



**ASHLAND PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
ASHLAND SENIOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ASAC)
MEETING AGENDA**

Monday, January 8, 2024 @ 3:30 – 5:00 pm

Virtual Meeting on Zoom Platform

To join meeting or give public input, see instructions on page 2.

- I. Opening (Gardiner, 1 min)
- II. Approval of Minutes – November 13, 2023 (all, 2 min)
- III. Additions or Deletions to the Agenda (all, 2 min)
- IV. Public Input (5 min) - *See page 2 for instructions.*
- V. Community Volunteer Network: services and volunteer opportunities for seniors
– Cassie Rose, Executive Director (30 minutes)
- VI. Standing Reports (25 min)
 - a. APRC Liaison (Bachman)
 - b. City Council Liaison (Kaplan)
 - c. Education Report (Holt)
 - d. Senior Services Superintendent Report (Mettler)
- VII. Items from ASAC Members or Work Groups (15 min)
 - a. Livable Ashland Alliance update (Bellegia)
 - b. Other items from ASAC members? (All)
- VIII. Next Meeting: Monday, March 11, 3:30-5:00pm, at Ashland Senior Center, 1699 Homes Ave
- IX. Adjournment – 5:00pm

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Administrator'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).

TO ATTEND THE MEETING:

If you wish to virtually attend an Ashland Senior Advisory Committee meeting, send an email to natalie.mettler@ashland.or.us, no later than by 10:00 a.m. on the day of the meeting. Please provide the following information, then staff will send you the link and/or phone codes:

- 1) Write "ASAC Participation Request" in the subject line of the email.
- 2) Include your name.
- 3) Specify the date of the meeting you wish to virtually attend or listen to.
- 4) Specify whether you will be participating by computer or telephone.
- 5) Provide the name you will use if participating by computer, or the telephone number you will use if participating by telephone.

TO GIVE PUBLIC INPUT IN THE MEETING:

If you would like to give public input for the meeting, please submit your written comments or a request to speak to natalie.mettler@ashland.or.us, no later than by 10:00 a.m. on the day of the meeting. Please include the information above plus the topic you would like to speak on. For oral comments, you will be invited to unmute and speak during the Public Input portion of the agenda.

City of Ashland
ASHLAND PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION (APRC)
ASHLAND SENIOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ASAC)
Meeting Minutes
November 13, 2023

Committee Members Present:

- Anne Bellegia
- John Engelhardt
- Cori Frank
- Mike Gardiner, Chair
- Debra Johnson, Vice Chair
- Noriko Toyokawa
- Patty Winner

Committee Members Absent:

- Jim Bachman
- Bob Kaplan

Staff Present:

- Leslie Eldridge
- Isleen Glatt
- Natalie Mettler

CALL TO ORDER

Gardiner called the meeting to order at 3:30pm.

OPENING

Glatt welcomed Interim Director Eldridge and Gardiner invited ASAC members to introduce themselves for her benefit.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Engelhardt asked for clarification on the following items from the September 9 meeting minutes:

- Is OHRA a “no barrier” shelter?
Staff clarified that OHRA’s Resource Center is “no barrier” and Shelter is “low barrier.”
- Are all ten of the OHRA Resource Navigators bilingual and bicultural?
The minutes reflect what was reported by OHRA Executive Director Cass Sinclair. Staff will check with Sinclair about the actual bilingual status of OHRA Navigators.
- OLLI community education series was in October, not November.

Motion: Engelhardt/Bellegia m/s to approve the minutes from September 9, 2023 with the above corrections.
Voice vote – all AYES. Minutes approved.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA

None.

PUBLIC INPUT

None.

ROGUE VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (RVCOG) SENIOR & DISABILITY SERVICES (SDS)

Connie Wilkerson, Director of RVCOG SDS, presented on SDS programs and services for older adults and adults with disabilities. See [presentation slides](#).

The following was covered in discussion:

- RVCOG SDS provides some grant funding to Rebuilding Together Rogue Valley to cover the cost of labor and materials for home modifications such as grab bars.

- There is a shortage of beds and staff in both adult foster homes and long term care facilities. The Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) Aging and People with Disabilities (APD) office works directly with adult foster homes to place people.
- RVCOG SDS and APRC SSD collaborate in many ways, including: SSD referring client to SDS programs, Ashland Senior Center serving as a Food & Friends meal site, SSD staff serving on the RVCOG Senior Advisory Council.
- RVCOG SDS was contracted to provide referral services during the 2017-18 transition of Ashland Senior Program to Ashland Senior Services Division.
- Typical referrals from SSD to SDS include: Options Counseling, Food & Friends, mental health programs, caregiver resources. In addition, federal funding from the Older Americans Act is funneled through RVCOG SDS to other local agencies to which SSD refers clients, including: Center for Non-Profit Legal Services, Rebuilding Together Rogue Valley, Call-A-Ride.
- Funding for RVCOG SDS's Options Counseling is pulled from a variety of sources, to ensure the continuity of this critical service. SSD is interested in advocating to increase capacity for Options Counseling.

CONVERSATION CLUSTERS PROJECT

Superintendent Glatt presented on the Conversation Clusters Demonstration Project. See [presentation slides](#). Glatt encouraged ASAC members to test the sites, complete the survey, and send photos of the sites in use back to Glatt. ASAC members can also help spread awareness of the project for replication elsewhere.

STANDING REPORTS

a. APRC Liaison

Interim Director Eldridge reported in Commissioner Bachman's absence. At their November 8 meeting, the Commission voted for a new structure for APRC standing advisory committees and less formal management advisory committees, based on the City Council's policy for such bodies. The structure is still being finalized and will provide a template for committees to develop their mission, annual goals and reporting. These changes will have minimal impact on ASAC, which will continue as an APRC advisory committee.

b. City Council Liaison

Councilor Kaplan was absent.

c. Education Report

Mettler reported that staff has been working on next season's activities and events. These are programs that will run from January-April 2024. Current ongoing activities will continue, and a new free memoir-writing class will be offered. Special monthly events for next season include 19th century guitar music performance, Healthy Brain & Aging class, Japanese Garden spring walk and a cybersecurity basics class. The new Personalized Strength & Balance Training class has had a great response and strong enrollment.

d. Senior Services Superintendent Report

Glatt referred to her Superintendent's report in meeting packet. She acknowledged the contribution of SSD instructors and volunteers; these partnerships allow SSD to offer as much as it does to the community. She highlighted that SSD was able to provide 459 flu and COVID vaccinations over three clinic dates. These clinics gave vaccine access to some of the most vulnerable older adults in the community, many of whom face transportation barriers that make it challenging to seek vaccines outside of Ashland. She acknowledged recent awards given to Anne Bellegia (AARP Andrus Award for Community Service) and Kathy McNeal (Oregon Recreation and Park Association Volunteer Service Award).

ITEMS FROM ASAC MEMBERS OR WORK GROUPS

a. Livable Ashland Alliance update

Bellegia shared that the AARP Andrus Award she recently received recognizes the importance of the work being undertaken by SSD and the Livable Ashland Alliance. The Alliance is forming action groups to develop action plans, drawing on the strength of current Steering Committee members. The first such group is a health action group. Eldridge stated that the City is discussing establishing a “Livability Team” modeled after Medford’s efforts to connect unhoused people to services. Glatt shared a link describing the proposed Ashland Livability Team in a recent Oregon Public Broadcasting article: opb.org/article/2023/11/08/ashland-drafts-urban-camping-restrictions-after-opening-homeless-shelter. Eldridge is concerned that the similarity of their name with the Livable Ashland Alliance may cause confusion. Bellegia responded that City Manager Cotta and former City Councilor Hyatt are Alliance Steering Committee members; Bellegia will contact them to make sure there is a clear distinction in name and function between Livable Ashland Alliance and the City’s possible Livability Team.

b. Other items from ASAC members

Gardiner announced that this will be Glatt’s last ASAC meeting because she will be retiring in January 2024. He and other ASAC members thanked Glatt for her leadership and significant contributions and for bringing together a strong group of people on ASAC.

Next meeting – Monday, January 8, 2024, 3:30-5:00pm (Zoom)

Adjournment – 4:57pm

Respectfully submitted by Natalie Mettler, Senior & Adult Services Coordinator, Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission

ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

340 S PIONEER STREET • ASHLAND, OREGON 97520

COMMISSIONERS:

Rick Landt
Jim Bachman
Justin Adams
Jim Lewis
Stefani Seffinger



Leslie Eldridge
Interim Director

541.488.5340
AshlandParksandRec.org
parksinfo@ashland.or.us

STAFF MEMORANDUM

TO: Ashland Senior Advisory Committee (ASAC)
FROM: Natalie Mettler, Interim Senior Services Superintendent
DATE: January 2, 2024
SUBJECT: Superintendent's Report to ASAC

PROGRAMMING & SERVICES

- **Holiday Party:** Almost 100 patrons enjoyed a Holiday Party at Ashland Senior Center on December 22. Event sponsor Village at Valley View provided festive refreshments. OLLI's French Caroling class performed familiar Christmas Carols in French. Rotary Club of Ashland and Shop'n Kart provided 70 gift cards, and the Senior Services Division provided some other small gifts so that everyone received something. In addition, each participant received a magnet gift made by students from the Inspire program at Ashland High School and a Community Services class from Pathways.



- **Charades:** Volunteer Kim Rosmaier facilitated a fun afternoon of Charades on Dec. 13.



- **Seniors Celebrating Creativity:** The latest art exhibit at Ashland Senior Center features a special group exhibit by eight watercolor students of instructor Ruddy Havill. The exhibit is in the dining and activity room during January through March, open Monday-Thursday, 8:30am-3:30pm.



VULNERABLE SENIORS

- **Senior Vaccination Clinic:** The Senior Vaccination Clinics during October 13 – November 6 were a great success, providing a total of 459 shots for approximately 300 seniors. The average age of participants was 75 years and included many disabled elders. We achieved our goal of helping older and disabled Ashland seniors who find it difficult to get to Medford where vaccines are more readily available.

In addition, staff and volunteers helped hundreds of other seniors find other community vaccination resources. A total of \$17,170 funded by AGE+, Mountain Meadows Community Foundation, and Ashland Community Health Foundation paid for subsidies for uninsured and underinsured patients, gift card incentives, and the substantial staff overhead required for a service of this magnitude. Many thanks to our funders and the 28 volunteers required to host three clinics.



PARTNERSHIPS

- **Sponsors:** Sponsorships are down for 2024. Only one of the 2023 sponsors has renewed for 2024: ATRIO Health Systems is again sponsoring our Young at Art program. Staff have met with potential new business sponsors Advanced Life Care Systems, a new home care provider, and Farmington Square, but neither have committed yet.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

- **Conversation Clusters Demonstration Project:** The Project, which launched on October 31, generated positive publicity for APRC on [Channel KDRV Newswatch 12](#) and [Rogue Valley Times Outdoor Adventures section](#). The Channel 12 story was then picked up by [Oregon Health News](#), a weekly e-newsletter sent by the Oregon Health Authority to readers throughout Oregon. The article titled, "[Loneliness: coping with the loss of human connection](#)," referenced "Chat Benches" in Wales and our own "Conversation Clusters" in Ashland as creative solutions to decrease loneliness.

Interim Parks Director Leslie Eldridge also heard positive feedback from City staff, electeds, and community members.

This age-friendly livability initiative was designed to increase opportunities for conversation and connection in public spaces. A community survey closed December 17 with 15 responses. Not surprisingly, the colder weather starting in November decreased use of the seating and the potential number of survey responses. Most survey comments were positive, with just three disagreeing or not wanting to prioritize the concept.

- **Leadership Changes at Senior Services Division:** A [press release](#) on December 5 announced Isleen Glatt's retirement on 1/5/24 and Natalie Mettler's appointment as Interim Senior Services Superintendent until a permanent hiring can be conducted.
- **Senior News:** The December and January [Senior News](#) issues featured the holiday events and the Senior Services staff changes. The January issue featured a special music and education event, the new Seniors Celebrating Creativity exhibit, and new January classes. Resources for free glasses and hearing aids, Medicare insurance advising, and volunteer opportunities were also included.



Conversation Clusters Demonstration Project




**Lithia Park,
Lawn facing Winburn Way and Skout**
A set of 20 stacking chairs that park users may move around on the lawn

**Garfield Park,
East Main and California St**
A semi-circle of three fixed benches facing a view of Grizzly Peak





**Glenwood Park,
Glenwood Dr and Ashland St**
A circle of four fixed benches near the center of Glenwood Park



Senior News December 2023

Ashland Senior Center, 4899 Homes Avenue, Ashland OR 97520
Monday, Thursday, 9:00am - 3:00pm | 541-438-2241 | 1101 pm
AshlandSeniorCenter.org | seniorinfo@ashland.or.us

Holiday Party
Friday, December 22, 9:30am
Ashland Senior Center
1101 pm

Fun with Charades
Wednesday, December 13, 4:30 pm
Ashland Senior Center, 4899 Homes Ave
1101 pm

Staff Transitions at Ashland Senior Services Division
See story on page 5.

Ashland Senior Center will be closed on December 25 for Christmas and January 1 for New Year's Day.



Senior News January 2024

Ashland Senior Center, 4899 Homes Avenue, Ashland OR 97520
Monday, Thursday, 9:00am - 3:00pm | 541-438-2241 | 1101 pm
AshlandSeniorCenter.org | seniorinfo@ashland.or.us

Introduction to 19th Century Guitar Music
Wednesday, January 31, 3pm
Ashland Senior Center
1101 pm

Seniors Celebrating Creativity New Exhibit Opens January 21
The Seniors Celebrating Creativity exhibit at Ashland Senior Center features a special group exhibit by the volunteer students of Ashland Middle School.

Ashland Senior Center will be closed on January 1st for New Year's Day and January 15th for MLK Day.

BUDGET/FACILITIES

- **Grants:** The Senior Services Division budget was supplemented this year by extra funding for the vaccination clinics, including dollars for staff time. AGE+ had more money than expected and paid for all 459 vaccinations and all 243 gift cards, awarding a total of \$29,945. Ashland Community Health Foundation granted \$2000. Because AGE+ paid for more than expected, the \$3000 grant from Mountain Meadows Community Foundation will remain in the Ashland Parks Foundation account to provide activity scholarships for seniors.

STAFF UPDATE

- Natalie Mettler and Shannon Holt did extensive training in November–December 2023. They have now assumed their roles as Interim Senior Services Superintendent and Interim Senior Services Coordinator, respectively. With the help of temporary Office Assistant Cheryl de Saram and our crew of four office volunteers, the transition is going very smoothly.

PATRON FEEDBACK

- “Thank you for the lovely Holiday Party and all your work! The refreshments were great, as were the conversations.”
- “Thank you for all the hard work you do to give seniors a better life. I’m grateful for the senior center. I’m sure it’s one of the best in the west.”