City of Alexandria

WATERFRONT COMMISSION

October 20, 2026
Lee Center Gold Room
1108 Jefferson Street
7:30 a.m.
Minutes

Members Present:

Jan Abraham, Citizen, East of Washington St. and South of King St., Vice Chair
Michael Adams, Citizen, Park Planning District III
Agnès Artemel, Citizen, East of Washington St. and North of Pendleton St.
Sarah Bagley, City Council representative (attended virtually)
Eldon Boes, Representative, Environmental Policy Commission
Patrick Burchette, Representative, Historic Alexandria Foundation
Charlotte Hall, Representative, Alexandria Chamber of Commerce
Robin Jordon, Representative, Alexandria Commission for the Arts
Melissa B Kuennen, Citizen, East of Washington St. and North of King St.
Jody Manor, Representative, Alexandria Planning Commission
Claire Mouledoux, Representative, Visit Alexandria
Deb Roepke, Representative, Alexandria Seaport Foundation
Louise Roseman, Citizen, Park Planning District I, Commission Chair
Sydney Smith, Representative, Founders Park Community Association
Patricia Webb, Citizen, Park Planning District II
Ivy Whitlatch, Alexandria Archeological Commission

Members Excused: Mark Villinger, At Large Commissioner

Vacant Representatives: Alexandria Park & Recreation Commission; Old Town Civic Association; Alexandria Marina Pleasure Boat Owners

Discontinued Representative: Old Town Business & Professional Association

Other Attendees: Diane Ruggiero, RPCA Arts & Culture Deputy Director; Beth Znidersic, Acting Deputy Director for Park Services, RPCA; Catherine Miliaras, Principal Planner, P&Z; Matt Landes, Portfolio Manager/Division Chief, T&ES; Marion Smith, President and CEO, US Maritime Foundation; Bruce Catts, Old Dominion Boat Club; Janice Hobart, Old Dominion Boat Club; Steve Forehand, Old Dominion Boat Club

1. **Call to Order**: Louise Roseman, chair, called the meeting to order at 7:30 am.

2. **Approval of the September 15, 2026 Minutes**
   Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Commission approved the minutes of the June meeting.

3. **City Updates**
   a. **Community Projects & Activities** (Beth Znidersic, Acting Deputy Director for Park Services, RPCA) The City is adjusting its watering schedule for fountains and irrigation in line with the changing of seasons. It's also preparing trees along King Street for holiday lights.

- In response to commissioner inquiries re tree wells, the City is planning to address maintenance issues, including cleanup, repairs, and replacing trees as needed. They have a volunteer group on board to help with an inventory of tree wells' conditions and are also planning to contract for addressing issues.
- In response to commissioner inquiries about plans for removal of large logs along our waterfront including in Oronoco Bay, the City has been focusing on removing smaller debris deposited from recent high tides.
- The City will inform Charlotte Hall when outdoor tables along King Street need to be moved to accommodate installation of Holiday Lights.
- The large mobile restroom facility at the south end of Waterfront Park will remain in place through the holidays.
- The holiday tree that's normally put up in Market Square will go in Waterfront Park this year. Tree lighting will take place on Saturday, November 21, the weekend before Thanksgiving.

b. **Private Development Update** (Catherine Miliaras, Principal Planner, P&Z)

- The BAR has approved the current plans for the waterfront flood mitigation project with a few minor issues to be resolved.
- The Robinson Terminal North project is on hold because of funding issues.
- In response to commissioner inquiries, Catharine reported that the City is looking for a better bike and pedestrian route through the Robinson Terminal North project area. Since the City doesn't own the shoreline there, it's more likely that any interim improved route would be along the east side of Union Street.

4. **Items of Information or Action**

a. **Overview of the Proposed US Maritime Museum** (Marion Smith, President & CEO, United States Maritime Foundation) The U.S. Maritime Foundation proposes to build a U.S. maritime museum on Alexandria's waterfront. Marion pointed out that many nations have maritime museums or similar facilities, but the U.S. does not. The U.S. does have considerable material that could be useful for such a museum.

The Foundation is proposing a two-phase project. Phase 1 is the acquisition and reactivation of the Tall Ship Providence facility. A Letter of Intent agreement for that is in place, and a signed Purchase and Sale agreement is expected to be concluded in November. The Tall Ship Providence pier will be kept open and may be expanded and/or adapted to accommodate visiting ships. Phase 2 will involve acquisition of the property at 1 Prince Street, and conversion of that into the museum. The Foundation has an option for this purchase. They hope to acquire it by Spring 2027. They have offered to locate the Indigo Ship Hull in the museum, with suitable arrangements for its preservation. This is planned as a "destination" and "community" museum, with changing information, use of screens to convey seafaring experiences, and facilities on the top floor for meetings and events as a source of income.

The Foundation believes Alexandria is an ideal location for the Museum -- with our 3.5 million visitors per year, our waterfront location, and our extensive maritime history. Regarding funding, they need $800,000 now for Phase 1, and about $46 million over 5 years to complete Phase 2. They are not asking the City for money now.

In response to the question about 1 Prince being of adequate size, Marion pointed out that today's IT capabilities contribute considerably to addressing that issue. Commissioners made

several comments, including the need for a parking plan and restrooms, and the cost of maintenance.

b. **Waterfront Flood Mitigation Program Update** (Matt Landes, Portfolio Manager/Division Chief, T&ES) Matt reminded us that the planned pump station has been eliminated because of opposition by the federal government and some residents. That change will make permitting easier. Omitting the pump station means that removal of flood waters will now be tide-stage dependent, but the project's bulkhead height will still be 6 feet, and other project goals will be met.

- The City has an agreement with the Tall Ship Providence Foundation, under which the Foundation will be required to temporarily relocate the ship, the gangway, the center, and the pilings during construction of the bulkhead, and can return to its current location following the bulkhead construction, at the Foundation's expense. The City is planning to re-establish and restore existing utilities that service the tall ship at this location.
- The project team will continue communications with Old Town Civic Association, businesses, and the Waterfront Commission.
- They're currently working on the 70% plan and on the contractor's schedule.
- The final design will be completed next fall and construction will start in late 2027 or early 2028. The work will proceed block by block, not all at once.
- The construction will require closures of Waterfront Park, Point Lumley Park, and the Strand Street parking lot. The contractor may keep portions those facilities open if and when safe and practicable to do so.
- The Pt. Lumley and Waterfront Park plans incorporate historical materials such as canal stones, temporary and permanent art spaces, and planters. The Rosenbaum bequest garden will also be incorporated as donor funding is made available.
- Relocating power underground is not in the plans, nor are inclusion of a fountain or ice rink in Waterfront Park, as recommended in the Waterfront Small Area Plan.

c. **Update on Waterfront Commission Views On Which Waterfront Small Area Plan Recommendations That Have Not Yet Been Implemented Should be Prioritized** (Agnès Artemel) Agnès reported that the priority projects have been compiled into five major groups. The Commission will review these project/issue areas and identify specific issues that warrant Commission consideration in the year ahead. The major areas are listed in order of frequency of mention, with volunteers for leading each of those reviews noted:

1. Water access, boating, and maritime waterfront (Melissa Kuennen and possibly a new commissioner representing private boat owners)
2. Waterfront amenities, green spaces and parks, trees (Louise Roseman and Eldon Boes)
3. Arts and history and cultural interpretation (Ivy Whitlatch and Patrick Burchette)
4. Connectivity and walkability (Agnes Artemel and Sydney Smith)
5. Torpedo Factory (no one assigned, will reconsider after the Waterfront Commission update on the TFAC's new management plans)

Parking was noted as an issue area that was mentioned in several responses. Diane Ruggiero also provided a report on the status of the Torpedo Factory. The new management plan will be presented to City Council in November and docketed for consideration in December. The status and plans will also be presented to the Waterfront Commission in November.

d. **Questions Regarding Activities of Other Organizations that are Relevant to**

the Waterfront Commission
Deb Roepke, Executive Director of the Alexandria Seaport Foundation, reported on the construction plans for Seaport II, the addition to the Seaport Foundation's facilities.

e. **Possible Agenda Topics for November Waterfront Commission Meeting**

- An update on the status and plans for the Torpedo Factory
- The Waterfront Commission's annual letter on its recommendations for the City's budget. It was noted that the Commission hasn't received a request for its recommendations, so Diane Ruggiaro will inquire about that. In preparation for that letter, Commissioners are asked to review its 2025 budget letter and provide comments to the chair so that the Commission can complete this task at its November meeting.

5. **Next Meeting**: November 17, 2026 (Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson Street)

6. **Adjournment** – at 9:28 am