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

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS – NON-AGENDA ITEMS
Chair Atkins thanked Torpedo Factory Art Center staff for accommodating the Commission meeting at their facility. Brett Johnson (Regional Program Director, Office of the Arts) shared general information about the center and its artists. The City of Alexandria manages the Torpedo Factory, which houses 131 artists, and a handful of non-profit organizations and small businesses. The center is open 360 days a year. Johnson also handed out a brochure listing programs and exhibitions scheduled for January-June 2018.

Commission Discussion:
Chair Atkins asked if there are plans to include musical performances or other performing arts to the centers offerings. Johnson stated that some aspects of performing arts have spilled over into the visual arts programming. Future goals and objectives of the center may call for programs specifically dedicated to performing arts. Atkins also asked about Johnson’s professional background. Johnson stated that he has been in his current position for nine months, and lived in the City for the last six years. For five years, Johnson served as the Director of Visual Arts at the
Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton, VA. Prior to that position, he worked at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, and the Hirshhorn Art Museum. James Spengler (Director, RPCA) asked how the Commission could stay connected to the Art Center and its upcoming activities. Johnson offered to add Commission members to the Torpedo Factory’s monthly newsletter.

III. PRESENTATIONS / INFORMATION
a. Environmental Action Plan Update

Ellen Eggerton (Sustainability Coordinator, Transportation & Environmental Services) gave a presentation on the Environmental Action Plan 2030. The presentation included:

- EAP Update Process
- EPC Recommendations
  - Land Use and Open Space
  - Energy
  - Outreach & Education
- Update Process Timeline

Commission Discussion:
In response to the goal of a 20% greenhouse gas reduction by 2020 and 80% by 2050, Coleman inquired if car traffic through the city contributes to greenhouse gases. Eggerton stated that it is a contributing factor, but it is not solely measured. Transportation contributes an average of 30%, and commercial buildings contribute approximately 40%. The City uses utility usage to measure greenhouse gases. The City contributes to 4%, while the remainder comes from residential usage and private companies. Beggs asked if the state provided incentives for counties, cities, or residents, to help reduce greenhouse gases. Eggerton stated that the state of Virginia does not offer an incentive, but there are incentives through the City of Alexandria. It is the job of T&ES to keep residents informed and offer programs similar to the current solar panel campaign. Birnbaum stated that one way to encourage green infrastructure is to incorporate it into the land use decisions for developing areas. Eggerton stated that it is included in the Storm Water Utility Credits, but not currently in the Environmental Action Plan. Atkins inquired on the request for council to create a new commission. Eggerton stated that not everyone agreed to this recommendation due to the staff resources that would be involved. The decision date for all recommendations is April 30.

Steve Milone (Environmental Policy Commission) stated that his Commission has specifically been working on land use, open space, and tree canopy coverage. One of their goals is to maintain 7.3 acres of open space per thousand residents. They also proposed reestablishing the Open Space Steering Committee and Open Space Fund.
b. **RPCA Strategic Plan Update**


Dana Wedeles (Principal Planner, Park Planning) presented the draft of the Strategic Plan. By the end of May, the Strategic Plan Council will work with Consultant, Reingold, to develop a document that tells the “story” of RPCA. In June, they will develop an outreach plan, with implementation beginning in July. Wedeles encouraged questions and comments from the Commission, and noted that performance measures for each of the focus areas are in development.

**Commission Discussion:**

Coleman asked about the wording of public space, cultural activities and programming. The phrase displays in different orders throughout the document. Wedeles stated that she would edit to ensure consistency. Atkins liked that the plan discusses workplace culture and office culture. She stated that everything seems to be on an equal footing, and it is great to see higher-level strategic thinking. Spengler stated that the department’s workforce is over 1,000 people and it is important that everyone has the same goals, and that all statements in the Strategic Plan are measurable.

**IV. ITEMS FOR ACTION**

a. **Approval of Minutes: February 15, 2018 & March 15, 2018**

Birnbaum suggested an amendment to the March and February minutes, citing as error in the spelling of Hooff’s Run. McPherson moved and Beggs seconded the approval of the February and March minutes with the amendments. The Commission approved the motion by unanimous voice vote.

**V. PROJECT UPDATES**

a. **Waterfront Project Updates**

i. **Interim Fitzgerald Square/Old Dominion Boat Club (ODBC) site**

Browand reported the completion of the Oronoco outfall project, and the reopening of West Point Park. He is currently working with T&ES to restore the seating area at the end of the street. T&ES is near completion of fixing an outfall at the southern portion of Founder’s Park. This will be a temporary replacement until the flood mitigation occurs in six to seven years. The marina will start utility upgrades in the next 30 days, with a completion timeframe of September or October. Upgrades include replacing power supplies on every pier, installation of lit pedestals, decoupling the power from the Torpedo Factory, and separating the power to Old Dominion pier.

**Commission Discussion:**

McPherson asked what the City is currently charging for boat slips, and a price comparison to the costs of neighboring areas. Browand stated that the cost is $11 per
foot, per month, per year. It is located at the top level of the cost recovery plan, and based on market analysis, it falls in mid-range of neighboring areas.

ii. **King Street Park**

Browand stated that completion of King Street Park construction is on schedule for this fall. The first phase of construction will focus on creation of a dedicated walkway to the Old Dominion Boat Club slips. In addition, the park has a designated public art project. Diane Ruggiero (Deputy Director, Office of the Arts) stated that each public art project has a designated task force. Almost 50 artists were invited, and 23 responded to the invitational. Out of those respondents, the task force selected the top 12 applicants for review and discussion. In June, the artist, SOFTlab will have their first visit/meet and greet. Once there is a final concept design, it will go before the task force for review. Recommendations from the task force forward to the Arts Commission for approval. There is currently a height limit on the artwork of 15 feet.

Browand stated that the City now owns the 210 Strand, which is located where the waterfront walk now ends. He also mentioned that the construction crew discovered three ship hulls in that area. He offered to have local archeologists attend a commission meeting and discuss the recent findings.

**Commission Discussion:**

In relation to King Street Park, Atkins asked if there are funds currently allocated for programming in the park. Browand stated that RPCA requested additional funding for park maintenance. Visit Alexandria will receive funds through a public/private partnership. They will raise $175,000 in addition to $175,000 of public money, designated for programming and beautification efforts near King Street waterfront. Ruggiero will also look into a different way to approach the special events policy to accommodate the park’s needs. In relation to the hulls, McPherson asked what archeologists would do with the findings. Browand stated that they would try to excavate and preserve them as much as possible.

iii. **Windmill Hill Park**

Browand stated that the Windmill Hill Park project continues after weather related construction delays. In addition, the water company asked for a commercial sized meter, which called for a redesign of the entire irrigation system. He stated that one of the biggest challenges would be keeping people out of the area before the park landscaping is established. Many areas of the park may look ready for use before the project is complete. He stated that there were enough funds to install a northern pier in the park.

iv. **Patrick Henry Project**

Browand reported that the final piece of steel will be place in early May, and he is working with the School Board and City Council to schedule a ceremony. He will
keep the Commission informed of the details. December 21 continues to be the completion date for the project, with students utilizing the new building when they return from their winter break on January 3.

b. **Cameron Run Regional Park Planning Process**
Browand reported that the second meeting between City and NOVA staff included a brainstorming session. The group discussed what could fit on the site in order to maintain the seven principals established as part of the planning process. They also discussed what NOVA Parks would do with a seven-year extension, or a longer lease. He stated that they seemed to be open to the types of programming potentially offered on the existing site for year-round use. The next meeting will be in two weeks, and will include discussions on pricing and a partnership structure. He stated that the group will present details of the proposed partnership to the Commission and City Council in the fall.

**Commission Discussion:**
Coleman stated that it sounds like discussions include both short-term and long-term options. Browand stated that the discussion did not prohibit long-term options. McPherson commented that he thought someone from the Commission would be involved in the meetings. Browand stated that it was determined from the City Manager’s Office that staff from RPCA, a Deputy City Manager, and NOVA Parks would be involved in the meetings. Staff would then update their respective Commissions.

c. **Warwick Pool**
Browand stated that Warwick pool would open Memorial Day weekend, with a dedication and Open House on May 24. The grand opening is May 26, and may include demos of aquatic activities.

VI. **DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

a. **Proposed FY19 Budget Operating & CIP Budget**
James Spengler (Director, RPCA) introduced Julie Miles, the newly hired Recreation Manager II for the Classes and Camps Section within the Recreation Services Division. Julie started her career in recreation with the YMCA in 2005. She spent seven years at the Ayrlawn Program Center in Bethesda as a Program Coordinator for gymnastics, music and ballet, and then became a Program Director where she was responsible for all youth and teen sports, enrichment and arts programs and camps. Julie spent two years as the Assistant Director of Admissions for the Art Institute of Washington, and is now joining us after four years with the City of Fairfax as the Community Programs Coordinator. Julie played a significant role with the City of Fairfax in the growth of the Summer Camp programs and assisted in completing the department’s documentation for its first CAPRA accreditation.

In relation to the FY19 budget, Spengler stated that the process is ending. The final two workshops concluded this week. The “add/delete” process will begin soon and the vote for final budget is in early May. RPCA will need a new agreement with the school system and Patrick Henry Elementary School on how it is to operate as a full service center.
Commission Discussion:
Atkins asked if we are anticipating any possible deletes based on questions asked during budget meetings. Spengler replied that the only questions received were in reference to delaying athletic field improvements and using those funds for public safety. He was opposed to the idea and shared those thoughts with Council. Beggs inquired about the field at Jefferson Houston and stated that it looked damaged. Spengler informed the Commission that an old waterline under the field has been a challenge to fix, and has been under repair.

VII. DIVISION UPDATES: Recreation Services; Park Operations; Park Planning, CIP & Marina
Division updates (staff reports) posted at:
https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/recreation/info/PRCCombinedStaffReports3_15_18.pdf

VIII. COMMISSION REPORTS (verbal reports by District)
DISTRICT 1: Barbara Marvin had no information to report. Liz Birnbaum attended the Potomac River clean up at Four Mile Run Park and there was a huge turnout. She also noted that Judy Noritake is receiving a special award at the Earth Day Celebration. Birnbaum is unable to attend the event but asked that someone from the Commission attend. Atkins will attend in Birnbaum’s absence. In regards to the Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO), Birnbaum reported that she attended the last official meeting. The group agreed on option B, however, there were a few amendments. The group has referred to the recommended option as “Option B+”. The adjustments to the plan will manage more of the overflow. The group formed a small subcommittee to finalize the text of the recommendation. The committee presented the recommendation to council. The CSO Committee recommended to Council that Alex Renew should take ownership of the City’s combined sewer system, if they agreed to take on the bonding, construction, and long-term management of this project. A rate reduction is one of the benefits of this recommendation. The current estimated impact on rates is $22-$40 increase per month. Atkins asked if there is a need for the Committee to weigh in on this issue with Council. Browand mentioned that this project will affect City parks, especially Oronoco Bay, and the Commission should continue to stay aware of progress. It was determined that since Council will make the decision on Tuesday, a letter from the Commission is not necessary. However, if anyone has personal interest in the issue, you can send a note to Council. Gina Baum reported an update from the Water Front Commission. She stated that the commission wants to revisit a recommendation of making the unit block of King Street exclusive to pedestrians.

DISTRICT 2: Stephen Beggs had no information to report. Jennifer Atkins attended the final meeting of the Dominion power line project. The group recommended that council consider the Potomac Avenue option. The option will go to council before June.

DISTRICT 3: Judy Coleman had no information to report. Brian McPherson stated that the T.C Williams High School lights project is still in discussion. Conner Rex mentioned that students
received a survey related to the project. Atkins asked if there is a timeframe for a final decision. McPherson said that there is not a clear decision date.

Atkins asked the Commission to reference a meeting chart. The chart gives a list of City related meetings that members can attend. She asked members to go after areas of personal interest, and to continue thinking about other meetings that may benefit the Commission to have a presence. Birnbaum volunteered to be the Four Mile Run representative.

IX. NEXT MONTH MEETING ITEMS – Working Draft Attached

X. NEXT MEETING
May 17, 2018 at Charles Houston Recreation Center.

XI. ADJOURNMENT
At 9:05 p.m., McPherson moved and Beggs seconded meeting adjournment. A unanimous voice vote approved the motion.