

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

The Common Council of the City of Ashland will meet as the Committee of the Whole on **Tuesday, March 27, 2018** immediately following the City Council meeting which begins at **6:15** p.m. in the Ashland City Hall Council Chambers.

The following items will be considered:

1. Roll Call
2. Council President's Report
3. City Administrator's Report
4. Approval of the Agenda
5. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Developing a Plan to Reduce Mowing in the City of Ashland (*Councilor Doersch*)
6. Adjournment

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AGENDA BILL

Ref: 056

COMMITTEE AGENDA: 5 (03-27-2018)
COUNCIL AGENDA:

SUBJECT: Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Developing a Plan to Reduce Mowing in the City of Ashland

RECOMMENDATION:

DEPARTMENT OF ORIGIN: Councilor Doersch

DATE SUBMITTED: March 19, 2018

CLEARANCES: Council President

EXPENDITURES REQUIRED: NA

AMOUNT BUDGETED: NA

APPROPRIATION REQUIRED: NA

RECOMMENDATION: A motion to support efforts by Public Works to investigate and implement ways to reduce mowing.

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

Councilor Doersch has requested that the Committee of the Whole discuss reducing the amount of mowing that the City does. When this request was made several months ago, Public Works began some research to consider the topic. That work had not been completed. Mowing season and the opportunity to make changes in areas mowed will soon occur, so it's time to begin the discussion.

At this point, the recommendation is for a motion to support efforts by Public Works to investigate and implement ways to reduce mowing. Any changes in mowing practices would have to be considered by Administration first so that any impacts on other departments or the City would be considered.

Below is what Councilor Doersch sent for the agenda bill. Note: the initial research by Public Works suggest that the City mows less than 350 acres, but a firm number wasn't established.

DISCUSSION POINT: As of now, the City mows approximately 350 acres within our boundaries from late April/early May into October. With the addition of the Timeless Timbers property and the lake frontage we will gain after the environmental cleanup, more acres probably will be added. Are there ways to change this? I suggest three possibilities:

1. That bushes such as lilacs, burning bush, or other such bushes be planted in corners of existing parks. They would not interfere with activities in the park and be beautiful in season. Low lying bushes would also be an asset along the walking trail next to the lake. They would be beneficial for maintaining the soil in place that is often washed out from under the asphalt when a storm occurs. Plantings could be accomplished through budgeting or donations to the beautification fund.

2. In areas that are lightly used for activities, trefoil could be planted. Trefoil is often used in ditches to keep the soil from eroding when new grading is done. It's a perennial plant that is low lying and has yellow flowers. Timeless Timbers would be a good place to experiment with trefoil.

3. The west side hockey rink has never been used as intended, as far as I know. Taking down the walls would make mowing easier and faster.