination with other City Departments
- Cancel & Regroup





12



## East Main Park Phase 1 Project Update

### Next Steps-Restart Process

- In collaboration with Public Works: Rebidding the project
- Confirming and correcting any missing components
- 2 separate bids:
  - Public Improvements (3-month process)
  - Park Development (9-month process)
- Construction anticipated to start in July 2026.
- Staff in contact with OPRD regarding an extension on the grant.



### Questions/Discussion:

- If all goes well the park could potentially open in summer of 2027? A: Yes
- This is for Phase I of the park? A: Yes
- Should be concurrent work on Phase II at least adding the playground. Staff should pursue possibly adding it to Phase I. An addendum?
- Are there price estimates for Phase II? Do we know what a playground would cost? A: Not sure. We can take a look.
- If the estimates exist, maybe give a brief update next month? A: Yes.

### VII. LOOKAHEAD REVIEW –

Date	Agenda Item	Presenter
2/11	Joint Meeting with CC/PC Business Meeting Council Chamber 6:00 PM	APRD Hosts
joint	Quarterly Financial Update (Information)	Morrison
joint	City of Ashland Five-Year Strategic Plan Process (Information)	City Admin Staff
Joint	Parks Leadership Next Steps (Information)	Cotta/Rooklyn/Zahran
bus	Commissioner Liaison Assignments (Action)	Chair Bachman
bus	Calle Guanajuato Agreements (Action)	Dials
<b>3/4</b>	<b>Park Commission Study Session Council Chamber 6:00 PM</b>	

	Recreation Division Annual Report (Information)	Flora
	Japanese Garden ADA/Winburn Way (tentative)	Dials/Caldwell
<b>3/11</b>	<b>Park Commission Regular Business Meeting Council Chamber 6:00 PM</b>	
	Japanese Garden ADA/Winburn Way (tentative)	Dials/Caldwell
<b>APRC Advisory and Management Advisory Committees</b>		
4/16/2026	Recreation Division Advisory Committee, the Grove 3:30 PM	
4/13/2026	Ashland Senior Advisory Committee, Senior Center 3:30 PM	
TBD	Trails Advisory Committee, the Grove 4:15 PM	
TBD	Ashland Japanese Garden MAC Lithia Cabin 2:00 PM	
TBD	Bee City USA MAC	
TBD	Current Parks, Conservation, and Maintenance MAC	
<b>Council Business/Budget Meetings/Commissions</b>		
5/5/2026	Joint PC/City Council Meeting 6 PM Council Chamber	Council Hosts
5/5/2026	Miscellaneous Fees	Dials

## **Parks and Recreation Department Work Plan**

Complete projects identified in the adopted Capital Improvement Plan for FY 26-27

- Preventative Maintenance Projects
  - Lithia – Butler Perozzi Fountain Restoration
  - ADA Improvements
  - Lithia – Master Plan work plan projects
  - Hunter Park – Tennis Court Rehabilitation
  - Irrigation Controllers
  - Siskiyou Mountain – Trail Re-route
  - East Main – Phase I development projects
2. Improve recreation and senior programming access by replacing staff eliminated during COVID-19 and developing a cost recovery policy.
  3. Complete the Parks, Recreation, Open space, & Senior services strategic plan (PROS)
  4. Establish Equipment Replacement and Repair program to be consistent with Citywide fleet standards.
  5. Update employee onboarding, training, and safety program
  6. Complete work plan items identified for FY 26-27 to implement the Lithia Park Master Plan
    - Fuels reduction between Glenview Rd & Ashland Creek
    - Hazard tree removal
    - Winburn Way traffic speed and road design
    - Trail map update

- Development and promotion of citizen science and/or other environmental education
- Replacement of interpretive signs for flora

7. Develop funding strategy for future capital projects, specifically:

- Pool replacement project
- East Main future development phase(s)

**2026**

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
Budget Concepts (odd years) Adopt CIP (odd years)  Golf Course Annual Report ✓	VIP Annual Report  Budget Direction (odd years)  Calle Guanajuato Lease Agreement	Recommend Budget (odd years)  Recreation Division Annual Report
APRIL	MAY	JUNE
Misc Fees and Charges	Environmental Education Annual Report	Senior Services Cookout with APD
JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
July 4th Parade	Senior Services Ice Cream Social	
OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
Return of the Salmon Family Field Day	Senior Services Annual Report  Ashland Rotary Centennial Ice Rink Opens  Senior Services + Ashland Firefighters Union Thanksgiving Pie	Ashland Parks Foundation Annual Report  First Frost Community Skate Event  Senior Services Holiday Party

Dials started to review the lookahead. Chair Bachman interjected:

- Joint Meeting on February 11 will include a Finance Update from interim finance director Bryn Morrison.
- Leadership next steps item (informational only) will be led by the city manager, deputy city manager, and deputy city attorney. They will reflect on the complexities of the Parks Director job as the PC considers filling the open position. The PC is responsible for hiring the director.
- Bachman hasn't heard anything from the Commissioners about changing the Commission liaison appointments for 2026 so the list from 2025 can go in the February 11 packet. Suggested having the appointments be for two years.
- Temporarily paused the advisory committees that advise management as we sort out the leadership situation.

Questions/Discussion:

- Does the Calle Guanajuato item on the agenda for the Feb 11 PC business meeting include fees? A: No.
- What does it include? A: The agreements themselves, the approval of the season, and the approval of the agreements with the artisans and restaurants. The fees will be presented with the rest of the misc. charges and fees in April or May before they go to Council
- The three-year fee schedule previously approved by the PC is ending now. Do we need to do a new one? A: The current fees will be charged until June 30, the end of the fiscal year. If the PC decides to change fees, they will be applied beginning July 1, 2026.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT** – Chair Bachman adjourned the meeting at 6:57 PM

Respectfully submitted by Nancy A. Mero, Executive Assistant