

**City of Alexandria, Virginia
PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
Patrick Henry Recreation Center
4653 Taney Ave**

**Thursday, September 17, 2026
7 p.m.**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order: Dana Colarulli, Chair
2. Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items
3. Commissioner Reports & Announcements
 - a. Staff Report – Commissioner Comments
 - b. RPCA Staff Updates
 - Staff Transitions - Hashim Taylor, Director, RPCA
 - OSTP/Power-Full Fun Day - Hashim Taylor, Director, RPCA
 - Colasanto Spray Park - Beth Znidersic, Deputy Director (acting)
4. Action Items
 - a. Approval Meeting Minutes - July 16, 2026
5. Items for Information
 - a. Boards & Commissions Training – David Lanier, Assistant City Attorney
 - b. Update of the Goat Grazing Pilot Project – TBD
 - c. “Where You Belong” Campaign – Hashim Taylor
6. Next Meeting: October 15, 2026 – Location TBD
7. Adjournment

For reasonable disability accommodation, contact Hashim Taylor at hashim.taylor@alexandriava.gov or 703.746.5504, Virginia Relay 711. We request that you provide 48-hour notice so that the proper arrangements can be made.

MEMORANDUM

DATE: SEPTEMBER 17, 2026

TO: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEMBERS

FROM: TAMIKA COLEMAN, ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR
RECREATION SERVICES DIVISION

SUBJECT: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION DIVISION UPDATE ITEM

OSTP School Year Update:

Current 2026-2027 Enrollment: 1244

Back to School and Back to the Basics! Kicking off this school year with energy, opportunity, and growth! This year, we're raising the bar for the Power-On Program with engaging, high-quality programming designed to support the whole child.

Students can look forward to: Academic Support, Sports & Cooperative Games, Civic Responsibility, Safety, Health & Well-Being, Cultural Arts, and STEAM Enrichment.

Our goal is to create a safe, welcoming, and inspiring environment where every program participant can learn, play, create, connect, and thrive.

Partnerships & Collaborations:

We are proud to collaborate with ACPS, UpCycle, Momentum Collective Inc., Y-Help, Virginia Tech, Sports Enrichment, and Buddie Ford Nature Center. These partners contribute valuable enrichment, academic support, STEAM opportunities and specialized programming at all Power-On locations and the Nannie J. Lee Recreation Center.

Program Wrap-ups:

- On July 24, the Jerome "Buddie" Ford Nature Center came out for a visit to the youth participants of Patrick Henry's Summer Power On program. They brought out several types of reptiles and animals. The youth learned all about the history of the displayed animals and reptiles including where they live, what they eat and how they survive. They were able to touch the animals and ask questions.



- On August 8, the 2026 summer partnership at William Ramsay Recreation Center concluded after providing youth programming and Saturday GED tutoring. On August 22, NOVA RAFT hosted a Back-to-School Supply Drive, distributing 135 school supplies and backpacks to Alexandria families. The partnership continues during the school year, with the adult program resuming August 31 and the youth program beginning September 1.
- On August 26, the Inspire to Lead mentoring program's 2025-26 cohort concluded with an end-of-year family night. Mentors, youth, families, and Teen Promoters reflected on the program's first full year while participating in activities including henna art, miniature painting, greenhouse design presentations, and karaoke. After meeting throughout the school year and summer, participants demonstrated growth, confidence, and new friendships as they prepared for the new school year.



- This summer, the Power-On and Power-Up programs served 1,157 participants. Campers enjoyed outdoor activities, games, team challenges, skill-building opportunities, and time to build new friendships. The summer provided engaging experiences centered on learning, creativity, and fun, supported by dedicated Power-On and Power-Up staff.



- Towards the last week of the Patrick Henry's Summer Power-On program, the campers were visited by the Alexandria Fire Department. They were able to interact with the firefighters after being suited up and ready to save lives.



Program Updates:

- Power-Full Fun Day:** The Power-Full Fun Day program returns this school year, offering programming for Power-On families on days when ACPS schools are closed. Fees are \$25 per day or \$125 per week, with Before Care available for \$15 per day or \$39 per week. The program's revenue goal for the year is \$132,000.

Upcoming Events:

- On October 3, the OSTP School Year Staff Training will take place from 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Staff will participate in engaging exercises designed to strengthen teamwork, collaboration, and professional growth.
- On October 10, the annual Kiwanis Kids Fishing Day will be held from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. at Lake Cook. Youth will have an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors and learn or practice fishing skills with peers, Kiwanis and Key Club volunteers, and City employees. Participants will learn to bait, cast, and fish in a supervised setting.
- The Center for Alexandria's Children's Learning & Playgroup Partnership returns to William Ramsay Recreation Center this month. Weekly Thursday sessions feature songs, stories, games, and activities that support early literacy, social-emotional development, and family connections.



Special Features:

- The Power-On program is collaborating with Virginia Tech to provide project-based training opportunities for OSTP staff and project-based learning and enrichment opportunities for Power-On participants through the Betabox program. Betabox provides hands on learning and exploration for youth and teens. Through coding, robotics and environmental science they immerse youth and teens in real-world challenges that build their critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Our Engaged Community: Partnerships in Action

- This summer, community partnerships brought new experiences, resources, and opportunities to youth and families across Alexandria. Partners supported sports activities, STEAM programs, community cookouts, literacy initiatives, food access, and back-to-school efforts.



- More than 1,000 youth were mentored by 741 caring adults, 71 adults participated in Caring University, and partners provided 1,100 backpacks to local students. From recreation centers to neighborhood parks, these collaborations expanded access to learning, connection, and community resources throughout the summer.

- **Facility Improvements & Mural** – William Ramsay Recreation Center’s new mural and facility improvements have created a fresh, welcoming environment for returning Out-of-School Time students. The colorful ribbon mural brings vibrancy and a sense of community, while freshly painted walls, new furniture, and improved organization have modernized the interior. Planned landscaping and the return of the Little Free Pantry in a new location will further enhance the exterior. Together, these improvements create a bright, inviting space that reflects the diverse community William Ramsay serves.

Staff Updates:

Alexandria's Connecting Youth Initiative: Meet Our New Teen Promoters



Teen Promoters: Armarni, Darbyn, and Cynthia

Funded through DCJS and the JJDP grant program, RPCA’s Teen Promoters connect youth with positive activities, programs, jobs, scholarships, and other community resources.

This summer, Teen Promoters attended 16 community events, engaged directly with youth and families, and promoted opportunities for teens. Their work also supports connections with Alexandria’s juvenile justice system, helping youth involved in diversion and probation access positive, pro-social activities.

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: SEPTEMBER 17, 2026

TO: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEMBERS

FROM: BETHANY ZNIDERSIC, ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR
RECREATION, PARKS & CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

ITEM 3.a.: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION DIVISION UPDATE
PARK SERVICES

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS UPDATE

- September Park Planning & Capital Development Report, Park Services (*Attachment*)

CLOSED OR PARTIALLY CLOSED TO PUBLIC USE FOR CAPITAL PROJECTS

- Four Mile Run Kayak Launch (storm damage)
- Ben Brenman Picnic Shelter Trail (intermittent trail closures September 16- 18, weather permitting)
- Hooffs' Run Park between E. Oak and E. Walnut includes a tennis court - (storm sewer culvert replacement)
- Holmes Run Trail Site 1 - (construction)
- Eugene Simpson Stadium Park (construction)
- Lee Center Parking Lot South of the Miracle Field (construction)
- Wilkes Street Park between Route 1 and Alfred Street (construction)

Summer Ballcourt Work

The ballcourts at Mt. Vernon, Angel Park, Potomac Yard, and Montgomery Park each received targeted repairs over the summer to help extend their life and improve the appearance of the playing surface. Work included targeted crack repairs and color coating. The Mapei court surfacing at Potomac Yard was also refreshed. Mapei is a specialized mesh and acrylic-based surfacing system designed to provide a durable, uniform playing surface while improving traction, playability, and extending the life of the asphalt.



Fort Ward Park Playground Accessibility Improvements

The playground at Fort Ward reopened on August 14! The completed upgrades relocated the playground uphill from its former location, creating a more accessible and welcoming experience for children and visitors of all abilities. There are new accessible parking spaces and a new accessible playground entrance. A reforestation area was created and over 50 trees were planted to increase tree canopy. The upgraded playground features inclusive play equipment designed for children ages 2-12, providing more opportunities for fun, exploration, and imaginative play. The project fulfills years of community-based planning recommended in the Fort Ward Management Plan, to protect the park's sensitive cultural, historical and natural resources while providing community recreation. A ribbon cutting ceremony with City Council will be planned for this fall.

William Ramsay Front Entrance Landscape Renovation

The landscape renovation at William Ramsay Recreation Center was completed in August, providing a refreshed and welcoming entrance to the facility. The project included new landscape plantings, mulched beds, and improved planting arrangements around the existing trees, walkways, and signage. The landscape incorporates a variety of flowering native perennials and other pollinator-friendly plants that provide seasonal color while supporting bees, butterflies, and other pollinators. These improvements enhance the overall appearance of the recreation center while creating a more sustainable and inviting landscape for visitors.



Witter Recreational Fields Renovation

The Witter Fields Renovation Project is complete and opened on September 8 for play! This marks an exciting milestone for the community who rely on these two premier turf fields. Originally constructed in 2014, the renovation was identified in the City's Capital Improvement Program to proactively replace the aging synthetic turf surface. As part of the renovation, a new organic infill material was installed to help reduce surface temperatures and create a more comfortable playing environment during hot weather. Studies of the organic infill have shown surface temperature reductions of up to 30 degrees while maintaining a surface suitable for athletic play. In addition, significant drainage work was completed to repair a damaged pipe and to improve overall field drainage by installing additional underdrains located in Field 1 and 2 and through regrading of the gravel drainage system.



Kelley Cares Miracle Field Renovation

This fall marks the 15-year anniversary of the Kelley Cares Miracle Field! One of the first facilities of its kind in the region, the Miracle Field is a synthetic sports diamond designed specifically for use by individuals with disabilities. The field surface is covered with a rubber-like material that provides a firm yet cushioned playing surface for wheelchairs, walkers, and other mobility devices. To celebrate this milestone, improvements to the facility, including new field surfacing, walkways, and fencing were completed in July. The refreshed field welcomed players for the fall season on September 9.

Colasanto Park Interactive Fountain

The City's newest interactive fountain soft opened on September 10! The project to convert the former mini pool to an inclusive year-round community gathering space was funded through the City of Alexandria's Capital Improvement Program and a Community Matching Fund partnership with The Del Ray Gateway Project. The opening marks a significant milestone for

the long-awaited project and will provide Alexandria residents and visitors with a new opportunity to play, cool off, and enjoy the outdoors. During the initial opening period, RPCA staff will closely monitor the fountain's operations and make any necessary adjustments to ensure the best possible experience for the community. RPCA is also working with community stakeholders to identify a date for an official ribbon-cutting ceremony. Details about the celebration will be announced once finalized.



Ben Brenman Park Fitness Station

This summer a new adult fitness station opened in Ben Brenman Park located along Backlick Run, near the dog park. This award-winning project was made possible through a partnership between the City, Virginia Walkability Action Institute, and George Mason University, and was supported by community feedback. The new fitness area provides more opportunities for outdoor exercise along this popular park trail. Additional trail work leading to the volleyball courts and picnic pavilion are scheduled in September to further improve ADA accessibility in the park.

Lee Center Courtyard

The Lee Center Courtyard construction project is almost complete! The footers for the planter and landscape walls have been installed, and the masonry veneer is currently underway. The brick has been carefully matched to the existing building, and all of the landscape plantings are native species. Combined with future plans to extend the mural, this project is set to bring new life to the Nannie J. Lee Center while blending seamlessly with the existing infrastructure. Substantial completion is anticipated by the end of September, with additional improvements to follow. Stay tuned for a refreshed multi-use space designed to support community members and staff services.

RPCA Storm Response: Keeping Our Parks and Streets Safe

The September 4th storm put our Urban Forestry team and contractors into action, responding to 44 tree-related emergency calls throughout the City. Urban Foresters inspected each reported location and worked closely with our contractors to address fallen and hazardous trees. With numerous complete tree failures impacting roadways and traffic, the team's immediate priority was to keep roads open and passable and address the most urgent safety concerns. Once those hazards were addressed, crews began working through additional debris and tree-related issues that were not blocking roads or sidewalks. Cleanup efforts continued throughout the weekend, with Urban Forestry maintaining on-call coverage to respond to any new emergencies.

See something that needs attention? Residents can help by reporting tree hazards and other park maintenance concerns through the City's 311 system. Please include the exact location, a brief description of the issue, and photos when possible. This information helps the teams quickly assess the situation, prioritize the response, and coordinate the appropriate resources.

cc: Oscar Mendoza, Division Chief, Natural Resources
Tonja Walls, Division Chief, Park Support

Attachment: Capital Improvement Projects Report

Park & Recreation Commission -Park Planning Report



September 17, 2026

	Project	Project Summary/Notes	Monthly Update	Planning District	Target Completion Date	Assigned To	Project Status
1	Park Facility Standards Manual	The City's Park Facility Standards Manual is a document that provides guidance to City staff, consultants, developers, and design professionals involved in planning, design, construction, and development review efforts for public open spaces and parks. Last updated in 2021, the document is scheduled for it's regular five-year review and update.	The Park Facilities Standards Manual 2026 update is now underway. The first step of improving the overall usability of the document and aligning the manual with the City's visualization and document standards is complete.	Citywide	08/31/27	Jesse Van Wick	Design
2	Nannie J Lee Courtyard	Project will fill in the existing pool and convert the former pool area to a new public space.	The hardscape for the courtyard is nearly complete and will be finished by the end of September. A landscape Contractor has been secured and is due to install plant material before the winter.	District 1	09/01/26	Jesse Van Wick	Implementation
3	Old Town Pool Replacement Design	This project will include planning and design for the replacement of Old Town Pool.	Design for the pool replacement project is complete and the project is transitioning to construction procurement. The SUP was approved by the Planning Commission on May 5, City Council on May 16, and the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) on May 20.	District 1	05/26/28	Bethany Znidersic	Procurement
4	Mt Vernon Colasanto Tennis Court Surfacing Repairs	This project will include crack repairs, color coat surface, and relining of the tennis court	This project repaired the court surface to address cracks and re-color-coat. Additional fence repairs are scheduled to be completed this fall.	District 2	10/30/26	Daniel Unkle	Implementation
5	Hooffs Run Tennis Court Rehabilitation	This project will rebuild the existing tennis court which will be impacted by the Hooff Run Storm Culvert Replacement project	Demolition and construction has commenced on the first segment of the culvert from Walnut St. to the south end of the ballcourt. Tree removals were completed and included trees along Marstallar due to acute CRZ impacts that could not be mitigated. RPCA staff will continue coordination for tree planting and ballcourt restoration. Additional project information: https://www.alexandriava.gov/public-works/bridge-inspections-and-maintenance	District 2	10/30/26	Judy Lo	Implementation
6	Hillside Park Soft Trail	This project will complete the last segment of the new park soft trail. The trail is located in a wooded area and provides a connection to the Arlandria neighborhood from Warwick Village. This project supports the Arlandria small area plan to provide a future trail located behind the existing shopping center	The Hillside Park Soft Trail Improvements Project will improve the existing park by removing deteriorated landscape timbers and asphalt and replacing them with a new natural-surface trail.	District 2	12/15/26	Daniel Unkle	Design
7	Shirley Tyler Unity Park	This project will restore the bioretention area and permeable pavement	The permeable pavement was cleaned over the summer to ensure the systems are draining properly. The stone was also replenished in the bioretention area and permeable paver system.	District 2	09/30/26	Judy Lo	Complete
8	Miracle Field Resurfacing	This project will replace the surface of the Miracle Field, repair and replace the fence where needed.	This project is complete.	District 2	09/07/26	Daniel Unkle	Complete
9	Witter Fields Synthetic Turf Recarpeting	Initial Scope: This project will replace the carpet and infill on both fields and the middle turf space. The project will include diagnostic testing of the drainage system and review of the impact board and nailer board.	The project has been completed and is being used by the community!	District 2	08/31/26	Jesse Van Wick	Complete
10	Colasanto Interactive Fountain Construction	This project phase includes funding for construction of interactive fountain.	Construction is substantially complete. City staff began the soft opening phase and is monitoring the fountain and public space for issues and any necessary adjustments.	District 2	07/31/26	Bethany Znidersic	Close-out
11	Simpson Park Renovation Construction	Construction of the Simpson Park Renovation Project	Construction of the fields at Big and Little Simpson continued over the summer. Please see the project website for more information regarding portions of the park that will be closed and project updates: https://www.alexandriava.gov/parks/project/eugene-simpson-athletic-diamond-fields-renovation-plan	District 2	09/01/26	Bethany Znidersic	Implementation
12	George Mason Recreational Space	This project will fund a full sized gym, dedicated RPCA storage and office space, as well as outdoor accessible restrooms for the new George Mason facility.	Alexandria City Public Schools is currently in the construction phase for the George Mason Elementary School Modernization Project. ACPs held a topping off ceremony on September 2 to celebrate installation of the last structural beam. Please see the ACPs website for more information: https://gm.acps.k12.va.us/about/facility-modernization-maintenance	District 2	08/03/26	Judy Lo	Implementation
13	Dora Kelley Trail and Stair Replacement Project	Replacement of the stairs from the Nature Center to the trail	Consultant has presented a design strategy for the stairs based on site conditions and aesthetic preferences. Contractor has begun soil boring and tree inventory on site.	District 3	07/30/27	Jesse Van Wick	Design
14	Brenman Trail Improvements (Exercise Station)	Trail improvements from the Dog Park to Somerville. Project includes new trail fitness stations in partnership with VVAI.	The project has been completed and is being used by the community!	District 3	06/30/26	Jesse Van Wick	Complete
15	Cameron Station Linear Park Tree Planting	This project will develop and implement a phased tree replacement program over three years. The work will include removal of dead trees.	This project is complete.	District 3	12/31/26	Daniel Unkle	Complete
16	Fort Ward Playground Relocation	Relocate playground to an accessible location as recommended in the Fort Ward Management Plan	Construction was deemed substantially complete and the playground re-opened on August 14. A ribbon cutting will be coordinated for this fall. Staff will continue to work with the project team on close-out items, landscape replacements, in anticipation of final acceptance later this fall. Project updates will be available here: https://www.alexandriava.gov/parks/fort-ward-implementation-projects	District 3	09/01/25	Judy Lo	Close-out
17	Ben Brenman Picnic Area ADA Path	Provide improvements to create accessible pathway, grills, and picnic facilities, based on the plans developed in FY2017.	RPCA has secured a Contractor to perform this work. The contractor is scheduled to begin Work on September 16.	District 3	04/01/26	Jesse Van Wick	Implementation
18	Luckett Field Access	Access improvements per the 2016 Neighborhood Park Plan	The sidewalk has been constructed, and the site is now accessible by wheelchair on both third and first base sides.	District 3	06/17/26	Jesse Van Wick	Close-out
19	AL Boothe Synthetic Turf Field Conversion	This project will convert the natural turf field in Armistead L. Boothe Park to synthetic turf.	The project team received the final approvals for the project and the 100% plans are complete. The procurement solicitation reviews will be coordinated through the summer and is anticipated to be released in the fall.	District 3	05/31/27	Bethany Znidersic	Procurement
20	Holmes Run Trail Repairs Construction	This project includes the restoration of four sections of Holmes Run Trail damaged and closed following July 2019 heavy rains.	Holmes Run Trail Dora Kelley New Bridge – Site work continues on the final section of repairs to the Holmes Run Trail. Northern side streambank, streambed and culvert bridge sections will occur late spring through the summer 2026. Substantial completion is anticipated for October 2026.	District 3	10/30/26	Bethany Znidersic	Implementation
21	William Ramsay Recreation Site Furnishings	This project will provide new site furnishings for the Recreation Center as part of planned program support improvements to refresh the Recreation Center.	Sites 2, 3 and 4 are open to the public with continuous access from Eisenhower Ave. through N. Beaugard St. The (2) ADA tables have been installed and are operational.	District 3	09/11/26	Jesse Van Wick	Complete