I. CALL TO ORDER
Chair Atkins called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS – NON-AGENDA ITEMS
Nothing reported.

III. PRESENTATIONS / INFORMATION
a. Comprehensive Athletic Fields Plan Update
“Athletic Fields Update” posted at:

Robert Narvaez (Urban Planner, Park Planning) reported that the City completed athletic field assessments in 2017. Park Operations has started to work on the recommended improvements based on that report. In the upcoming years, some fields will close for renovations. Park Planning will start conducting interviews with various user groups to gain more information, and find alternative fields to minimize the effects of the closures. Fields at Minnie Howard and Ft. Ward will be the first scheduled for re-carpeting.
Commission Discussion:
The commission inquired how long re-carpeting a field would take, and the timeline for the final report. Dan Roush indicated that re-carpeting a field takes approximately eight weeks. The Commission will receive a drafted report in June and a final report in October.

b. City of Alexandria Landscape Guidelines Update

Bethany Znidersic (Principal Planner, Park Planning) reported that interns researched possible updates to the existing Landscape Guidelines. They reviewed guidelines from neighboring jurisdictions to determine if their recent updates were applicable or beneficial to the City of Alexandria. In the fall, Park Planning reached out to other City departments as well as other divisions within RPCA to get internal feedback on the current guidelines and suggested improvements. They are currently working to draft the needed updates proposed. Once the draft is complete by early summer, they will obtain feedback from the community, landscape designers, and the Commission. Consideration of the document by the Planning Commission and City Council is late December.

Commission Discussion:
Chair Atkins asked if Znidersic could give a few examples of the requested updates. Znidersic stated that they have received a broad range of requests. Storm Water suggested that to help with some of the regulatory guidelines, it would be beneficial to reference the green infiltration plantings for streets. Another suggestion was that the landscape guidelines include soil specks. It is a priority to reference the National Resources Plan and Urban Forestry Master Plan when considering these updates to ensure continuity.

c. Youth Football Program Update & Discussion

Margaret Orlando (Division Chief, RPCA), Tamika Coleman (Regional Sports Program Director, RPCA), and Jim Gibson (Alexandria Titans Football Commissioner 2017) reported on the current status of the league, the transition to becoming volunteer led, and the recent concerns of parents.

Orlando stated that the Alexandria Titans is the only league/club in Fairfax County Youth Football League operated by a City government. RPCA forms the teams, and the teams play in the Fairfax County league. Rebranded in 2001, the Alexandria Titans Youth Football Club formed an advisory group of parents and coaches, of whom Mr. Gibson was the Chair. Coaches, staff and parents appointed him as volunteer Commissioner. He accepted that role, and has been the commissioner since that time. In 2014, the group and the City decided to transition from being City facilitated to parent facilitated as an affiliate organization, and a goal was set to make that transition by 2017.
In 2016, some supporting families aged out of the program and there was a need to recruit additional volunteers. By 2017, the Board grew to ten members, with a number of volunteers supporting the program. The Board obtained its 501c3 status, which is required to become an affiliate. There were some concerns and questions from parents involving program policies. On January 30, the City held a meeting to answer any questions parents may have had.

Coleman stated that there were many questions covered during the meeting including how coaches are chosen and the training they are required to have, how players are fitted for equipment, how teams are formed, and how schedules are created and the timing of their release. All questions and responses are located in the Titan’s Football Update report.

Gibson stated that over the last 28 consecutive years he has been an assistant coach and head coach of multiple youth sports teams, an assistant Commissioner and Commissioner, and currently Chair of the Youth Sports Advisory Board. He is very dedicated to the community and the youth football program. Earlier in the season, a parent approached him with questions and concerns pertaining to the league. While attempting to answer those questions, the conversation escalated to a point that he felt the parents were disrespectful. He has since had email contact with both parents and though their questions were answered, they are still not content with the responses they received.

**Commission Discussion:**

Atkins asked if the program needs volunteers, and what methods are used to recruit. Orlando stated that the Recreation Department advertises volunteer opportunities, and reaches out to high schools and colleges. It is required that each coach has two assistant coaches on their team. Atkins also mentioned that one of the complaints she received was related to helmet fittings, and went on to ask how often equipment is replaced. Coleman stated that Helmets go through an inspection every three years. A third party x-rays all helmets for damages. Only helmets that pass this inspection are used. The City purchases new equipment every year to replace old and/or damaged equipment. The Commission inquired about the age range of players. Coleman stated that players are seven to sixteen years old and the age/weight matrix is used to forming teams. Baum asked about the transition to a volunteer run program. Orlando stated there is a group of 10 people that intend to apply for affiliate status in April. The City will assist with the program until the group is fully self-sufficient. Walsh asked if the transition would cause a fee increase. Gibson stated that the goal is to transition as seamless as possible. Baum asked for thoughts on the talks of restricting tackle football to an older age group, and the possibility of concussions. Gibson and Coleman explained that players and parents participate in Heads-Up Football training prior to the season. The training explains the correct way to tackle to minimize head injuries. Gibson went on to say, even though football has been the focus for head injuries, there are many other sports that have a higher injury rate. McPherson mentioned a complaint that some teams are too small. Orlando stated that the maximum number of players on a roster is 22. The number of players fluctuates due to weight loss/gain, a participant leaving the program, or injuries. The City constantly monitors the number of players on each team and makes changes when necessary. The Commission noted that many of the rules in question are those of the Fairfax County League and not the City of Alexandria.
IV. ITEMS FOR ACTION
a. Approval of Minutes: January 18, 2018
McPherson moved and Beggs seconded the approval of the January 18, 2018 minutes. The Commission approved the motion by unanimous voice vote.

V. PROJECT UPDATES
a. Waterfront Projects
i. Windmill Hill Park Shoreline
Browand stated that the Windmill Hill Park Shoreline project continues to be on schedule. He anticipates the park will be functional by early spring. Portions of the park will open in phases due to planting and ongoing improvements. There will be a community meeting held in the next 4-6 weeks to provide an opening schedule. The Union Street corridor improvements have fallen behind schedule due to the continuous construction activity of the Robinson South neighborhood. The City has decided not to include certain pedestrian improvements until a substantial amount of construction is complete at Robinson Street South. Those improvements include a raised crosswalk at Wilkes Street, and raised intersection at Gibbon Street. The mid-block crossing will require the elimination of three parking spaces on Union Street. Browand will present the requirement to the Parking and Traffic Board at the end of March. He asked the Commission to endorse the elimination of those spaces, which will improve safety at the crossing.

Commission Discussion:
The Commission inquired about the specific location of the spaces and frequency of use. Browand stated that the spaces are located at the intersection of Wilkes Street Tunnel and Union Street. It will require 20 feet from the north side (roughly 2 parking spaces) and 10 feet from the south (roughly 1 parking space). This will open up the view for those exiting the bike trail. He went on to say the plan did not clearly express the need for space; however, it is a common ailment for this type of project. Residents are in favor of the improvements, and the Parking and Traffic Board will notify them of this need. The spaces are in use heavily on the weekends; however, there are often spaces available a block away.

Motion
Baum moved and Walsh seconded to endorse the removal of three parking spaces at the intersection of the Wilkes Street Tunnel and Union Street in order to provide greater safety. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

ii. Interim Fitzgerald Square/Old Dominion Boat Club (ODBC) site
Browand reported that the mitigation project has started with dredging at the foot of Oronoco Street. Within the next month, West Point Park will re-open to the public. We hope to receive multiple proposals from the current RFP and begin the utility upgrade later this spring. The upgrade will support the new King Street waterfront
park. It also includes removal of the infrastructure inside the Torpedo Factory that is servicing the marina. This will allow for separate metering if needed.

Browand reported that the City took possession of the ODBC on January 31. Utility disconnects and tree removal has begun. The City removes trees out of necessity, and those that would not survive the construction impacts. However, the City will replant a number of trees in the park. Demolition of the building will take place March 17. The demolition will kick off the ground breaking for the park. The park should be available by mid-fall, barring any unforeseen setbacks.

For clarification, Browand explained that Waterfront Park is located on the Strand with its southern border being Prince Street. Construction will not affect this park. King Street Park (temporary name), will consist of the ODBC property, and the current King Street Park. The current park will close the week of March 17, and will not re-open to the public until project completion in mid-fall. The only fencing that will remain after completed construction is security fences for the two piers. The City is required to maintain utility services to the two piers. Planning presents commercial boat licenses to City Council on March 6 and March 17. New licenses will be in place April 1.

The Point Lumley connector is a new project that is near completion. The shoreline has been stabilized and raised, and will stretch from the foot of Prince Street to the 210 Strand open space. This will begin the process of having a continuous waterfront walk. Within 18 months, the plan is to have a continuous walkway from Oronoco Street to Jones Point Park.

b. **Cameron Run Regional Park Planning Process**

   Browand reported that staff and NOVA Parks meet on Tuesday. The intent is that staff will be actively working with NOVA Parks. Respective Commissions and Boards receive questions/comments, with an ultimate goal of identifying whether or not we have a sustainable partnership. The meeting includes planning staff from RPCA and Nova Parks, Deborah Collins and Paul Gilbert. More information will follow over the next few months.

   **Commission Discussion:**

   McPherson inquired if there had been any communication since the last Commission update. Browand stated that the only communication is the request for the meeting on Tuesday. Atkins stated that NOVA Parks recently elected a new board. She has sent requests to the Alexandria Representatives, inviting them to a Commission meeting.

c. **West End Park & Programming Forum**

   Browand reported that the meeting on January 31 was very successful. Birnbaum attended and represented the Commission. Approximately 20 people attended. Public Art was a strong talking point among the attendees. Birnbaum concurred that public art was very important to the residents. Residents were conscious of what services they are getting, and the fact that they lost festivals when the City transitioned to the cost recovery model. Birnbaum went on to say the meeting was a
great idea, and the residents really seemed to appreciate it. Browand stated that he is in the process of gathering the comments from the online survey, the meeting, and those received via email. There is an internal staff meeting next week to address the comments and questions. Once complete, the community will receive the responses and the responses will post to the City’s website. Similar meetings will occur yearly for each park planning district. He encourages members of the Commission to attend.

Browand stated that the Patrick Henry Project is moving along very well. There are a number of synthetic turf options under consideration. It is likely that recycled crumb rubber is not a consideration. For updates on the project, ACPS is maintaining a project webpage. Live updates are available through an onsite camera. Browand will supply the Commission with a link to the live camera. The project is on schedule to be completed and the facility fully functioning by January 2019, with the exception of the field. The estimated time of completion for the field is summer 2019.

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. FY19 Budget
James Spengler (Director, RPCA) stated that next Tuesday, the City Manager makes his FY19 budget recommendations to City Council. RPCA fared very well. Most reductions submitted were not accepted. Most supplements requested were accepted, and we will restore some maintenance services. We were successful in extending the resource allocation and cost recovery policy to have revenue increases offset reductions. Patrick Henry Recreation Center will operate as a full-service center.

Commission Discussion:
Walsh asked what seemed to change about the fiscal outlook to bring about the positive response. Spengler stated that based on the voice of the public and the Commission, the City Manager believed previous reductions may have been reduced too far in terms of service level. One of his priorities was to restore maintenance. The revenue this year looks to be better than forecasted. The level of 2% reductions other departments submitted included efficiencies, which helped allocate additional funding to new initiatives. Spengler went on to say, Browand was able to offset a large amount of reductions by timing the commercial licensees. The full list will be available and sent to the Commission on Tuesday

VII. DIVISION UPDATES: Recreation Services; Park Operations; Park Planning, CIP & Marina
Division updates (staff reports) posted at:
https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/recreation/info/PRCCOmbinedStaffReports2_15_18.pdf

Commission Discussion:
Commissioners inquired about the number of trees removed in the Park Operations report (page 7 in the above link). Mr. Spengler stated that the majority of tree removals are service requests from
residents for trees on public land. The Commission mentioned that in the Urban Forestry chart, FY18 list 549 trees removed, and 234 planted.

VIII. COMMISSION REPORTS (verbal reports by District)
DISTRICT 1: Gina Baum and Barbara Marvin had no information to report. Liz Birnbaum reported the Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) groups had another meeting on February 1, and another is scheduled at City Hall next week. The City has tried to eliminate raw sewage run out that occurs at four locations after a substantial rainstorm. The legislature has adopted a law that states the problem needs to be resolved in a specific amount of time. Three options are under consideration to resolve the problem quickly. During the recent meeting, the group compared all three options using five criteria. The criteria included:
- Cost - Life cycle cost including initial construction and O&M.
- Schedule - All needing to be done within the specified time.
- Community Impact – Mostly from Construction itself.
- O&M – Both the burden to do the O&M and the community impact.
- Adaptability – The ability to expand and adapted to climate change and other future factors.

Birnbaum stated that based on the presentation, what they are calling “Option B” seems to be what the group is leaning towards. This option includes building large new tunnels near Hoofs Run, under Old Town and across the southern end to the Waste Water Treatment Plant. This option also involves the least treatment of the Oronoco Bay outfall. It meets the criteria, but it does involve dumping a considerable amount of untreated mixed sewage and storm water into Oronoco Bay. The other option that is still a possibility is building a large storage tank at Oronoco Bay and near Jones Point. This option would have more of a community impact than option B, which includes construction and the routine cleaning of the tanks. They discussed using green infrastructure to offset some of the need. The group will look into the cost effectiveness of that option and provide more data in upcoming meetings.

DISTRICT 2: Stephen Beggs and Matthew Walsh had no information to report. Jennifer Atkins stated that there is another meeting next week for the Dominion transmission line project. A list of questions and concerns from meeting attendees and Park Planning staff went to Dominion. Next week’s meeting should provide answers to those questions. Atkins also stated that she had additional communication with those close to the Dale Street Garden and 3550 Commonwealth Avenue Park projects. Everything seems to be going smoothly. She did receive some complains about maintenance conditions of the gym at George Washington Middle School.

DISTRICT 3: Brian McPherson had no new information to report. Abby Froemming gave Kudos to Recreation Services. She stated that her son just started a toddler fitness class at Nannie J. Lee Recreation Center and he adores his coach Skylar. Judy Coleman attending a recent Eisenhower West meeting that included reports on sewer modeling, an air quality study, and feasibility of the bridge that would connect the Van Dorn metro area to Pickett Street. Conner Rex had no new information to report.
IX. MARCH MEETING ITEMS – Working Draft Attached

X. NEXT MEETING
March 15, 2018 at the Charles Houston Recreation Center.

XI. ADJOURNMENT
At 9:08 p.m., Beggs moved and McPherson seconded meeting adjournment. A unanimous voice vote approved the motion.