



MINUTES FOR REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

PARK COMMISSION

May 13, 2026

Council Chamber, 1175 E Main – 6:00 PM

Commissioners Present: Landt, Weiner, Bachman (Chair), Gardiner (Vice Chair), Adams
Staff Present: Deputy City Manager Rooklyn, Deputy City Attorney Zahran, Acting 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 Landt, Weiner, Bachman, and Gardiner present (Adams arrived just after the Roll Call).
- III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 1. Park Commission Study Session April 1, 2026
 2. Park Commission Regular Business Meeting April 8, 2026
 3. Park Commission Strategic Planning Workshop April 18, 2026

Chair Bachman asked for unanimous consent to approve the minutes. No objections.
Minutes approved by unanimous consent.

IV. **ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA** – None

V. **PUBLIC FORUM** – None

VI. **CONSENT AGENDA** – None

VII. **BUSINESS**

1. **Ashland Creek Fish Rehabilitation Project** – Scott Howell from Rogue River Restoration Council (3RC)

SUMMARY – Scott Howell with the Rogue River Restoration Council (3RC) will give a presentation to the Park Commission on a proposal to restore spawning-sized gravel in Ashland Creek between Winburn Way and Granite Street Dam. This initiative directly

fulfills recommendation #9 of the Lithia Park Master Plan to augment creek materials and aligns with the mandate to regenerate healthy habitats. The project will take one to two days per year annually for five years. After five years, 3RC will review the program and likely apply for extensions.

APRD staff has spoken with the City of Ashland Planning staff regarding the proposed project and permitting process. Although it is a tight timeline, we are optimistic that the permit and the work can be completed prior to the deadline for the in-water work period which ends on September 15, 2026. 3RC will obtain all required permits prior to doing any work.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED – Lithia Park Master Plan, Recommendation #9: Augment input of gravel, cobble and wood material to Ashland Creek.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS – None. If approved this project will be privately funded and executed by 3RC with Scott Howell as the lead.

PROPOSED ACTIONS OR MOTION(S) – APRD staff is recommending moving forward with this proposed project with a review with 3RC after the completion of the second year (Fall 2027) and after the fifth year (Fall 2030) of the project.

Move to approve the privately funded Ashland Creek Fish Rehabilitation Project executed by 3RC pending all permits are received from the City of Ashland and Department of State Lands with a review scheduled for Fall 2027 and Fall 2030.

ATTACHMENTS:

Request from Scott Howell, Rogue River Restoration Council (3RC)
Lithia Park Master Plan, Recommendation #9: Pages 69-71

PREPARED BY: Rachel Dials, Acting Director

TO: Ashland Parks Commissioners

FROM: Scott Howell, Rogue River Restoration Council (3RC)

DATE: May 5, 2026

SUBJECT: Proposal for Annual Spawning Gravel Restoration in Ashland Creek



Executive Summary

The Rogue River Restoration Council (3RC) proposes an annual, volunteer-supported project to restore spawning-sized gravel in Ashland Creek between Winburn Way and the

Granite Street Dam. This initiative directly fulfills **Recommendation 9** of the Lithia Park Master Plan to augment creek materials and aligns with the mandate to regenerate healthy habitats.

The Need for Action

- **Habitat Shortage:** Current spawning gravel is severely limited, leading to "redd superimposition"—where multiple steelhead spawn in the same spot, damaging previous eggs.
- **High Impact:** Recent monitoring shows up to **50% of redds** have been damaged due to this lack of suitable habitat.
- **Ecological & Economic Value:** Restoring these populations supports regional fisheries and provides a unique educational attraction for park visitors.

Proposed Methodology (Low-Impact Approach)

Unlike the Master Plan's suggestion of using heavy machinery, 3RC proposes a significantly less invasive "targeted" method:

- **Manual Placement:** Up to **20 cubic yards** of 1–3 inch washed river gravel will be moved via wheelbarrows and placed by hand using buckets.
- **Strategic Sites:** Gravel will be placed at stable natural boulder structures to minimize downstream migration and ensure no channel blockages occur.
- **Timing:** Work is slated for the ODFW in-water window (June 15–Sept 15) to ensure negligible turbidity and zero impact on active spawning.

Organizational Commitment

- **Funding & Labor:** The project is **privately funded** and will be executed by 3RC staff and local volunteers at no cost to the City.
- **Accountability:** 3RC commits to at least **five years of monitoring** to track a goal of 40 stable or increasing steelhead redds.
- **Collaboration:** We look forward to working with Parks staff on educational signage to help visitors steward these iconic wild fish.

Permitting, Approval, and Support

- **Permits:** All permits from the City of Ashland Planning Department and DSL will be received before any work begins.
- **Approvals:** We have already received approval from ODFW pending all required permits are granted. We are hopeful to get Ashland Parks approval.

- **Support:** ODFW has been involved in the drafting of 3RC's proposal. They recognize the need for the restoration work proposed and are enthusiastically supportive of the project.

Lithia Park Master Plan – Recommendation #9 (attachment)

Recommendation 9: Augment input of gravel, cobble and wood material to Ashland Creek.

Streambed gravel is important for aquatic species and spawning anadromous fish, such as steelhead and Coho salmon. The reach of Ashland Creek through the park has a substrate that is severely lacking

in gravel and is somewhat lacking in cobble due to the two dams upstream that serve as sediment traps. Increasing the instances and amount of gravel

and cobble in the creek will decrease channel downcutting, increase floodplain connection, and increase habitat diversity for aquatic species. Adding gravel to the substrate (gravel augmentation) will provide more opportunities for anadromous fish spawning to occur

within the park. The overall objective of gravel augmentation is to try to mimic the sediment transport that might occur if the dams were not in place.

It is currently estimated that the average annual volume of gravel and cobble material deposited into Reeder Reservoir by Ashland Creek is 2000 cubic yards. In

relatively dry years this figure should be much lower, and in high flow years it may be much higher. Due to the alteration of the Ashland Creek hydrograph by Hosler Dam and Reeder Reservoir, which results in lower peak stream flows through the Park, it is uncertain whether Ashland Creek below the Granite Street Dam

has enough energy to transport and distribute the full volume of material deposited into Reeder Reservoir. It is likely that the appropriate volume of gravel augmentation will be less than the volume that is deposited to Reeder Reservoir.

Gravel augmentation is going to require a significant adaptive management approach and would ideally start out with small amounts of gravel that are gradually increased up to the carrying capacity of the creek through the

park. The material assimilation and carrying capacity of the creek will be dynamic and unpredictable from year to year. Augmentation will require the oversight of a fisheries

biologist or fluvial geomorphologist to inspect the channel on an annual basis and decide whether to add more or less gravel for the next round of augmentation. While

removing Granite Street Dam will improve sediment recruitment (see

related Recommendation 6), it's unlikely to resolve the lack of gravels upstream given the upstream dam and reservoir. Therefore, this recommendation includes a process for augmenting gravel in Ashland Creek before the removal or breach of Granite Street Dam and after.

The ideal source of material for gravel augmentation is the upper end of Reeder Reservoir where it is deposited by Ashland Creek and removed as part of ongoing maintenance of the Reservoir.

It has been estimated that the average annual yield of sediment to Reeder Reservoir is 2000 cubic yards. Until Granite Street Dam is removed, gravel and cobble material, with an emphasis on gravel, should be transported from where it collects at the upper end of Reeder Reservoir during flood events to downstream reaches of Ashland Creek. Ideally the gravel augmentation would occur on the downstream side of the Granite Street Dam. Once the Granite Street Dam has been breached or removed, the ideal location for gravel augmentation would be at the most readily accessible location on the downstream side of the Hosler Dam.

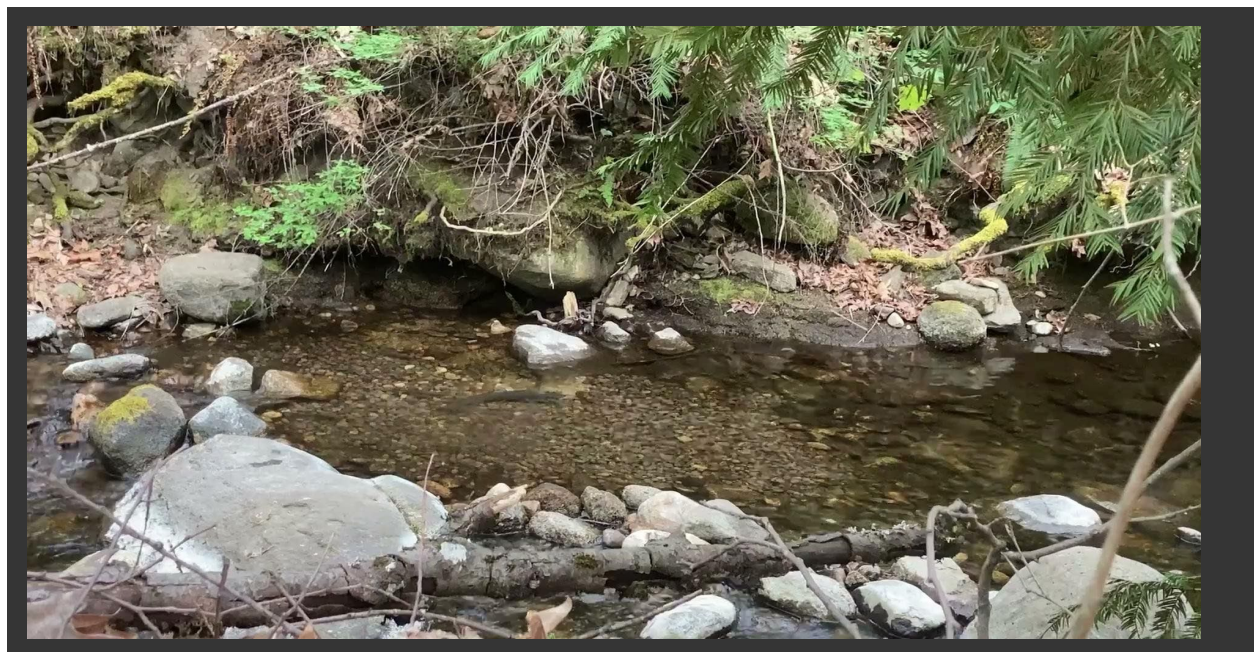
Removal of Granite Street Dam is likely to improve sediment recruitment but unlikely to resolve the lack of gravels completely given upstream dam and reservoir. The stream gravel amount and composition used in augmentation should be monitored throughout the park on an annual basis to determine if material transport and augmentation is needed to optimize aquatic habitat and floodplain connection.

Material for use in augmentation could be selectively mined from the upper end of the Reeder Reservoir to match the type of material desired. Material selected for augmentation should be primarily gravel with the inclusion of some fines and cobble. The type of material that would be most beneficial to the augmentation process can be determined on an annual basis, or just prior to its removal from Reeder Reservoir. Placement of material into Ashland Creek should occur at a location with good access for dump trucks and other heavy equipment to facilitate the work. Timing of material placement should be at the beginning of the higher flow season (fall and early winter) to facilitate its distribution to downstream reaches by the high winter stream flows. Material should be placed over a long enough period to allow it to move downstream and to prevent blocking the channel at the point of placement. If removal of material from Reeder Reservoir occurs more rapidly than the rate at which it should be placed in Ashland Creek, it can be stockpiled for later use. Prior to the removal of the Granite Street Dam, the material should be deposited below the dam. After dam removal and the stream restoration is completed, material should be distributed in areas below the Hosler Dam at a readily accessible location.

Woody material is also an important component of stream health. Large trees within the channel are important elements of pool formation and fish cover. They can be added to urban streams in a manner that ensures that they remain in place to prevent their migration downstream. Fish habitat restoration activities for the creek should be considered as soon as, and whenever, practical. These activities should include the creation of a series of pools distributed throughout the stream reach within the park, and

the addition of large wood (whole or partial mature conifer trees) to provide hydraulic diversity and fish holding areas. Large wood added to the stream channel and floodplain should be anchored appropriately to prevent its migration downstream of the park. Trees that are removed from the park's forested areas for maintenance purposes should be kept within the park for use as habitat, with as many of them placed within the stream channel and floodplain as is reasonable considering restoration objectives. Trees also have habitat value as downed wood in upland areas and nature play areas.

Presentation Slides





Ashland Creek background

- historically primary driver of water quality, fish production in Bear Cr
- Cool, clean water far downstream

Fish confirmed to be present

Native fish

- Summer and winter steelhead
- Cutthroat trout
- Coho salmon
- Sculpin

Non-native fish

- Redside shiners
- Also non-native crayfish

Restoring spawning gravel in Ashland Creek

Objectives

Building resilience in wild steelhead facing climate headwinds

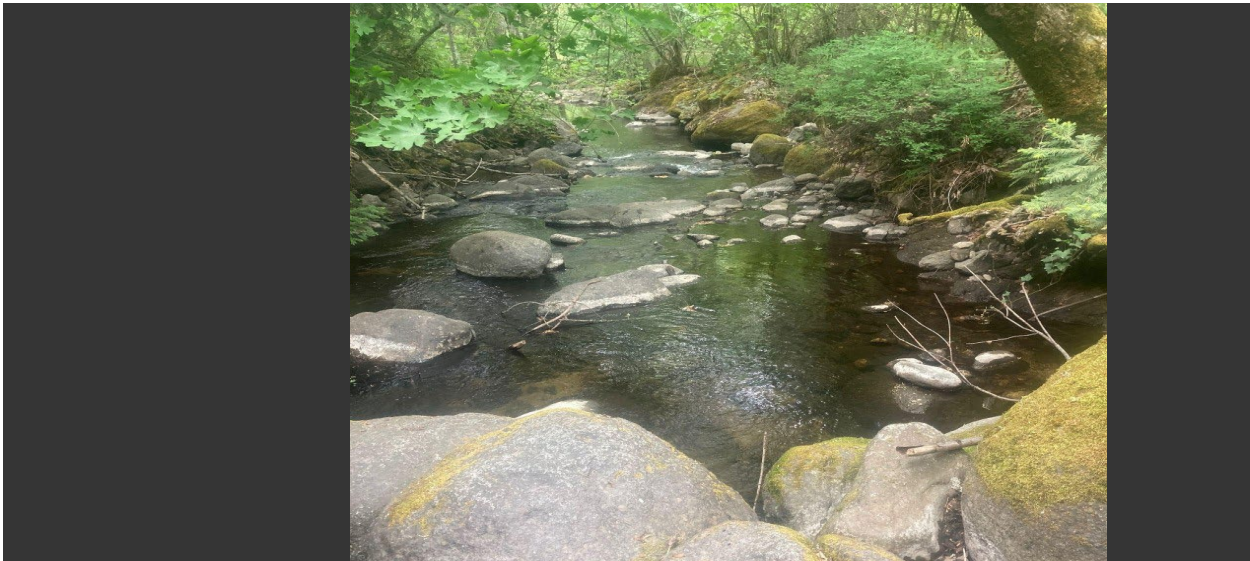
Increasing production of wild steelhead

Stewarding stream function and health

Completing an action in Lithia Park Master Plan

Proposed project

- Up to 20 yards washed river rock 2-4 inches annually
- Winburn Way to Granite St Dam
- Targeted placement at natural boulder/cobble structures to reduce risk of wash out. Place in patches 50 ft².
- Temporary storage at parking lots
- Moved/placed by 3RC staff and volunteers with wheelbarrows (Parks help with vehicles?). Leftover placed below Granite St.
- Work in late Aug-mid Sept; may ask for later pending conditions
- Monitoring planned via spawning surveys



Why???

Shortage of spawning gravel

- Lack of gravel migration downstream as a result of Granite St Dam.
- Lack of gravel recruitment from natural bank erosion as a result of bank armoring.
- Increased streambed scouring because of unnaturally elevated water velocities during high flow events as a result of creek channel incising.

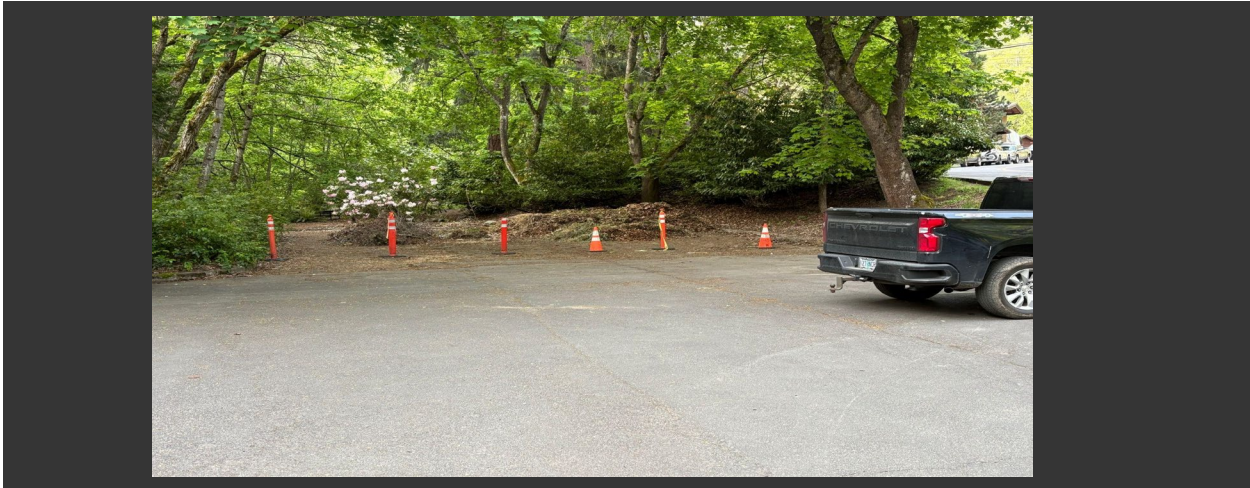




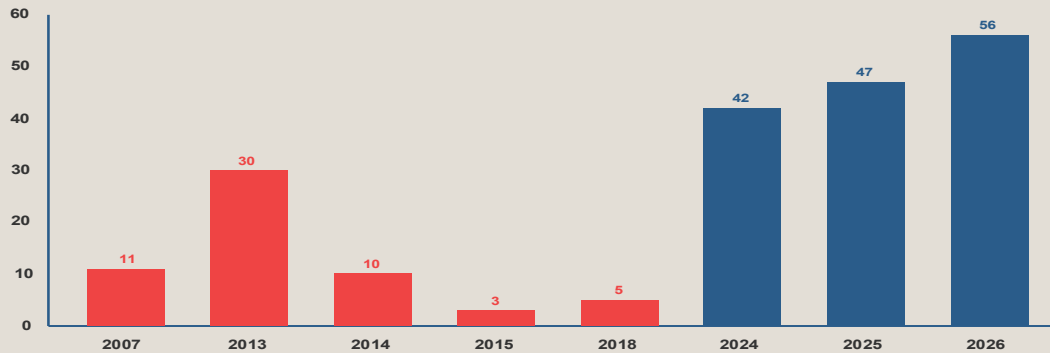
Only 1% of natural bedload transport

- Pg 80 in Master Plan
- It is currently estimated that the average annual volume of gravel and cobble material deposited into Reeder Reservoir by Ashland Creek is 2000 cubic yards.
- In relatively dry years this figure should be much lower, and in high flow years it may be much higher.
- Due to the alteration...by Hosler Dam and Reeder Reservoir, which results in lower peak stream flows through the Park, it is uncertain whether Ashland Creek below the Granite Street Dam has enough energy to transport and distribute the full volume of material deposited into Reeder Reservoir.
- It is likely that the appropriate volume of gravel augmentation will be less than the volume that is deposited to Reeder Reservoir.





Number of Redds Observed by Year



Metrics of success

- Fish continue to spawn in available habitat up to Granite Street Dam
- Redd number stable or increasing relative to ODFW population estimates (late run summer steelhead, upper Rogue winter steelhead).
- Redd goal--minimum of 30 reds upstream of Winburn Way is met or exceeded on average.
- Survey for 5 years. Meet with ODFW to review work if metrics not being met—esp the first two.

Investment in restoring Ashland Creek

- 7 dams removed: TID, Smith Meyer Roper, Helman push up dam, three dams in Lithia Park, even sm push up dam for pond.
- 1 diversion improved: Delsman
- 1 fish trap removed; juvenile fish could and did swim up into former wastewater pipeline



ODFW's Support

- Plan already has approval from Frank Drake our ODFW regional manager
- ODFW is very supportive of the proposed project and has offered to help with Planning Department and DSL permit applications
- Dan Van Dyke (recently retired ODFW regional manager) is on 3RC's board and has been a key figure in drafting proposal

A request for help with stewardship

- Request both approval and support for this project, an action item in the Master Plan.
- The fish we inherited from previous generations are facing new climate challenges. The watershed and its fish need our stewardship.
- I urge you to continue investments in restoring Ashland Creek and helping pass wild steelhead on to future generations.



Questions/Discussion:

- Reservoir is becoming more shallow and filled with sediment. Short of removing the dam, what else can be done to help the fish? A: The Master plan addresses removing sediment from Reeder Reservoir. Removing sediment from the Granite Street reservoir would be amazing.
- Excitement for the idea and the way it supports the Lithia Park Master Plan. The Park Commission fully supports the project. It is easy to implement and will have a big impact.

Motion: Move to approve the privately funded Ashland Creek Fish Rehabilitation Project executed by 3RC pending all permits are received from the City of Ashland and Department of State Lands with a review scheduled for Fall 2027 and Fall 2030. Parks Staff will assist.

Motion: Gardiner

Second: Adams

Vote:

Gardiner	Yes	Weiner	Yes	Bachman	Yes
Adams	Yes	Landt	Yes		

2. Update on Permanent Director Hiring – Deputy City Manager Rooklyn

SUMMARY – Discussion regarding permanent Parks Director hiring process and timeline.

BACKGROUND – City staff will provide an overview of the typical hiring process and timeline for a Director-level position. This will include the recruitment firm selection process, the steps within a typical recruitment process, and anticipated timelines. The Park Commission will have an opportunity to discuss their preferred process.

The Parks and Recreation Department is currently overseen by Deputy Parks Director Rachel Dials as Acting Parks Director under the management of the City Manager. The Parks and Recreation Director position has been vacant since January 28, 2026.

PREPARED BY: Nancy A. Mero, Executive Assistant

Presentation Slides



Guiding Documents

[AMC 2.28.640](#)

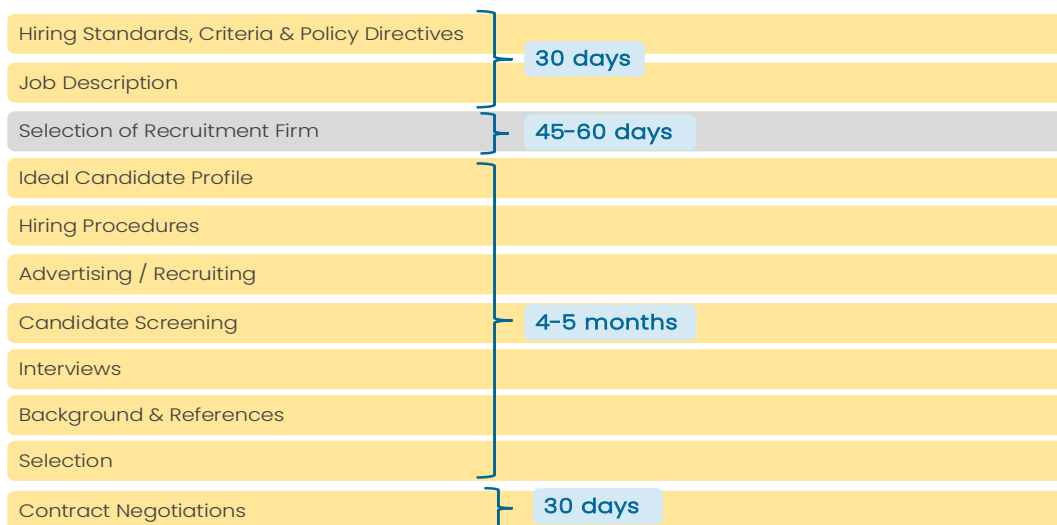
- Park Commission hires through an outside hiring firm or through direct appointment
- City Manager provides input on job description, applications, and interviews.
- City Manager has contract signing authority.

[ORS 192.660](#)

- Requirements to go into executive session for hiring executive officer



	Park Commission	City Staff	Recruitment Firm
Hiring Standards, Criteria & Policy Directives	✓	✓	
Job Description	✓	✓	
Ideal Candidate Profile	✓		✓
Hiring Procedures	✓		✓
Advertising / Recruiting			✓
Candidate Screening	Subset		✓
Interviews	Subset	✓	✓
Background & References	Subset		✓
Selection	✓		
Contract Negotiations	Subset	✓	



Selection of Recruitment Firm

Due to likely dollar value, will require at least three competitive bids.

Bids can be solicited by directly asking specific firms or posting a Request for Bids.

Bidding window is typically 10-21 days.

Staff or Park Commission can select which firm to contract with, based on previously established criteria.



Commission Discussion

Are there changes you'd like to make to the "typical" hiring process or roles/responsibilities?

When would you like to start the hiring process?

How would you like to approach selecting a recruitment firm?



Questions/Discussion:

- Don't we already have the job description, etc. from past hiring of Directors? A: Foundation is there but the director job description has changed since the last hiring.
- Who is 'City Staff' in the chart referring to? A: City Manager's office and/or HR.
- Regarding a 'subset' of the Park Commission participating in interviews, historically the entire PC has done interviews. A: Those details will be worked out with the hiring firm you select.
- What's the time frame for appointing an Interim Director? A: Could be done at the next PC business meeting if you have someone in mind. If you go through a hiring process closer to 30 – 60 days.
- Do the HR/City Manager's offices have insight into recruiting firms to recommend for hiring a Parks Director? A: Rooklyn does not. Recommends reaching out to colleagues in other cities for suggestions.
- Noted that the Acting Director does not report to the PC. Appointing an Interim Director there would be a contract, and the appointee would report to the PC establishing a more normal relationship between the PC and the director. The PC currently does not have their agency in place to actualize their policies by directing staff. Hiring a new director will take time and they need to get it right this time.
- Hiring an interim does not conflict with hiring a permanent director. Two separate issues. Supports the idea of having a more clear and traditional relationship with the current director.
- Who would do the outreach for recruitment firms? A: HR is currently Jordan with very limited capacity. If speed is the issue, she recommends the PC suggest potential firms to her.
- The material Rooklyn sent to the PC included two director job descriptions, but they don't apply to this situation? A: The 2024 job description is in conflict with ordinance 3248. Rooklyn is not familiar enough with the job description from the comp and class study to say if it is in conflict with the ordinance. The job description will have to be discussed at a public meeting where the public has a chance to make comment.
- Zahran: Recommended being really clear in the job description regarding what the Director actually does/will do. Considering what other departments do/can do is important. Referenced Parks staff working with Public Works. Discussing hiring in an Executive Session has specific requirements.
- Realistically could there be a draft of the job description by June 10? A: Yes.
- Suggested to have the PC look for hiring firm or to post the RFP. Wouldn't it be better to do both? A: Yes, post the RFP and PC could also send their suggestions to Jordan.
- Feels like PC's job to work on the job description. A: Rooklyn will provide the draft to the PC via email so they can work on it.
- Who should receive the PC's suggestions? A: Rooklyn.
- Discussed the idea of adding a meeting. Time is short for that before June 10.

- Imperative that legal go through and update the areas of the job description affected by the changes brought by the ordinance.
- Noted there are seven months of meetings left in this year. Three commission positions are coming open so there could be a new majority in January. Potentially teeing up the process for the next commission to finish.
- Discussed forming a working group of Commissioners and legal prior to June 10 meeting. Not realistic timewise.
- Rooklyn recommended ignoring the 2024 job description focus on the comp and class study job description.
- Rooklyn and Zahran will work on the changes brought about by the Ordinance including suggestions/comments sent by Commissioners.
- Executive team will discuss the draft prior to June 10 meeting.
- Put interim director on the lookahead for July. (Rooklyn recommended waiting until the director job description was finalized as the interim would be working under the same description).
- Public hearing for director job description required for June 10.

3. Updated 2026 Park Commission Meeting Schedule

SUMMARY - The Park Commissioners (PC) requested an update to the meeting schedule to make some adjustments for the July through December 2026 meetings. The changes include:

- Adding the study session back in August.
- Changing the business meeting to November 4, due to the Veterans Day holiday on November 11, 2026.

Confirmation has been received from the City Manager’s office that the Joint Meeting with Council on August 12 will move forward as planned. It is up to the PC if you prefer to have a Business Meeting after the Joint meeting on August 12.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED - 10.68.030 Park Commission-Authority

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS - None

PROPOSED ACTIONS OR MOTION(S) - Move to approve the updated meeting schedule.

ATTACHMENTS - Updated 2026 Park Commission Meeting Schedule

May 13	Business Meeting	Council Chamber
June 3	Joint Meeting w/Council	Council Chamber
June 10	Business Meeting	Council Chamber

July 1 July 8	Study Session Business Meeting	No Meeting – Summer Break Council Chamber
August 5 August 12	Study Session Joint Mtg/Business Meeting	Council Chamber Council Chamber PC Hosts
September 2 September 9	Study Session Business Meeting	Council Chamber Council Chamber
October 7 October 14	Study Session Business Meeting	Council Chamber Council Chamber
November 3 November 4	Joint Meeting w/Council Business Meeting	Council Chamber Council Hosts Council Chamber
December 2	Business Meeting	Council Chamber

PREPARED BY: Rachel Dials, Acting Director

Motion: I move to approve the updated 2026 meeting schedule as presented.

Motion: Gardiner Second: Landt

Vote:

Gardiner	Yes	Weiner	Yes	Bachman	Yes
Adams	Yes	Landt	Yes		

VIII. **ACTING DIRECTORS REPORT** – Acting Director Dials

Acting Directors Report



Projects & Parks:

- E. Main: out to bid
- Hunter Tennis: out to bid
- Butler Perozzi Fountain: work is progressing
- Ice Rink Cabling–scheduled for late July.
- New shower towers installed at Daniel Meyer Pool
- TID water should be hitting park locations soon
- 2 new park seasonals have started and 4 more will start within the next few weeks.



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Programming & Recreation:

- Summer program digital guide is out
- Pool opens on June 3rd
- Splashpad opens Memorial Day 11am-7pm 7 days a week.
- Bird Day is this Saturday May 16 8am-noon at North mountain Park
- Bike Swap event saw over 400 people attend and raised over \$5600 for the Pedal Power Program
- Two events May 2/3 Kids Jamboree at The Grove and the Childrens Celebration at the J. Garden that brought over 750 people out!
- Community Center will be available for rentals soon. Golf Course Food Concessionaire under contract soon. Staff is making some minor kitchen modifications to the sink prior to move in.



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Miscellaneous Fees:

- Per AMC 2.68, I worked with City Manager guidance to update our fees per the wider city policy (adjust by the 3.1% March CPI) and those fees will be considered by City Council on May 19th.
- deviated from that policy for our pool fees, skate rentals, and other fees that users who often pay in cash, to help keep it easy for our customer service staff
- Did not change this year due to being recently adjusted:
 - Court Usage Fee
 - Field use Fees
 - PH & CC Fees
 - OKGC Fees



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Questions/Discussion:

- Prior to the meeting, Acting Director Dials received a question from a Commissioner regarding the Calle Guanajuato fees. If the PC wants to look at adjusting those fees, she suggested they do that early next year.

- What's the schedule for the golf course driving range? A: Just got the drawings back looking at around \$180,000 which would likely be covered by the insurance money. The item will come before the PC soon.

IX. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS/STAFF

a. Liaison Report

Adams and Weiner attended the Forest Lands Management Advisory Committee meeting last night where the Glenview Hillside Trail proposal was reviewed. The FLMAC had minor suggestions. Will send their notes to the Acting Director soon.

X. UPCOMING MEETING DATES

1. Trails Advisory Committee May 20, the Grove
2. Joint Meeting with Council June 3, 2026
3. Park Commission Regular Business Meeting June 10, 2026
4. Park Commission Regular Business Meeting July 8, 2026

XI. ADJOURNMENT – Chair Bachman adjourned the meeting at 7:40 PM

Respectfully submitted by Nancy A. Mero, Executive Assistant