

MINUTES FOR REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

PARK COMMISSION

July 8, 2026

Council Chamber, 1175 E Main – 6:00 PM

Commissioners Present: Weiner, Bachman, Gardiner, Adams, and Landt

Staff Present: Deputy City Manager Rooklyn, Deputy City Attorney Zahran, Interim Parks

Director Dials, Recreation Supervisor Flora, Executive Assistant Mero

Absent: None

I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chair Bachman called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

II. **ROLL CALL** – Commissioners Weiner, Bachman, Gardiner, Adams present (Landt joined after roll call).

III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. Park Commission Regular Business Meeting June 10, 2026

Gardiner: His name was excluded from the roll call in the minutes.

Motion: I move to approve the minutes as amended.

Motion: Gardiner

Second: Weiner

Vote:

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

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

V. **PUBLIC FORUM** –

Andrew DelCarlo, Oregon: Member of the Rogue Valley Masters Swim Team. Spoke to the importance of having a year round viable pool in Ashland. Spoke to the viral role a community pool plays in creating community providing the opportunity to exercise for all ages and for kids to learn to swim. Asking Parks and Rec to prioritize planning for a year round pool.

Barney Spera, Ashland: Suggested to the Park Commission that Ashland would benefit from having a Carousel. Offered to make a \$100,000.00 donation to kick off a campaign to make it happen. Touted the popularity of a carousel in Butchart Gardens in Vancouver, Canada. Could be a source of income for the City. Asked the Commissioners to look into the possibility to see if it would be viable.

VI. **CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Trails Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes from November 19, 2025

Chair Bachman asked for acknowledgement of the minutes by unanimous consent. No objections. Minutes acknowledged by unanimous consent.

VII. BUSINESS

1. Employment of the Parks Director (Job Description) (Action) – Deputy City Manager Rooklyn

SUMMARY – The permanent Parks and Recreation Director position has been vacant since January 28, 2026. Prior to recruiting a new Parks Director, the job description needs to be reviewed and updated.

At the June 10th Regular Park Commission meeting a Public Hearing was held to discuss the job description and gather public input. After the public hearing the Park Commissioners chose to table the discussion to give more input to the job description prior to approval.

The Park Commissioners have now had a chance to give input and feedback on the job description, and those changes and updates are reflected in the draft version. The job description represents a full rewrite of the Parks and Recreation Director job description to provide better clarity on the day-to-day role of the position, create clearer standards, and align with AMC 2.28.600 – 660.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED – Ashland Municipal Code 2.28.600 – 660

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS – Currently budgeted.

PROPOSED ACTIONS OR MOTION(S) – Adoption/Amendment: I move to adopt the Parks and Recreation Director job description [as amended].

Tabling: I move to table the Parks and Recreation Director job description to [the next regular business meeting.]

ATTACHMENTS

Draft of Parks Director job description with tracked changes

Clean version of Parks Director job description

PREPARED BY: Jordan Rooklyn, Deputy City Manager

Questions/Discussion:

- In the minimum requirements section, a bachelor's degree is listed as a minimum qualification for the job. Next the job description states that a bachelor's degree could count for four years of the nine years of required leadership experience. More clear to state five years of leadership is required.
- Preference stated to keep nine years as the required leadership experience.

- Is it an actual minimum requirement if one doesn't have to have it? If not, why do we say it is?
- Part of City's goal for assuring equal employment opportunity. Actual experience may be equal to the degree.
- Suggested under minimum qualifications, change bachelor's degree to: advanced degree could substitute for up to four years of experience.

Motion: I move that we approve the job description for the permanent Parks Director with the amendment that under the third bullet for the minimum qualifications section the word bachelor's degree be replaced with graduate degree.

Motion: Adams

Second: Weiner

Vote:

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

2. Interim Parks Director Contract (Action) – Deputy City Manager Rooklyn

SUMMARY – At the June 10 Regular Business Meeting the Park Commission moved to appoint Rachel Dials Interim Parks Director. The Assistant City Attorney, Deputy City Manager, and Park Commission Chair have worked with the candidate to negotiate a contract.

The main points of the contract are:

- The contract is for one year or until a permanent director is hired, whichever is sooner.
- Rachel Dials will retain rights to the Deputy Director role.
- Rachel Dials will be at Step 4 of the Parks Director salary range, which represents a 10% increase from what she would make as Deputy Director.
- Other benefits – including potential severance – parallel those which City department heads receive.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED – Ashland Municipal Code 2.28.600 – 660

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS – Currently budgeted

PROPOSED ACTIONS OR MOTION(S) – I move to appoint Rachel Dials as Interim Parks Director and request City Manager to execute the contract.

ATTACHMENTS – DRAFT Interim Director Contract (Please note: Once the Park Commission has approved the final version of the Parks Director job description it will be included as Exhibit A in the Interim Parks Director Contract).

PREPARED BY: Jordan Rooklyn, Deputy City Manager

Questions/Discussion:

- If we haven't recruited a permanent director in one year, Dials remains in the position? There's no sunset? A: The contract has a sunset of one year. It is possible a decision can be made to extend the contract.
- The Deputy Director role will remain open during this period? A: Yes

Motion: I move to approve the promotion to Interim Director as written.

- Deputy Director is doing a great job as Acting Director knitting together the complexities she inherited. Look forward to moving some of that forward.
- Confirmation this process will work well. Good not to fast track the hiring of a permanent director. Happy to work with Rachel over the next year.

Motion: Weiner

Second: Gardiner

Vote:

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

3. Pickleball Court Hours Discussion – Interim Director Dials (Information)

SUMMARY – This memo provides an operational update regarding the Lithia Park pickleball courts. This is in response to concerns regarding off-hours usage and acoustic impacts. Included are options for updated rule regulations, physical site controls, and improved collaboration with the Ashland Police Department.

Commissioners are asked to provide staff direction regarding court hours, structural sound mitigation, and facility security.

BACKGROUND

Court Hours

Increased pickleball participation has led to higher use at the Lithia Park Courts. Staff have observed the courts see the highest demand M, W, F from 8 AM -11 AM during open play.

Currently, the posted facility rules state that the courts open at 7 AM and close at "sunset," creating ambiguity that hampers enforcement. In speaking with the Ashland Police Department (APD) their recommendation was to clearly state the open and close times on signage and to refer people to contact APD with violations of the posted hours.

Locking the Courts

Locking the courts at night is one of the options discussed to reduce violations. The court complex itself features four (4) independent pedestrian entry gates and two (2) maintenance gates, all which remain unlocked at all hours. Staff have evaluated this idea,

and it would require an extra 15 minutes per shift for opening and closing. The bigger concern is confrontation with non-compliant players. If this option was considered, staff would need to implement a safety protocol with explicit escalation steps for staff to follow for non-compliant players.

APD's recommendation was to start with increased signage that includes opening and closing hours and to not lock the courts at this time. The only park facilities that are currently locked at night are public restrooms within all parks and the Japanese Garden.

Quiet Pickleball Equipment

Another idea was to **require** Quiet Pickleball Equipment such as paddles and balls.

<https://usapickleball.org/acoustics/>

Through research and discussion with the Ashland Oregon Pickleball Club, it was determined current "quiet ball" technology changes gameplay dynamics, requiring players to strike balls with significantly more force. The Club indicated that the manufacturing sector's quiet equipment technology is still evolving. Staff recommends utilizing advisory signage to **encourage** use of USA Pickleball-certified acoustic equipment rather than pursuing an unenforceable mandate.

Sound Mitigation

Staff are currently evaluating high-performance, heavy-duty vinyl sound barriers for potential use at the Lithia Park courts, looking specifically at the "Acoustiblok" system currently utilized at the Rogue X pickleball facility in Medford.

Staff need to assess how these barriers will perform within a canyon topography. Additionally, evaluation of the structural load capacity of the existing fencing will need to occur, as adding sound barriers may necessitate structural reinforcing or replacement.

While this infrastructure improvement is being explored for future Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) funding, staff will compile more information to present in future discussion.

ASSESSMENT – Current Ordinance: Per AMC 9.08.170, disruptive noise (such as yelling, shouting, or whistling) is prohibited in residential and noise-sensitive areas between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., or whenever it unreasonably disturbs community peace based on volume, timing, or duration.

Staff requests Commission discussion regarding the implementation of designated court hours and expanded rules signage at all four entrances to the pickleball courts:

Proposed Operating Hours: 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM, year-round.

Signage Content (Rules & Enforcement):

- **Hours & Trespassing:** Playing outside of posted hours, playing after dark, or trespassing is strictly prohibited. Violators face citations or exclusion by the Ashland Police Department per AMC 10.68.
- **Sound Mitigation:** Players are urged to use USA Pickleball-approved "Quiet Category" paddles and acoustic balls to reduce community noise impacts.
- **Amplified Sound:** External speakers, boomboxes, and amplified audio are strictly prohibited under AMC 9.08.170.

PROPOSED ACTIONS OR MOTION(S) – N/A

ATTACHMENTS

AMC 9.08.170 Unnecessary Noise – see packet

Current pickleball signage at Lithia Park Courts

Specific public comments related to pickleball noise

PREPARED BY: Rachel Dials, Interim Director

Questions/Discussion:

- How much would the sound study cost? A: TBD about \$5,000.00
- Does the ORD say boom boxes, etc. are prohibited at all times? A: Yes
- Make hours of play specific and year round so the signs don't have to be changed. Put no amplified sound, boomboxes etc. on the signs, too.
- Concerns and challenges with recommendations. Hours aren't posted on Parks and Rec website. Many of the hours would be after dark much of the year. Align Japanese Garden hours with Pickleball. Spoken with pickleballers who don't understand why Ashland hasn't implemented the quiet equipment policy. Have to make it a mandate and enforce it. Consider easy, free solutions first.
- We should maximize the use of the courts we have. Lights would be one way. In the summer should maximize cooler evening hours. Closing at 8 PM is too early. Should accommodate the players.
- Seasonal hours might make sense.
- Seldom anyone playing pickleball before 7 AM. A person often blows leaves as early as 6:30 AM. Amend signs to signify no use rather than no play.
- High use in the AM between 8 and noon. Noisiest use is in the evening.
- Staff is looking for Commissioners to address some of the issues created by pickleball play. Need to make it clear on hours and no boomboxes etc. Not a fan of locking the courts. If we need enforcement we can call on APD. Focus on what we can do easily and at little cost.
- Pickleball noise impacts a lot more than neighbors. Many comments saying people no longer go to the Park or walk the trails because of pickleball. Need to implement best practices that are recommended by US Pickleball.
- Need to state on the signs that trespassing/using amplified devices are prohibited.

Direction: Need to post hours of use on the signage, potentially seasonal, potentially aligning with the hours of the Japanese Garden, include AMC on noise, encourage or mandate the use of quiet equipment. Get a general estimate of cost.

Bring it back to a study session. Maybe the August study session.

Trying to keep the August study session for just the proposed Lithia Park East Hillside Mountain Bike Trails. Could potentially bring the pickleball noise mitigation item to the August business meeting if there is to be one following the joint session with City Council.



PICKLEBALL COURTS

OPEN DAILY | 7AM – SUNSET

GENERAL RULES

These courts are for **EVERYONE**. Please be **CONSIDERATE**.

- All Lithia Park Rules and City of Ashland Ordinances apply to use of courts.
- Courts are for pickleball only.
- Non-marking court shoes **REQUIRED**.
- Do not use hard bristle brooms, tape, or anything that can damage the court surface.
- All ages and skill levels are welcome to play during “Open” and “Drop-in” play. Children under age 10 must be supervised by an adult.
- Only Ashland Parks and Recreation Department authorizes court reservations. PlayTime Scheduler and other online platforms cannot be used to reserve courts.
- Private events, leagues, lessons, and tournaments require Ashland Parks and Recreation approval and permitting prior to the event.

For more information on reserving courts and special event permit requests for private use visit ashlandoregon.gov/pickleball

 Thank you for helping us make the Lithia Park Pickleball Courts experience positive for everyone! 

Ashland Parks & Recreation | 1195 E. Main St, Ashland OR | 541.488.5340 | parksinfo@ashlandoregon.gov

OPEN PLAY RULES

Monday – Wednesday – Friday | 8am – 11am

“Open Play” is a structured pickleball gameplay experience for players of **ALL** skill levels.

- All games follow USA Pickleball Association rules.
- Join a court by placing your paddle in the paddle rack according to posted procedures.
- Two Players Per Side/Two Games Per Turn
- You may place your paddle back in the rack after your two games are done.

DROP-IN PLAY RULES

“Drop-in play” are all hours not scheduled for Open-Play and/or APRD authorized events

Drop-in sessions are for **all abilities, ages, and groups of players** to enjoy the courts privately or invite others to join in pick-up games. All courts are available unless reserved through Ashland Parks & Recreation.

When courts are full:

- All players must be present and follow posted procedures to rotate onto courts.
- Organized activities or practices that violate posted procedures and limit access to others are strictly **prohibited**.
- Once a group steps onto a court, there is a 1 hour 30-minute time limit before all group members must vacate and allow others to rotate on.
- A minimum of two players per court is required. 1v1 and 2v1 groups are encouraged to invite waiting players onto their court to maximize enjoyment for everyone.

Thank you for helping us make the Lithia Park Pickleball Courts experience positive for everyone!

 Please visit the website ashlandoregon.gov/pickleball for more information as we continue to improve your pickleball experience!

Ashland Parks & Recreation | 1195 E. Main St, Ashland OR | 541.488.5340 | parksinfo@ashlandoregon.gov

Contact the Parks & Recreation Commissioners

This form provides the opportunity for citizens to submit comments to Ashland Parks and Recreation Commissioners. Your comment will become part of APRC's public record.

Full Name	Andrea Weiner
Phone	Field not completed.
Email	
Subject	Lithia Park Tennis

Message

Good afternoon Parks Commission and Department:

I would like to voice my support for reverting the Lithia Park courts back to "tennis only". The constant, intrusive noise associated with pickleball is not compatible with Lithia Park, especially when the courts are directly adjacent to our \$2 million Japanese Garden, the upper duck pond, and picnic areas.

In summer 2023, I had several e-mail conversations with staff and commission whereby they acknowledged the problem: "It is my understanding that the commissioners take this issue seriously (as do I) and that we intend to trouble shoot some of these problems (noise, hours of play, etc) in the coming months."

"I'm hopeful we can find a way to allow folks to play pickleball and also reduce/eliminate/move the damaging noise of the game for residents."

"Administratively we can lock the courts when we lock the garden each night and open them after 7am which we will be doing."

Nearly three years later, and nothing has been done to correct the error of putting pickleball in Lithia. You now have the opportunity to do so.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Andrea Weiner

Upload your file

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Full Name

James di Properzio, Ashland resident

Phone

Email

Subject

Cogent comment on our pickleball/tennis pickle!

Message

Dear Commissioners,

I attended the meeting but arrived too late to sign up to speak. Most of the tennis community arrived late, because they had circulated the wrong location among themselves, and thus were underrepresented among the speakers.

The double-lining proposal pits the tennis and pickleball communities against each other, and neither wants it anyway. Just months ago, in 2025, a public meeting on the renovation of the tennis courts was held, at which we were assured by the then-head of Parks and Rec that the courts would not be double-lined.

Switching the Lithia Park courts back to tennis again is a double waste of money, infuriates the pickleballers, and won't work for the AHS tennis team, because they can't split up practices and competitive home meets. The team needs 8 courts together to host meets.

Also, rules for high-school competitive tennis matches follow USTA, which forbids courts lined for pickleball entirely. The state scholastic standards follow this, though they do allow play on double-lined courts in emergencies or temporarily, neither of which would apply in Hunter Park.

Noise from pickleball in the park is a noticeable nuisance to me for more than a quarter-mile when I walk the chip trail up Lithia Park, but that problem is easily solved at no cost to the city. Multiple types of quiet and even 'near-silent' pickleballs are made now, and they perform as well or better than the first-generation, Whiffleball-style pickleballs.

Restrict play to the balls manufactured to be quieter—some are as quiet as tennis balls or quieter. Problem solved. Some pickleballers may grumble initially, until they try the new balls and realize they perform better.

Let's leave the pickleballers their 8 courts in the park, leave the tennis team and community their last remaining 8 courts in Hunter Park without double lines, and look toward where dedicated pickleball courts can be built, as they will clearly be needed in the coming years.

Sincerely,
James di Properzio

Upload your file

Field not completed.

Contact the Parks & Recreation Commissioners

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Full Name

Robert Hart

Phone

Email

Subject

pickleball courts

Message

I live directly above the pickleball courts on the east side of Lithia Park. The noise is a constant irritant. The pickleball courts should be relocated as soon as feasible. It would be a huge win for the homeowners and Lithia Park!

Upload your file

Field not completed.

Full Name

Bonnie Mavis

Phone	<i>Field not completed.</i>
Email	
Subject	Pickleball in Lithia Park
Message	Pickleball is a fun and healthy activity that connects people and builds community, versus dividing community and creating a negative cloud. I live a couple of blocks from the courts and am challenged to hear the play until I get right above it on Granite. The sound of Pickleball, in my mind, is not a bad thing...it is a happy sound and merely a matter of personal opinion. The sound I hear whenever I am near the courts is laughter and lively conversation...isn't that the point? Our country's health in general needs more activities like this and a lovely and convenient place to do them. People can engage, move, laugh and build community, which is critical to healthy aging, In addition, the courts also attract young people and blur the lines of age that is so obvious on the streets of Ashland. Encouraging this connection and diversity is a positive way to knit together the gap between our generations. Eliminating Pickleball in Lithia is short sighted and will serve only the people who choose to make something negative out of a very positive activity that brings life to Ashland. You know the statistics...Pickleball is growing world wide and it should be aloud to grow here as well.

Contact the Parks & Recreation Commissioners

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Full Name	John & Rebecca Lane
Phone	<i>Field not completed.</i>
Email	
Subject	Lithia Park

Message**There will be Noise**

Lithia Park checks all the boxes for an ideal urban park with plenty of open public spaces that support a variety of leisure and recreational activities. The park provides a safe and aesthetically pleasing environment with natural wildlife, vegetation, duck ponds, and a year-round creek. It also offers a wide range of amenities, such as; a playground, pickleball and volleyball courts, walking trails, picnic areas, an outdoor band shell, Japanese Garden, and green space for outdoor vendor markets. There are restrooms and several free parking lots to support numerous park visitors.

Amenities attract adults and children who wish to recreate. We want amenities to be well utilized. Toddlers laughing on the swings and splashing in the creek, hikers plodding on well-worn trails, music coming from the band shell, market vendors selling their wares, groups enjoying a picnic, and kids of all ages playing pickleball. There will be noise. If you have a park with lots of amenities, but without any noise, then it is probably underutilized. Welcome these outdoor activities and the exuberant noise.

Full Name

Robert Brownell

Phone

Email

SubjectKeep Pickleball in Lithia Park

Message

Dear Commissioners,

I live at 233 Granite Street, next door to Commissioner Weiner, and as close to the pickleball courts as any home in Ashland. When I am in my home, I do not hear anything from the pickleball courts. When I am on my porch, I can hear activity, but it is no bother. I can also hear concerts at the Bandshell, which is no bother. When I walk to town through the park, I can hear the shrieks of children playing. Again, this is no bother. In fact, it is expected. I live across the street from a public park. In fact, it is wonderful. The public park is being used by the public. If there is no noise from these activities, then we are doing something wrong. Hiking, walking, picnics, quiet contemplation, boisterous play, concerts, street musicians and, yes, pickleball are all accommodated. What a wonderful place.

Eliminating pickleball from Lithia Park is as absurd as prohibiting any of the other activities mentioned above. It may be the most utilized real estate in the park. It is also the activity that attracts the broadest cross-section of residents. Seniors, families, college students, young professionals and children are all frequent users. The Parks Commission should be proud that so many more people are using the park since the courts converted to pickleball. Bravo!

When people play in the park, do they make noise? Of course. Do they park in front of my house? Certainly. Because it is a park for the people of Ashland, not a dedicated open space for the residents of Granite Street.

My thoughts,
Bob Brownell

Full Name	Robin DONALDSON
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Phone	
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Email	
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Subject	STRONGLY SUPPORT PICKLEBALL in Lithia Park
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Message	I must express concern that this APR message presents a perspective that feels both one-sided and dismissive of the park's longstanding purpose. Lithia Park was established with the guiding principle "to serve the public through culture, recreation, natural beauty, and health-oriented tourism." From its original design in 1914, recreation has been a central and intentional component. Original recreational features, such as the tennis courts and bandshell are, by nature, active and sound-producing spaces. The addition of the children's playground after 1920, expanded and improved repeatedly, has always brought the joyful noise of play. More recently, the skating rink introduced in 2019 has added another layer of recreational activity and the sounds that accompany them. The reality is that recreation and sound are inherently linked. What one person perceives as noise, another experiences as vitality, connection, and community life. A missed hockey shot may echo loudly, but it represents effort, competition, and engagement. The laughter of children, the performances at the Elizabethan Theatre, the music of the solo cello player to the rock various bands playing in the park, or even the natural sounds of wildlife, all contribute to the rich and dynamic character of Lithia Park. "Peace and quiet" is, ultimately, subjective. For many, the sounds of activity are not disturbances but affirmations that the park is fulfilling its purpose, bringing people together to enjoy
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shared spaces.

Rather than framing these sounds as intrusions, I would encourage a broader perspective: they are indicators of a thriving public space. They reflect health, recreation, culture, and community, exactly what Lithia Park was intended to support.

I invite the APR board to join me in the living room of any one of my extended family's homes adjacent to the Lithia Park to experience, hear, measure the silence of a pickleball as it strikes the paddle.

40 Granite
70 Granite
114 Granite
227 Granite (DIRECTLY across from the pickleball courts)

Contact the Parks & Recreation Commissioners

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Full Name	Kathleen Page
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Phone	
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Email	
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Subject	in support of pickleball
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Message

I'm writing in support of pickleball play in Lithia Park. I understand that some people who live near the park don't like the sound of the game. The sound produced during pickleball play is quiet enough, but it has a somewhat higher pitch as compared to tennis. I often walk along Granite Street near the courts. From there, I can hear the sound of children and adults playing pickleball and I find it delightful. It's not loud at all; it is simply the sound of people engaged in recreation. If you choose to live near a public park, you must accept that the park will not be silent. There are sounds from various events that take place there, the playground, bandshell concerts, volleyball courts, and the pickleball courts. I would like to suggest the use of noise-canceling headphones for those who are bothered by the low decibel sounds produced at the courts. There are not many places to play pickleball in Ashland, and it is an increasingly popular game. Playing pickleball promotes social connections between Ashland residents and improves fitness. It would be tragic if pickleball were banned from Lithia Park. I'm certain that there are far more Ashland residents who benefit from having pickleball courts in the park as compared to the number of residents who don't like the sound of it. The Ashland Parks and Recreation commission should prioritize parks and recreation, not peace and quiet

Contact the Parks & Recreation Commissioners

Full Name

Martha Kalin

Phone

Email

Subject

Pickleball Courts

Message

Hello,

I wanted to give my input on the issue of pickleball courts in Ashland, as I have heard there is discussion of eliminating the court at Lithia Park. I play regularly at Lithia Park, at least 3 or 4 times per week. I'm a retiree, so this is possible for me time wise, and it's one of the great joys of my life. I'm new to Ashland as of 3 years ago, and have met so many wonderful people of all walks of life at the pickleball courts. I donate to help support the courts, I help to clean off the courts on days when they are wet or icy. I bring my daughter and grandkids and their friends to learn how to play. I see so much intergenerational joy, diversity and camaraderie on the courts, something so very important in this time in the world. We share volunteer opportunities we're involved with and passions in our lives. We go for walks through the park before and after. We go to the nearby stores and restaurants. There is nothing comparable that I've encountered that is so wonderfully open and welcoming. I recognize that people also value the silence and beauty of Lithia Park and I count myself as one of these people as well. However, it would be a great tragedy to remove something so amazing and that brings so much joy as the beautiful Lithia Park Pickleball Courts. When I'm walking or sitting in the woods in a reflective mood, I love the sounds of children playing on the playground, or people playing music, or people of all ages playing pickleball. There must be ways to allow all of this to coexist in a respectful way.

Thank you for considering this,
Martha Kalin

4. Lithia Park Ice Rink Pavilion (Information) – Mark Knox Vice President of Ashland Parks Foundation

SUMMARY – The Ashland Parks Foundation Board member Mark Knox will present a progress report on the proposed Ice Rink replacement structure and ancillary buildings along with next steps.

ATTACHMENTS:

Lithia Ice Rink Pavillion Concept Plan – see packet

City of Ashland Pre-application for the Lithia Ice Rink Pavilion Concept Plan – see packet

PREPARED BY: Rachel Dials, Interim Director

Came before the Commission previously when it was announced the white tarp would be the permanent cover for the ice rink. Said we could do better as a community - Commissioners agreed.

Good stuff is happening. Formed a steering committee of people who understand land use and finance. Chose an architect, KSW, connected with a contractor for the cost estimate. Plans just came out last Friday. Going public with plans tonight. Presenting the plans to Rotary tomorrow. Want the Commission's general opinion on the plans.

Next step would be the Land use process. Will need sign off by City Manager, will hold more meetings with neighbors, planning commission, etc. Privately funded with the exception that Parks Department would take down the old cover.

Starting with light fundraising. Next they will meet in earnest with the neighbors. Could start with building the pavilion and phase in the rest. Would like to start building after end of the upcoming skating season. Will not interfere with/interrupt another skating season.

Dials: This will come back to the Commission to amend the CIP for this project.

Knox: Land use can take months. Would like to ask the Commission and City Council to be able to work through that process.

Questions/Discussion:

- Recommendation to put pictures of plans in poster form up at the rink to get people excited. Thrilling and beautiful!
- Pre App says two less parking spaces? A: Recounted today, there will be one extra spot. Footprint of the rink is the same? A: Yes, the new roof will cover more space, out to the property line. Chiller and cooling coils stay the same? A: Yes
- Ice rink coils are embedded in the parking lot, cannot be moved. Lower profile building would greatly benefit the neighborhood. Thank you for looking at the Nutley/Winburn intersection. Important to think about traffic calming there. It's way too wide.
- This will make the intersection busier, and it needs to be addressed. Space there that could be activated. Long term needs a bump out. Should be put into the transportation plan.
- Clarification that the ice rink footprint cannot be changed. The cover has to be designed around that. Lower profile (10 feet) will be a big benefit to the neighborhood.
- How about solar panels to offset some of the costs? Maybe someone would want to donate. Make sure the louvers don't make noise when it's windy.
- Could at least plumb for solar while it's being built. Conduit is inexpensive.
- Could the bathrooms be made more visible for other users?

- Will pass that along. Not sure they should represent the façade of the space. Maybe use wayfinding signage instead. Restrooms aren't a requirement but would be convenient.
- Envisioning restrooms being open seasonally and maybe for special events.

5. Park Walk Medallion in Front of Lithia Park (Action) – Mike Gardiner President Ashland Parks Foundation

SUMMARY – At the June 10th Regular Meeting, Ashland Parks Foundation (APF) President Gardiner again gave a presentation on the Park Walk Medallion. The purpose of the plaque is to recognize the volunteer efforts of all the many individuals who have led park walks in Lithia Park beginning in 1989. The medallion would be similar in size and fashion to medallions that have been placed at many locations around town identifying important local historical events (MAP Project) and the current Public Art Advisory Committee's efforts to create the Literary Walk around town.

Tom Foster, longtime volunteer with the Park Walk program, will be donating the money for the medallion to the APF and in return APF is facilitating securing the contractor to make the medallion.

The medallion will be created in bronze. If approved by the Commission the medallion will be installed by Parks staff in fall of 2026.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED – N/A

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS – The medallion will be a private donation sponsored by the APF. The Department will provide the labor and supplies to install the plaque which is within the Parks Operations budget.

PROPOSED ACTIONS OR MOTION(S) – I move to approve the design and the installation of the Park Walk Medallion in the sidewalk near the main entrance to Lithia Park.

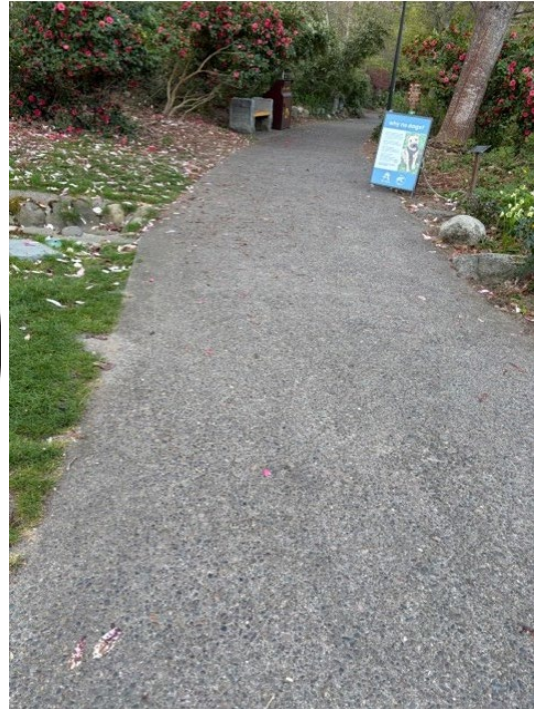
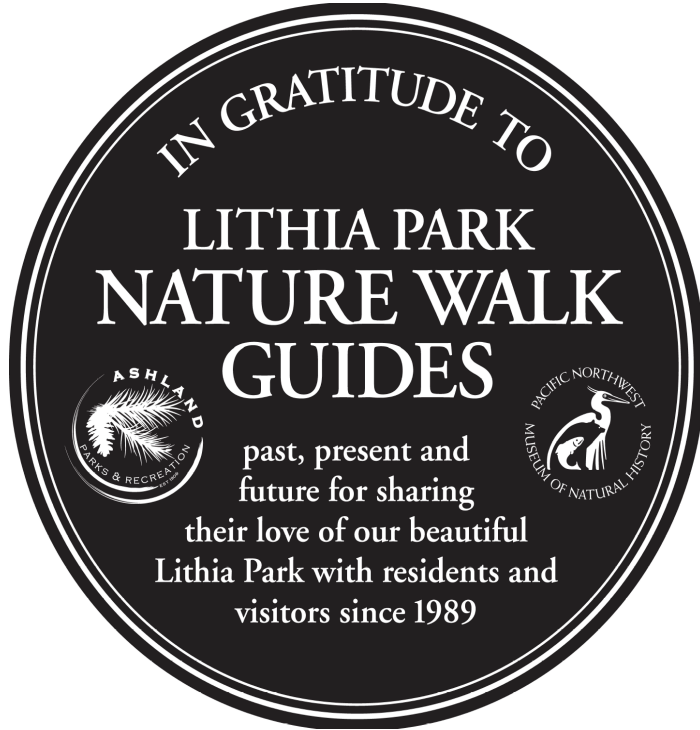
ATTACHMENTS

Picture of Location in Lithia Park

Final design artwork of medallion

PREPARED BY: Rachel Dials, Interim Director

Gardiner bringing the final medallion design back as a representative of the Ashland Parks Foundation: Employed a graphic designer to come up with several options. Presenting this rendering for approval by the Commission.



Questions/Discussion:

- How big would the medallion be? A: 18"
- Is the medallion round? A: Yes

Motion: I move to approve the design and installation of the Park Walk Medallion in the sidewalk near the main entrance to Lithia Park.

- Appreciate the opportunity to do this. Parks Department thinks they can do the installation in the fall.
- Appreciate the effort that went into this and that the medallion follows the style of other medallions around town.

Motion: Gardiner

Second: Bachman

Vote:

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

6. Lithia Park East Hillside Mt. Bike Trail Proposal Public Input Update (Information)
Interim Director Dials

SUMMARY – Update on Public Input for Lithia Park East Hillside Mountain Bike Trail.

- **Comment Period opened on the website on June 15, and comments will be received through September 3, 2026.** We have collected and filed 87 public comments that date back to 2025. There is a direct link on the main Parks and Recreation homepage that highlights the public process, ways to give input and includes a link to the trail proposal.
- **Parks Commission Study Session on August 5, 2026, at 6:00 PM in Council Chamber** where the trail proposal will be presented *only* for discussion and public comments.
- **Park Commission Regular Business** meeting September 9, 2026, at 6:00 PM in Council Chamber for potential action on proposed trail.
- **The proposed trail is now marked with biodegradable paint.** RED for the uphill section and ORANGE for downhill section. The trail crossings as of right now are marked with two lines (=). Specific signage for the trail crossings and Notice of the proposed trail will go up by July 22nd or as soon as possible.
- **Staff will coordinate with TAC to hold at least one public meeting on-site to view the trail.** That meeting is TBD. TAC will have a meeting on July 15, and this will be on the agenda for discussion.
- **Staff have viewed the full trail site.** The proposed trail traverse's rough terrain which may make it difficult for some members of the public to see the full impact. It was suggested that TAC or the proposer put together some drone footage that could be shared.

PROPOSED ACTIONS OR MOTION(S) – N/A

Information only. Staff seeking feedback.

ATTACHMENTS – N/A

Questions/Discussion:

- Is it possible for staff to take the Commissioners on the trails? Yes. Two at a time to avoid violating public meeting law.
- Could the somewhat endangered plants be marked to protect them? A: Will ask Chris Chambers.
- Thanked staff for all the work done to inform the public on the trails location.

Direction: Wait for signs to be put up then will schedule tours and will ask Chris to mark rare plants.

VIII. INTERIM DIRECTORS REPORT – Interim Director Dials



- E. Main Public Improvements starting soon
- Hunter Park Tennis Courts preconstruction mtg, next week
- OKGC Driving Range Update
- CC/PH Open House/Ribbon Cutting July 22 3:30pm-5:30pm
- Epic and AFC Concerts June 15, June 29, 3200 est total
- Tanabata Event July 11, Japanese Garden 10am-1pm
- Trails Advisory Committee Accepting applications through July 9th. Five applications received for two vacancies. ASAC, RDAC & TAC meetings next week
- LOC Training for elected officials Tuesday July 14, 3pm-5pm, Council Chamber
- 4th of July – Thank you to Parks Team for support of parade route, Lithia Park activities and Rec team for 4th Run Support. Over 600 people registered.



- GIS will do some drone footage of before and after on Hunter Tennis Courts
- Tanabata – hanging wishes on trees
- Training on July 14 is different than previous trainings.

IX. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS/STAFF – None

X. UPCOMING MEETING DATES

1. Ashland Senior Advisory Committee July 13, Senior Center 3:30 PM
2. Trails Advisory Committee July 15, the Grove 5:00 PM
3. Recreation Division Advisory Committee July 16, the Grove 3:30 PM
4. Park Commission Study Session August 5, Council Chamber 6:00 PM
5. Joint Meeting City Council/Park Commission Regular Business Meeting August 12, Council Chamber 6:00 PM

XI. ADJOURNMENT – Chair Bachman adjourned the meeting at 7:50 PM

Respectfully submitted by Nancy A. Mero, Executive Assistant

Written Public Testimony Received:

Dear Parks Commission and Department:

The ongoing problem of pickleball noise in Lithia Park has long been acknowledged by parks staff and commission:

"I have no doubt that there will be further discussions and mitigation strategies discussed in APRC going forward. I'm hopeful we can find a way to allow folks to play pickleball and also reduce/eliminate/move the damaging noise of the game for residents." APRC Commissioner (7/12/2023)

"Administratively we can lock the courts when we lock the garden each night and open them after 7am which we will be doing." Rachel Dials, Deputy Director (7/12/2023)

"The concerns that you express are shared in many communities in the face of the growing popularity of this sport." APRC Commissioner (8/1/2023)

"It is my understanding that the commissioners take this issue seriously (as do I) and that we intend to trouble shoot some of these problems (noise, hours of play, etc) in the coming months. I did want to let you know that I am aware of and concerned about the issue, and that it remains on my radar to work with residents and pickle ball players to come to some sort of mitigation actions that improve the noise concerns." APRC Commissioner (8/8/2023)

"I can understand your concern. I know the decibel level can be quite loud . I will look into what has been addressed thus far." APRC Commissioner (10/23/2023)

It has been three years since I received these messages, and still no meaningful efforts have been made to address the problem. Please consider adopting some real noise-mitigation strategies at your next business meeting on July 8, 2026. Thank you.

Respectfully,
Andrea Weiner

Trusting you each will evaluate a new proposed trail within Lithia Park, I'm respectfully asking for your time to read my reasoning behind my objection to this trail.

Over the many years, the trails within Lithia Park have been used by hikers only, many Seniors, some with disabilities without the fear of fast moving bikes, and some heavy E bikes that have currently poached onto this pristine hillside.

The new proposed trail would cross these long time existing hiking trails eight (8) different times. This would eliminate the ability for myself, and the many others to hike these trails without the fear, of fast moving bikes. This was the reasoning behind at least four signs along Glenview, stating NO BIKES.. at the entrance of each hiking trail. These hiking only trails are currently being poached by bikes. Commissioner Adams along with RVMBA may have not taken this into consideration before proposing this bike trail.

Their proposal for a low angle, adaptive and beginner friendly mountain bike trail stated as "needed" for the youth to learn the skills before riding the 53 miles or so, currently in our watershed and beyond. This is a "want"...not a "need!"

Let's not forget RVMBA was behind the E. Main St. Park, with a promise of \$150,000 towards a pump track. This is a huge \$5.5 mil investment for the people of Ashland and we also have a BMX type track near the dog park. Both of which could be used for beginner bikers. Some trails in the watershed were listed as beginner...and later changed to intermediate?? Now Madrone Ridge is on the horizon with 2000 acres and

more bike trails!

Some maintain that this new trail would provide a second route into the downtown area.

However, they do not address that these young beginners and other bikers coming down the steep grade of Pioneer St, are directed into the area of OSF, Green Show and theaters! The grade of Pioneer St, 10-12% steeper than some of the trails in the watershed, (Caterpillar 7.5% and Jabberwocky at 9.5%)..and also has a crosswalk and a STOP light at Main St.a very busy area.

I question the ability of both the beginners and all bikers to navigate this area safely and the quick reaction for a red light?

This highly congested area brings tourist and locals alike to the renowned Shakespeare Festival, from all over the world, that contribute bigly to Ashland's economy, many, staying in a high and hotels, eating in high-end restaurants, shopping locally, and longer stays,as was stated by Travel Ashland at a recent council meeting.

Bikers and E-Bikes will never stop using the thrill of Winburn Way with a speed limit of 15 mph, and by routing some of the bikers onto Pioneer especially the young and inexperienced, and obstacles, will now present two (2) areas of conflict between bikes, pedestrians, and cars!

RVMBAs has provided many wonderful trails throughout our valley, Thanks... but NONE ...into a town center and our loved ..
...Crown Jewel Lithia Park!

Both RVMBAs and DEVOS have called on bikers everywhere to email the parks to make their voices heard and have provided sample letters. Some who may never ride the proposed trail will respond.

I trust your judgment that you will not rely on the number of emails alone.

How many towns can boast of a beautiful park such as Lithia Pk, only a few steps away from the busy hub-bub of the downtown area where one can escape into this natural area, take a lunch break, hike the pristine hillside, hear the birds, the sounds of a babbling creek, meditate and experience, the calm beauty that Lithia Pk provides. And share the wildlife, that seek refuge too?

Please note that once carving into this hillside, disturbing the natural flora, fauna and small trees with a machine, will ..forever disturb this natural area that lies within the boundaries of our park.

Please evaluate this proposed trail and just say No ..to bike trails, with in the boundaries of our Crown Jewel.. Lithia Park. 🌲

Thank you for reading, Respectfully, Nancy K Boyer