City of Alexandria, Virginia  
PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, April 25, 2019  
7 p.m.

P&RC Members:
Present: Jennifer Sands Atkins, Chair (District 2); Stephen Beggs (District 2); Matthew Walsh, Secretary (District 2); Liz Birnbaum (District 1); Brian McPherson (District 3); Gina Baum (District 1); Ashley Sanchez-Viafara (HS Youth Rep)

By Phone: Abby Froemming (District 3);

Absent: Barbara Marvin (District 1); Judy Coleman, Vice Chair; Connor Rex (HS Youth rep)

RPCA Staff: James Spengler, Director; Dinesh Tiwari, Deputy Director, Park Ops.; Laura Durham, Division Chief, Recreation Services; Tiffany Marbury, Executive Assistant; Jack Browand, Division Chief, Park Planning; Bob Williams, Division Chief, Park Ops; Dana Wedeles, Principle Planner, Park Planning.

Other City Staff: Nathan Imm, Principle Planner, Planning and Zoning; Karl Moritz, Director, Planning and Zoning.

I. CALL TO ORDER
Commission chair, Jennifer Sands Atkins called the meeting to order at 7:11 p.m.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS – NON-AGENDA ITEMS

III. COMMISSION REPORTS (verbal reports by District)

DISTRICT 1: Gina Baum and Jennifer Atkins had nothing to report. Liz Birnbaum stated that she attended the recent River Renew stakeholder meeting, which discussed the cost residents will endure. The project will cause an increase of $110 per year (roughly $9 per month). The next stakeholder meeting is May 1.

DISTRICT 2: Matthew Walsh had nothing to report. Stephen Beggs reported that the Potomac Yard Metro Implementation Group (PYMIG) recently met to discuss usage of the southern entrance.

DISTRICT 3: Brian McPherson and Abby Froemming had nothing to report.
HIGH SCHOOL REPS: Ashley Sanchez-Viafar areported that T.C Williams High School has a broken air-conditioning system. Repairs are scheduled in the next few weeks.

IV. INFORMATION & UPDATES

a. Open Space Policy Plan Update

“Open Space Update” posted at:

Dana Wedeles introduced Karl Moritz and Nathan Imm, from the Department of Planning and Zoning. Moritz and Imm gave a presentation discussing updates to the Open Space Policy Plan.

Commission Discussion:
Commission members agreed that open space should be intentional and not an afterthought, and that the City should approach the planning of private open space on a larger scale. They also stated there is a benefit to having some control over the space and designating certain areas for specific use. Atkins stated that the presentation will be given to the Environmental Policy Commission and the Planning Commission. Comments and questions from each presentation will be collected and shared with all commissions prior to the joint session on May 20.

b. Resource Allocation & Resource Recovery Policy

“Resource Allocation and Cost Recovery” posted at:

Laura Durham, Division Chief, Recreation Services, gave a presentation on the Resource Allocation & Cost Recovery Policy. The presentation precedes next month’s commission meeting where the consultant, GreenPlay, will discuss their recent findings and recommendations.

Commission Discussion:
McPherson asked how the success rate of programs are measured. Durham stated that the main indicator of a successful program is its enrollment. There are some programs that do not meet their minimum enrollment and they are cancelled. Birnbaum wanted clarification on the impact the resource allocation and cost recovery policy has had on the department. Durham stated that though the policy is not the only factor responsible for the positive trend over the last few years, it is a strong contributor. The Commission agreed that the policy is helpful in directing the use of tax dollars. Durham stated that the policy will be presented to City Council in June with the updates noted in the presentation.
V. ITEMS FOR ACTION:
   a. Approval of Minutes: March 21, 2019
      Walsh moved and Beggs seconded the approval of the March minutes. The Commission
      approved the motion by unanimous voice vote.

VI. DIRECTOR’S REPORT
   a. FY 2020 Operating & CIP Budget Update
      James Spangler, Director, RPCA, shared the departments strategic challenges presented to
      City Council earlier this month. He addressed the following challenges:

      • Shift from General Fund support for programs to participant fees.
      (risk: equity, program dependence)
      • Aging indoor aquatics center, that house the largest volume of programs.
      (risk: facility fails)
      • Open space demand. (risk: lack of active space, conversion to other uses)
      • Seasonal staff system. (risk: not competitive in labor market)
      • Public demand and expectations. (risk: poor experiences)

VII. DIVISION/PROJECT UPDATES: Recreation Services; Park Operations; Park
      Planning, CIP & Marina
      Division updates (staff reports) posted at:
      https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/recreation/info/PRCCombinedReports25April
      2019(2).pdf

      Browand stated that the dog park lights at Brenman should be installed in the next few
      weeks, and the project of moving and upgrading the playground at Four Mile Run will be
      presented to the Planning Commission next month. He also stated that the new King Street
      Park is a popular area, and is doing very well. Walsh stated that Simpson playground is very
      popular and gave kudos to Dana and the park planning team that lead the project.

VIII. NEXT MONTH MEETING ITEMS – Working Draft Attached

IX. NEXT MEETING
    May 16, 2019 – Charles Houston Recreation Center

X. ADJOURNMENT
    At 9 p.m., Baum moved and McPherson seconded meeting adjournment. A unanimous voice
    vote approved the motion.

*Please note that meeting minutes are a brief summary of topics discussed during each Commission
meeting. Meetings are voice recorded in their entirety, and recordings are available upon request.