

ASHLAND CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING DRAFT MINUTES

Tuesday, April 6, 2021

Held Electronically; View on Channel 9 or Channels 180 and 181 (Charter Communications) or live stream via rvtv.sou.edu select RVTV Prime.

Written and oral testimony will be accepted for public input. For written testimony, email public-testimony@ashland.or.us using the subject line: April 6 Business Meeting Testimony.

For oral testimony, fill out a Speaker Request Form at ashland.or.us/speakerrequest and return it to the City Recorder. The deadline for submitting written testimony or speaker request forms will be on Monday, April 5 at 10 a.m. and must comply with Council Rules to be accepted.

Note: Items on the Agenda not considered due to time constraints are automatically continued to the next regularly scheduled Council meeting [AMC 2.04.030.E.]

6:00 PM REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Akins called the Business Meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilor Jensen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. ROLL CALL

Councilors' Hyatt, Graham, Moran, Seffinger DuQuenne and Jensen were present.

IV. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Study Session of March 15, 2021
2. Business Meeting of March 16, 2021

Jensen/Hyatt moved to approve the Minutes. Discussion: None. **All Ayes. Motion passed unanimously.**

VI. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS & AWARDS

VII. MINUTES OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES

Airport	Budget	Conservation
Historic	Housing and Human Svcs.	Parks & Recreation
Forest Lands	Climate Policy	Cost Review
Planning	Public Arts	Transportation
Tree	Wildfire Mitigation	

VIII. PUBLIC FORUM

Business from the audience not included on the agenda. The Mayor will set time limits to enable all people wishing to speak to complete their testimony. [15 minutes maximum]

See note above for how to submit testimony for Public Forum.

Submitted Written Public Testimony (*see attached*).

Emily Simon – Ashland – Thanked Council on being able to address issues on racial justice. She urged Council to have an offline meeting prior to the Public session to determine what can be ironed out beforehand so the issue can move forward as quickly as possible.

Marni Koopman – Ashland – Spoke regarding CEAP. She spoke regarding the Climate Impact Policy. She spoke that the Commission is white males of 40-50 and recommends. She recommended that the Commission starts over and starts with diversity.

Mark Kraus – Ashland – Spoke regarding the Children’s World Montessori. He spoke to the importance of the school and urged the City to not remove.

Hazel Adams- Ashland – Spoke regarding the Children’s World Montessori and the importance in keeping it.

Mayor Akins spoke regarding the Children’s World Montessori. Mayor Akins explained that the Council is a public body and anyone can come and talk about anything, but pointed out that this is not the governing body regarding the school property that would be the School Board. Regardless the Council is happy to hear all comments.

Peter Jensen – Ashland – Spoke regarding the Children’s World Montessori. He spoke to not rid of this school. He spoke in concern of Community wide issues and limited childcare.

Karolina Lavagnino – Ashland – Spoke regarding the Children’s World Montessori. She spoke that without this space it will be detrimental to the Community. She spoke that it is crucial to have this space and if not possible to keep this space to find a space similar.

Michelle Keller – Ashland - Spoke as a representative of the Children’s World Montessori. She spoke that she has been a caretaker for 24 years. She spoke that a space is very much needed. Childcare is an essential service. She spoke that without the space it will affect the Community.

Kristen Roy – Ashland – Spoke regarding the Children’s World Montessori and the need of this School. She spoke to the importance of childcare. She spoke in response to Mayor Akins statement that this item does not fall in the jurisdiction of the Council and spoke that this does not fall in the jurisdiction of the School Board either so where does it fall? She spoke that her testimony is a call to action.

IX. CITY MANAGER REPORT

City Manager Pro-Tem Adam Hanks gave the City Manager Report (*see attached*).

X. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Liquor License for Osteria La Briccola
2. Approval of Liquor License for House of Thai Cuisine
3. Approval of Liquor License for Local 31 Pub

4. Approval of Liquor License for Chozu Bath and Tea Garden
5. Approval of Liquor License for Sammich
6. Approval of Liquor License for Wild Goose
7. Approval of Liquor License for Mary's BBQ
8. Appointment of John Scarborough to the Wildfire Safety Commission
9. Appointment of Leda Shapiro to the Housing and Human Services Commission
10. Appointment of Destiny Young to the Public Arts Commission
11. Appointment of System Development Charge Committee Members

Hyatt/Moran moved to approve Consent Items 1-11. Discussion: None. All Ayes. Motion passed unanimously.

12. Confirmation of the Appointment of William E. Schireman as Municipal Judge Pro Tempore

Moran pulled this item. Moran questioned the days of week that the Court is open. Human Resource Director Tina Gray answered it is open 4 days a week. Monday – Thursday. Gray explained that the pro-tem would only be used in an emergence.

13. Pre-Approval of a Federal Aviation Administration Grant Offer & Critical Care Airport Relief Grant Offer

Moran pulled this item.

Public Works Director Scott Fleury gave a Staff report.

Moran/Graham moved to approve Consent Items 12 & 13. Discussion: None. All Ayes. Motion passed unanimously.

14. Approval of a Two-Year Contract Extension with TriStar Risk Management for Third-Party Administration of Workers' Compensation Claims

Gray gave a Staff report.

Council discussed bringing back comparative data.

Graham/Hyatt moved to approve Item 14. Discussion: DuQuenne spoke that she would like to have options to come back to Council. Comparative data was requested. Gray explained that a mini-bid would have to happen. Hanks explained that this request is a special procurement that requires Council approval. The intent to bring it to Council was not to go through a full bid process because we are looking at extension for a short period of time. Hyatt questioned the timeframe of the extension. Gray spoke that the existing amendment ends June 30th. Council discussed movement of claims. Gray explained that if there are no claims then the City does not have to pay anything and the City will do their part to reduce claim. City Attorney David Lohman spoke that historically the City has saved a lot of money using TriStar as opposed to going to other sources. Graham spoke regarding saving money which doesn't look likely. She spoke that we are still in a state of emergency and Staff is thin. She spoke in support of the motion. **Roll Call Vote: Jensen, DuQuenne, Seffinger, Moran, Hyatt and Graham: YES. Motion passed unanimously.**

XI. PUBLIC HEARINGS

Persons wishing to speak are to submit a "speaker request form" prior to the commencement of the public hearing. Public hearings conclude at 8:00 p.m. and are

continued to a future date to be set by the Council, unless the Council, by a two-thirds vote of those present, extends the hearing(s) until up to 9:30 p.m. at which time the Council shall set a date for continuance and shall proceed with the balance of the agenda.

XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Consideration of Small Business Grants offered by the City of Ashland

Hanks gave a brief Staff report.

Council discussed how to get small business back on their feet.

Hanks explained TOT funds.

Hyatt suggested reaching out to RVCOG and SOREDI for options and information.

Council discussed grant options.

Council discussed the Business Development Program.

Council discussed employment development and steps to help the business community.

Hanks spoke that tourism is picking up.

Seffinger spoke to the importance of employment development.

Moran spoke on the importance of focusing on outcomes and results.

Graham spoke regarding essential services and ways to navigate and support local businesses.

Council discussed options on how to move forward on helping businesses.

Council decided to have a Study Session to discuss this item further.

XIII. NEW AND MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

1. Review of City Assets: Land and Structure Inventory

Hanks gave a brief Staff report and introduced Public Works Director Scott Fleury.

Fleury went over a PowerPoint Presentation (*see attached*).

Items discussed were:

- Properties with surplus potential.
- North Mountain Avenue.
- 380 Clay Street.
- East Main Street Parking.
- B Street Yard.
- Hardesty Property 1291 Oak Street.
- Imperatrice Property.

Council discussed the budget process with this item.

DuQuenne questioned the tree on Hanks spoke regarding 380 Clay Street and the tree. She suggested to look at Jackson County Housing Authority to purchase the property. Hanks spoke that they were not interested in purchasing the property.

Jensen suggested for Council to bring back information on the process that is needed to go

through regarding the options of removal or movements of the house and tree.

Seffinger spoke regarding the concept of how to revitalize Ashland in the most effective way.

Hyatt spoke regarding Clay Street property pit well. And questioned if it hooked into City services and would it affect the sale. Fleury spoke that this item would have to be mitigated during the transaction.

Hanks explained the options regarding converting the properties to affordable housing.

Graham/Hyatt moved to declare tax lot 391E09BC 201 as surplus and direct Staff to complete the disposal process. Discussion: Graham spoke that this is the surplus property piece in the downtown that has limited options. She spoke that it seems appropriate to declare and surplus and have staff dispose of it for the highest value possible. Hyatt agreed with Graham. **Roll Call Vote: Hyatt, DuQuenne, Seffinger, Graham, Moran and Jensen: YES. Motion passed unanimously.**

Graham/Hyatt moved to direct Staff to investigate the possibilities for disposal for the already declared surplus properties located at 380 Clay Street and 900 block of North Mountain Avenue; specifically, to help the community move forward with our housing and childcare issues. Discussion: Graham spoke to the importance to look at ways to leverage properties to move forward. She spoke that childcare will come up during strategic planning and that it will be good to go over options. Hyatt spoke that Staff has been progressive in reaching out to the community with Budget surveys. She spoke that information that has come back is affordable housing. She spoke that it is challenging and these properties give the City an opportunity to look at our Community's values and how these properties will be able to support those values and Community needs. She spoke in support to the motion. She spoke to the importance of childcare. Seffinger spoke to the importance of good childcare. Jensen questioned the timeline. Hanks answered an estimated 2 months. **Roll Call Vote: Hyatt, Graham, Jensen, Moran, DuQuenne and Seffinger: YES. Motion passed unanimously.**

XIV. ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND CONTRACTS

XV. OTHER BUSINESS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS/REPORTS FROM COUNCIL LIAISONS

Graham spoke that there will be a Wildfire Safety Campaign has 4 months of different themes: April – Hardening your home. May – Firewise Landscaping. June - Preparing to Evacuate. July - Preparing for Wildfire Smoke. Citizens can find more information at fireadaptedashland.org.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT OF BUSINESS MEETING

The Council Business Meeting was adjourned at 9:09 PM

Respectfully submitted by:

City Recorder Melissa Huhtala

Attest:

Mayor Akins

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Manager's office at (541) 488-6002 (TTY phone number 1-800-735-2900). Notification 72 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title I).

Public Testimony 04/06/21

Public Testimony #1

Parks' Senior Program and the City (City Attorney, Risk Management) have made unrealistic demands on the foot care clinic at the Senior Center resulting in the end of the vital program for older seniors. Refer to Susanne Severeid's Ashland Chronicle article for key facts: <https://theashlandchronicle.com/did-the-city-give-the-senior-foot-clinic-the-boot-by-susanne-severeid/>

This is unacceptable and must be addressed by the City Council. Many seniors move to Ashland for retirement and are a significant part of Ashland's economy and volunteer base. Ashland should not abandon them when, in their later years, they become most in need.

The isolation that we have all felt during the pandemic is what many older seniors experience in normal times. The isolation harms the ability to get the ongoing services that they need including healthcare. With services like the sewing assistance and now the foot care gone (and what else we don't know about?), the senior program is shutting out the needs of those seniors.

The City and Parks should do all it can to continue the foot care program rather than setting up roadblocks to stop it. It does not take money (since it is self supporting, and helps build participation at the Senior Center), it takes decency.

As always, Mayor Akins, thank you for listening. I have confidence that you will do what you can.

Sue Wilson
1056 Dead Indian Memorial Road
Ashland, Oregon
Dear members of the Ashland City Council,

Public Testimony #2

I am writing to express my concern about the loss of space for critical child care services, and to urge the Council to work with the Ashland School District to support efforts to ensure the important resource that is Children's World Montessori remains available for Ashland families. They have been asked to vacate their current space at Lincoln School to accommodate K-12 students next fall.

I understand and empathize with the plight of the school district to find a COVID-compliant solution for K-12th graders (we also have a child in that system). Yet it's important to consider the broader care and educational infrastructure and pipeline, to include early childhood education and children 0-5. Children's World is one of few educational facilities providing full-time care and support to children 5 and under in Ashland, and losing that space is a blow to Ashland's ability to maintain and support families with young children.

I want to encourage the Council to partner with the School District in ensuring that Children's World is able to continue providing critical care for Ashland's families by helping find and procure suitable space to care for the next generation.

Please feel free to contact me.

In community,
Brian Stout, parent to children in pre-K and kindergarten

Public Testimony #3

To whom it may concern,

This letter is in support of Children's World Montessori and to object to their upcoming displacement from their current location.

My family and I moved to Ashland in 2018 looking for a better quality of life to include a safe and enriching place to raise our children. Before we moved I made it my top priority to find childcare first - not housing, not a job - knowing that quality childcare is hard to find throughout the state. We were lucky enough to get a spot for our oldest son, then three years old, at Children's World Montessori. The staff and facilities at Children's World have been absolutely wonderful. They are caring, supportive and safe in a way I have not experienced at other locations. Being new to the area, Children's World helped us build our community.

During the COVID pandemic our oldest, now 6, is back at Children's World where they help him to participate in virtual kindergarten and provide childcare while my husband and I work. They have managed to be available for our family and our community in a way that public school has not.

We have two additional children, ages 1 and 3, that have been eagerly awaiting their turn to be a part of Children's World next year. Finding childcare for younger ages is even more difficult than finding pre-school education, and as far as I know, Children's World has the only formal toddler program in the city.

It is well documented that early childhood education, i.e. the period of time from birth to when a child enters kindergarten, is incredibly important for not only basic cognitive skills, but also to teach social and emotional skills including how to interact with peers, teachers, and other adults. Children's World and their method of education excels at this. In this era of increasing rates of mental illness these skills are paramount.

I am a physician assistant providing primary care to under and uninsured patients in a federally qualified health care center. I see first hand the high burden of mental illness, substance use disorders, and maladaptive coping behaviors that plague our society. I see what incredible stress the COVID pandemic, school closures and lack of childcare has placed on individuals and families. I want to keep working and supporting our community, and I also want to know my children are being well cared for and learning important life skills.

For all of the above reasons I would ask the responsible parties to pursue any and all options that would allow Children's World to stay at their current location or assist in finding an alternative location so that they may operate next year and for many years thereafter. Our kids and our community depend on them!

Thank you for your consideration,

Anna Olsen, PA-C

Public Testimony #4

Hello,

I am a resident of Mt. Ashland access road and my daily commute is affected once more by the closures on I5's exit 6. I would like to know what can be to open the exits for highway 99 and Ski road residents.

This is a costly inconvenience.

Thank you,

Stephanie Langhorne

Public Testimony #5

To whom it may concern,

My name is Hazel Adams. I'm a Toddler Teacher in Children's World Montessori in Ashland. This is my very first school here in United States. I was provided the opportunity to work in the Toddler Site at North Main Street in Ashland. I had only work there for a year because we were forced to relocate due to the property owner's expanding needs. This moved 2 classes into the Lincoln Elementary building where we were forced to share a single classroom due to limited space. This will be the second time Children's World has been asked to pack up and leave.

While we can certainly understand the space needs of the district currently, I do not feel that this justifies the disruption of so many jobs and lives that we try so hard to preserve in this community. I'm grateful to have served the families and children in this community for the last 3 years. Although, I'm new here, I've witnessed how Children's World has helped transform so many lives in different ways.

I hope a mutually beneficial arrangement can be found to avoid the closure of such a fine and deserving institution as Children's World.

Thank you very much for your consideration in this matter.

Cordially,

Hazel Adams

Public Testimony #6

Greetings all:

On behalf of lawyers for justice, Attached please find the completed City Council Speaker Request Form to speak on April 6, 2021. As neither the Racial Justice Commission (RJC) nor the Resolution appear to be on the agenda until April 20, 2021, I believe that my comments would be most appropriate during the public Forum portion of the meeting. I would also request that this email be considered as written testimony in support of my oral comments during the meeting.

I anticipate that my comments will be quite short on Tuesday evening, and I am very hopeful that as many issues as possible regarding the RJC can be ironed out prior to the meeting on April 20, 2021 so that the time devoted to the issue at the meeting on the 20th is productive and focused. It would help me greatly in preparing any anticipated testimony for that evening to obtain a copy of the proposed ordinance creating the RJC in advance so that I too can tailor my remarks. The need for an equity lens, and a commission tasked with seeing the world through that lens, should be viewed as helpful to the City Council in examining issues as diverse as the budget, the unhoused and police enforcement. While I was glad to see that the APD is currently not requesting a continuation of Ordinance 3176, I would like to remind the Council that “stop and identify” can look and feel very different depending upon the color of one’s skin.

I would appreciate knowing that the speakers request has been received in a timely fashion, and that I will have an opportunity to speak during public forum, and that this email will be considered written testimony in support of my oral comments.

Thank you again,

Emily Simon
Attorney at Law

Public Testimony #7

Dear the Ashland Climate Policy Commission,

Thank you for organizing together in order to facilitate a future of climate justice for our communities. I appreciate your effort in bettering the future of Ashland through effective climate policy. However, it has come to my attention that the commission’s members all identify as white men. While there is absolutely no problem with white men participating in climate policy, the problem arises when no one else is represented. Without the input of people who have experienced discrimination such as racism and sexism as a result of climate change, we will not be able to make the right decisions about climate policy that will insure not only a future of environmental justice but also a future of social equity. It is extremely important that marginalized communities are given a voice when it comes to climate policy, as they are often the ones most affected by its impacts. We need to create a future that has the best interest of all people, including those in marginalized communities, in mind. In order to do so, we need more representation of women and people of color on the climate commission. I strongly encourage you to re-elect the members to better represent our communities.

Thank you,
Sage Reddish

Public Testimony #8

Dear City Councilors and Mayor Akins-

As most of you know, I'm a climate change scientist who served on the Ad Hoc committee for developing Ashland's Climate and Energy Action Plan, also called the CEAP. In this plan, there are 2 important responses to climate change.

(1) The first is MITIGATION, which is the reduction of greenhouse gases by 8% per year, on average. These emissions come from driving our cars, heating our homes, and buying food and other things.

(2) The second is ADAPTATION, which is protecting the people and resources that are most vulnerable to climate change impacts. These include water, our forests, and many different populations most affected by heat waves, wildfires, drought, floods, and other extreme conditions.

Our climate plan isn't a plan for today's residents. It is a plan that allows a livable future for young people. The youth of Ashland filled Council chambers and the overflow room on the night that the plan and Climate Recovery Ordinance were debated and passed. They made important demands, which the City met. These included an ordinance to enforce the plan, science-based targets, and a Commission to oversee implementation and ensure it is both EFFECTIVE and EQUITABLE.

The plan itself calls for equity on gender, race, age, and economic status.

The Climate Policy Commission (CPC) was created to ensure that the people and resources most vulnerable to climate impacts are benefitted by the CEAP. This very important Commission exists because the youth of Ashland demanded it for accountability.

Currently, this brand new Commission is made up entirely of white men over the age of 40 or 50. A commission tasked with climate equity across gender, age, income, mobility, race, and other factors is made up entirely of older white males. I realize and appreciate that there are conversations happening about the need for diversity. That does not change the makeup of this vital Commission.

I am asking that we start over and appoint new Commissioners to the Climate Policy Commission. My recommendation, as I made clear when the plan was being developed, is that the Commission give younger people both leadership and power. The CEAP determines their future. The Commission must also have representation from diverse residents of Ashland, including those with disabilities, people of color, working families, local businesses, and others. The Commission must also have ecological knowledge on the natural systems and resources so vital to Ashland.

I want to caution you to please NOT do the following – please do not appoint a few token women or young people or people of color to the Commission as it exists today. I would not serve on such a commission because the relationships, culture, and power structure is already in place.

This request in no way reflects a lack of respect for the current Climate Policy Commissioners, who are knowledgeable and dedicated residents of Ashland. Their continued engagement and leadership is needed. There are many different roles that would allow us to continue to benefit from their expertise. I have complete confidence that the City can craft a way to continue to have their guidance and expertise.

Thank you for your very hard work, dedication and continued leadership.

Sincerely,

Marni Koopman, Ph.D.

Climate Change Scientist

For more information on climate risks and vulnerabilities in Ashland, please visit the following page and download the Vulnerability Assessment completed in 2016

<https://www.climatewise.org/projects/1248-ashland-oregon>

Public Testimony #9

To: Mayor Julie Anne Akins and Council Members of the City of Ashland
Re: Community Support /Awareness / Young Children Advocacy Statement

April 5, 2021, Ashland, Oregon.

Dear Council members, Madam Mayor,

I would like to thank you all for your service, for your endless volunteer hours to better our community.

At the present time when life is asking everything we have to give, and our resources and efforts appear as not enough something happens that threatens the livelihood of many. We might think this is NOT our problem, yet we are all connected here, inevitably.

Ashland has attracted many by its beauty, culture, compassion and sense of community. This beautiful “Green Bubble” might be commencing to fail to protect those who need us the most at this time of peril. In this case I am speaking for the young children. The children of some professors at SOU, the children of healthcare professionals, the children of teachers in the Ashland School district, the children of a fire fighter, children of a single mother trying to make life work, children of the Alameda fire survivors, the grandchild of a CDC official in Jackson county and even the grandchild of a former city administrator (also former firefighter). I am

mentioning this because all these families are connected by Children's World Montessori Toddler and Preschool Program- a lovely little center that cares for these children from 18 months to 6 years. It has served 100 or more families in a regular year for the last 30 plus years. I am speaking on behalf of these children and their families who are now wondering where their children will be come July, as Children's World has been asked to vacate this summer from their current site, the site that so graciously was leased to CW by the School District for many years. Also I am speaking on behalf of the 30 employees (including myself), my colleagues whose lives now face uncertainty and once again for one of our teachers who has survived the Alameda fire. This is a place that has been all inclusive since its beginning. I have worked for it since 2009. they are my family.

We can say that no one is at fault here, true, however it faces us as a community with the reality that we are NOT enough, or are we? Can the City facilitate a land or building for this program to survive? In the last couple of weeks many locations have been explored, unsuccessfully. Can you kindly reflect on the possibility of the impact that this might cause to the families who live here? Can we work together? Can we build that bridge that until now has been disregarded? The social change in this "Green Bubble" is in your hands. Thank you kindly for your time.

Sincerely Yours,

Ana Maria Luisa Guzman-Witt (Ana Witt)

Public Testimony #10

Hello Melissa,

I realized I had emailed the wrong address in regards to me speaking at tonight's meeting. If I'm still able to that would be great. If not, here is my message to the council just in case.

"Good Evening to the Ashland City Council.

Thank you for allowing me the time to speak.

My name is Jason Croft and I am here to advocate for your assistance in finding Children's World a new home and to address the critical issue of child care in our town.

I have two sons ages 4 and 1. When we began looking for child care three years ago we realized how few options were available to us in Ashland. Day care waiting lists were so full we would be the 25th family in line or not even to get on waiting lists. We were beyond fortunate to have our oldest child admitted into Children's World. Additionally, we are planning for our youngest son to start there as well this fall.

With the sudden relocation of Children's World we feel like we are potentially back to square one now and again we are finding there are no other options in Ashland. We are at the point where we will have to start looking at Medford. After the Alameda fire last year the idea of putting that distance between us and our kids, not to mention a likely drop in quality of care and education, makes this a less than ideal option.

When I first moved to Ashland 19 years ago there were five public elementary schools and now only three still operate. Now with the limited child care options this city must make the decision to better invest in its youth. It is already hard to afford living here with the number of retirees relocating and changing the economy. With no child care options in town, I ask, what is to motivate a young family to move or stay here?

My wife and I are both working parents and Children's World provides us the opportunity to continue our careers while our sons receive the attention and development they need at this time. If we were forced to hire a nanny the costs associated would be significantly higher than what we pay now and they wouldn't be socializing and growing with friends like they are able to now.

This is the case for not just us but many families in this town. I ask that you please do everything within your power to find Children's World a new home for this next school year. Thank you."

Best Regards,

Jason

April 6, 2021

The City Manager's Report showcases current events facing the City externally and internally since the last Council meeting, while highlighting City accomplishments.

600 Air Purifiers Provided for Ashland Community Members Most in Need Since July 2020

In a team effort lead by Ashland Fire & Rescue and with extensive partnerships in the community, the Wildfire Division has distributed 600 air purifiers to date for community members most in need of relief from smoke. The Residential Air Purifier Program funded by a grant from the Oregon DEQ is the largest purifier program of its kind in the country. Addressing smoke education and providing the needed technology was an opportunity for community cooperation and partnerships during a challenging time for everyone. Several different departments across the City helped in the effort:

- Thank you to the electric department for storing the purifiers!
- The Senior Center staff reached out to adults over 65 who are vulnerable to smoke, thank you!
- CERT Volunteers and Terri Stewart were available to distribute the purifiers during COVID safe curbside pickups and the Fire Union delivered air purifiers – you are amazing!
- Chamber of Commerce, Ashland YMCA, Ashland School District, Options for Helping Residents of Ashland (OHRA), Asante Community Hospital, local childcare centers, retirement communities and many more made the program successful, thank you!

For our community members over 65, under 15 years old and for some who have life threatening heart and lung problems, COPD or asthma – receiving the free air purifier through the program has been a relief they otherwise could not afford.

Affordable Housing Development – Columbia Care

The Community Development Department just issued a building permit for Columbia Care's "Rogue Ridge". This affordable housing project will comprise 30 multi-family dwelling units including one resident manager's unit, and 29 affordable housing units in a 26,000 square foot, three-story building in two connected wings. Rogue Ridge is consistent with Columbia Care's goals as an agency to provide safe and stable affordable housing with the necessary services and support that assist individuals to live successfully in the community.

In 2018, the project received \$300,000 from the City's affordable housing trust fund to assist with land purchasing costs. Additionally, the City waived an additional \$470,000 in permit fees to assist with the construction of the needed affordable housing. The building will be constructed off Ashland Street on the property behind Rogue Credit Union.



Housing Survey

The City of Ashland is undertaking a Housing Capacity Analysis (HCA) to better understand and address the community's housing needs. This study will look at what housing types are needed to meet the needs of residents at all income levels over a 20-year period (2021 to 2041). Information about the Housing Capacity Analysis and public meeting announcements can be found online at www.ashland.or.us/HCA2021.

Due to limitations on public gatherings, Community Development staff and EcoNorthwest, the State funded consultant for undertaking the HCA, are presenting information about Ashland's housing market, how it has changed, and how it will continue to evolve, through an online virtual open house. This online forum includes a series of questions allowing participants to provide input on their housing preferences and on potential strategies to address Ashland's unmet housing needs. This feedback will assist elected and appointed officials in identifying strategies and actions that are supported by the community. The Virtual Open House will run from April 1 through April 16, 2021 and can be accessed by going to ashland.or.us/engage and selecting [The Future of Housing in Ashland: Virtual Open House](#) topic.

2020 Certificate of Excellence in Electric Reliability

Our Electric Utility has received national recognition for achieving exceptional electric reliability in 2020. The recognition comes from the American Public Power Association (APPA), a trade group that represents more than 2,000 not-for-profit, community-owned electric utilities. The Electric Utility has received this recognition in 2015, 2016, 2018, and 2019.

According to a national comparison by the Energy Information Administration (EIA), City of Ashland Electric Utility is in the top quartile (25%) of utilities for System Average Interruption Duration Index (SAIDI) based on the EIA data in 2015 - 2019, thereby qualifying for the 2020 Certificate of Excellence in Reliability.

APPA helps electric utilities track power outage and restoration data through its subscription-based eReliability Tracker service. Once per year, APPA's Reliability Team compares this data to national statistics tracked by the U.S. Energy Information Administration for all types of electric utilities.

Looking Ahead

This is a draft of the next Council meetings agenda and is subject to change.

April 19 - Study Session

- Water Treatment Plant Envision Program Update

April 6 - Business Meeting

- Annual Commission Reappointments
- Approval of Public Art in Railroad Park
- Acceptance of a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Plan for the Ashland Municipal Airport
- Public Hearing for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Awards
- Approval of a Professional Services Contract for Improvements to the Community Center and Pioneer Hall
- Social Equity and Racial Justice Resolution Council Discussion and Action Identification
- First Reading of Social Equity and Racial Justice Commission Ordinance
- First Reading of the Food & Beverage Tax Allocation Ordinance

For the full look ahead and descriptions of each item, go to [ashland.or.us/lookahead](https://www.ashland.or.us/lookahead).

April City Source

This month's edition of the City Source includes an article on the recommended budget, information on the COVID-19 pandemic, a reminder to prevent digging accidents by calling 811, how to keep Ashland safe with weed abatement, the APRC Summer Community Playguide, the Wildfire Safety Campaign, controlled burn information, the Adapt Your Home Campaign and call for climate action stories, events, and the City Calendar for May.

Go to [ashland.or.us/citysource](https://www.ashland.or.us/citysource) for the latest and past editions.

