

**Summary Minutes
Monthly Meeting
ALEXANDRIA WATERFRONT COMMISSION
Tuesday, March 15, 2016
Sister Cities Conference Room
City Hall
301 King Street
7:30 a.m.**

Commission Members

Present

Charles Ablard, Historic Alexandria Foundation
Cheryl Ahearn , Citizen, Park Planning District I
Dennis Auld, Citizen, Park Planning District II
Gina Baum, Alexandria Park and Recreation Commission
Jerry Bennis, Alexandria Marina Pleasure Boat Leaseholders
Howard Bergman, Founders Park Community Association (FPCA)
Susan Cohen, Alexandria Commission for the Arts
Stewart Dunn, Alexandria Planning Commission
Charlotte Hall, Alexandria Chamber of Commerce and Chair
Kathryn Kolbe, Citizen, Park Planning District III
Jody Manor, Visit Alexandria
Sally Masterson, East of Washington St. and south of King St
Stephen Mutty, Alexandria Seaport Foundation
Edward (Ted) Pulliam, Alexandria Archaeology Commission
David Speck, Old Town Business and Professional Association (OTBPA)
Stephen Thayer, Citizen east of Washington St. and north of King St.
Townsend A. (Van) Van Fleet, Old Town Civic Association
Christa Watters, Citizen east of Washington St. and north of Pendleton St.
Ryan Wojtanowski, Environmental Policy Commission

Excused

John Bordner, Citizen west of Washington St.

Absent

Paul Smedberg, Member, Alexandria City Council

City Staff

Francine Bromberg, City Archaeologist, Office of Historic Alexandria
Jack Browand, Commission Staff Liaison and Division Chief, Park Planning, Design &
Capital Development, Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities (RPCA)
Captain Len Fouch, Alexandria Police Department (APD)
Tony Gammon, of Project Implementation (DPI)
Jim Hixon, Dock Master, RPCA)
Richard Lawrence, AICP, Urban Planner, Planning and Zoning (P&Z)
Katie North, Transportation & Environmental Services (T&ES)
Iris Portny, Commission Recording Secretary, RPCA
Steve Sindiong, T&ES

Guests

Brian Buzzell, resident
John Goslin, resident
K. S. (Skip) Masterson, resident
Joshua Nadas, U.S. National Park Service (George Washington Memorial Parkway)

Welcome and Introductions

Hall welcomed new Commissioners Susan Cohen, Cheryl Ahearn, and David Speck.

Approval of Minutes from January 19, 2016

Auld moved and Bergman seconded that the January 19, 2016 minutes be approved. Motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

Waterfront Commission Officer Election Policy

Hall introduced the Commission's draft officer election policy for discussion and approval. She noted the policy was drafted in response to Commissioner Smedberg's suggestion that the Commission have a formal policy on how and when to elect its officers. Browand noted that the language requiring elections to be held annually does not impose a term limit on the officer positions.

Van Fleet proposed the draft language be amended to specify that a quorum is needed for votes on officers. Wojtanowski proposed the draft policy's action dates be changed from June to May for elections and from May to April for nominations.

Wojtanowki moved, and Mutty seconded, that the policy be approved as amended. Motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Approved Policy Regarding Election of Officers as approved:

The Commission at the regular monthly meeting during the month of May, subject to a quorum, shall elect officers for a term of one year. Officers shall assume office beginning at the regular meeting in July and shall hold office until replaced. Officers may be removed for failure to perform their office by vote of the Commission, subject to a quorum, provided each member is notified in writing at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which such vote is held. Officer vacancies shall be filled by regular election, subject to a quorum, at any regular meeting.

Nominations: 1. At the regular April meeting, subject to a quorum, Commission members in good standing may be nominated for the office of Chair and Vice Chair by motion. 2. At the regular monthly meeting in May, subject to a quorum, Commission members shall elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson. 3. Officers shall assume office beginning at the regular meeting in July.

Waterfront Governance Subcommittee Presentation

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/recreation/info/WGovernancePresentation15March2016.pdf>

Background for Governance Subcommittee's review

Commissioner Kolbe, Subcommittee chair, noted that the subcommittee was created in August 2015 to examine the pros and cons of potential governance models for Waterfront public spaces, and to recommend to the full Commission which model would be best suited for managing Waterfront-related activities as the Waterfront Plan is implemented. Kolbe thanked Commissioners Watters, Speck, Auld, and Hall and Stephanie Landrum and Marcie Anderson of the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership for their work supporting the Governance Subcommittee.

Kolbe reviewed why the Governance Subcommittee was created. City staff advised Council in June 2014 that expectations for programming, operations and maintenance for the revitalized Waterfront's public spaces will be "much higher than the norm for city parks and will likely not be possible under the current city structure." The City then commissioned the 2015 BAE Urban Economics review of governance structures used for similar public spaces. The BAE report was briefed to the Commission in April 2015.

The Subcommittee considered the following models reviewed by the BAE report:

- city management (the City's current system),
- new government entity (e.g., Fairfax County Park Authority),
- supporting organization (e.g., Glen Echo Partnership), and
- public improvement district or authority (e.g. Arlington and DC BIDs).

Subcommittee process

Kolbe reviewed the Subcommittee's process for gathering information and assessing the advantages and disadvantages of each model. They heard from representatives from the Glen Echo Partnership, the Fairfax County Park Authority, Washington DC's Southwest and Capitol Riverfront BIDs, and the City of Alexandria's current Waterfront leadership team (Parks and Recreation, Transportation, General Services, Project Implementation, Planning & Zoning, Safety).

Factors considered when assessing the models

Kolbe said an important factor was the City's need for a single, flexible governance entity to oversee all activities related to Waterfront public spaces (e.g. operations, maintenance, programming and revenue generation) and that could do so in a way that balances public and private investment to support Waterfront services.

Kolbe said staff estimates that the annual net increase in operating expenses for the Waterfront will be about \$2.5 million, depending upon maintenance and programming levels that are implemented. She said these increased costs underscore the need to have a reliable revenue stream that can be dedicated for Waterfront-related uses. She said another factor is the need for a

governance model that can incorporate residential and business stakeholders' priorities into decision-making on a continuing basis.

Timing for governance decisions

Kolbe said the City needs to make decisions soon about Waterfront governance in light of the accelerated pace at which private Waterfront development has moved ahead. She said DC BID representatives had said it took between seven and nine months to create a BID's governing structure and priorities after deciding to create a BID.

Subcommittee recommendation: Community Improvement District (CID)

Kolbe reported that Subcommittee members unanimously recommend a Community Improvement District as the governance model best suited to the City's Waterfront's needs. She noted that, as local government, budgets have become tighter throughout the country, Business and Community Improvement Districts have become a popular way to leverage public and private funds, especially in high profile areas.

Kolbe said the Subcommittee recommends that the CID's geographic boundaries should run from Daingerfield Island to Jones Point.

CID Advantages

Kolbe said a key advantage of a CID governance model is that it can create a dedicated revenue stream for Waterfront-related activities. She said the current City governance model, in contrast, requires public revenues generated from Waterfront activities to go into the City's general revenue fund and then to compete with other City spending priorities during the annual budget process.

Kolbe said the Subcommittee was also impressed by a CID's ability to involve the people directly impacted by the Waterfront in governing decisions on a continuing basis.

Potential CID Disadvantages

Kolbe said a CID's potential disadvantages include the need to have a funding source before it can be implemented, the high ratio of residences to businesses in the Waterfront area and the potential perception that stakeholders would have less control over the area than they do with City governance.

Commission Discussion:

Commissioners commended Kolbe and the subcommittee for their review. Discussion focused on several major issues: Who will benefit from the City's "world class Waterfront" being created? Who should pay into a dedicated revenue stream to ensure top quality Waterfront operations? What is the best way to involve all City stakeholders in Waterfront-related decision-making?

Stakeholder participation in governance

In response to Wojtanowski's question, Kolbe **said** stakeholders from throughout the City could be included on the CID's Board of Directors just as representatives from throughout the City sit on the Waterfront Commission. Kolbe said Board composition would be one of many details to

be decided upon after Council approves the concept of creating a Community Improvement District (CID).

In response to Dunn's question whether business stakeholders' votes might be weighted by the size of a business, Richard Lawrence (P&Z) said an Arlington BID representative had said a membership's voting can be designed in different ways.

Mutty said he thought the Waterfront's long boundaries, crossing several neighborhoods, might create challenges in forging a majority consensus for decision-making since Improvement Districts typically cover only a single neighborhood.

Funding CID services

Kolbe emphasized that a CID is a bottom-up governance structure.

In response to Bergman's question about how revenue would be generated, Kolbe said the Subcommittee was not recommending which choices should be made about a CID-related tax district. She said one of a CID's advantages is the flexibility a community has in designing and implementing it. That flexibility includes the CID's governing structure and the scope of any related tax. Kolbe said City Council would be the final decision-maker on a CID-recommended tax rate.

Thayer asked what scope of business and/or residential fees would be needed to produce a revenue stream to support the desired level of Waterfront services. Kolbe said further analysis of CID-related financing options would be needed after Council had approved a CID as the preferred governance option.

Watters said that when the Subcommittee evaluated the governance models it recognized the City needs to put in place a structure to ensure a dedicated revenue stream for covering the ongoing expenses of the world-class waterfront that is planned.

Watters said the Subcommittee did not think a CID model would be *easy* to fund - but would be the *easiest* to fund when compared to the other available options. She noted the current budget proposal (FY2017) eliminates a Waterfront Park manager position. Watters said Waterfront stakeholders' willingness to support a CID-related tax assessment will be directly related to whether a property owner or business sees CID services creating visible benefit to their community.

A CID's potential residential impact

Several Commissioners said Waterfront residents are unlikely to support being included in a CID tax that supports Waterfront operations and maintenance. Van Fleet said any residential tax should be imposed Citywide.

Browand said most communities choose not to tax individual residences.

A CID's potential business support

Hall said the Governance Subcommittee's recommendation had not yet been presented to the Chamber of Commerce's governance group but the Chamber is very interested in having an effective Waterfront governance structure that can foster activity along Waterfront and King Street corridors. Manor said the success of local retail businesses is directly related to having an active and well-kept Waterfront. Watters said businesses in other local BID areas consider the high quality landscaping, maintenance and programming provided by a BID as directly benefiting their businesses.

Why not continue current City governance model?

Bergman said City staff manages Waterfront operations well and should continue to do so and that, rather than creating a CID governance structure for oversight, the Waterfront Commission should continue to serve as the oversight body for Waterfront operations. He said City leadership should be willing to raise the Citywide tax rate if additional revenues are needed to cover expanded Waterfront operations since the Waterfront Plan approved by the City was seen as benefitting all residents.

Watters noted that proposed City funding for parks maintenance is regularly cut during the City's budget review process. Speck said the need to create a new Waterfront governance model is fed by the City's dilemma of how to balance the full range of funding obligations in coming years without raising the City's tax rate to a point that cannot be sustained. Auld said the Waterfront needs a governance model that can protect the City's major investment in Waterfront infrastructure by creating a funding process that avoids having maintenance, operations and programming funds compete each year with other City funding priorities.

Commissioners agreed they needed more time to review the Subcommittee recommendations and consult with the organizations that they represent on the Commission.

Next steps

Speck moved and Mutty seconded that the Commission receive the Governance Subcommittee report today and schedule a Special Meeting for action on it.

The motion passed by voice vote with Bergman opposed and no abstentions.

Additional Commission questions

Ahearn asked if an analysis was available comparing the respective tax burdens paid by residents in Park Planning District 1 with the City's other planning districts. Hall said specific revenue choices were outside the Governance Subcommittee's tasking.

Several Commissioners said it would be useful to have additional information about revenue generation options before deciding whether a CID would be the most effective Waterfront governance model. It was agreed this could be discussed at the Special Meeting to be scheduled.

Commission Liaison Reports

Ad Hoc Monitoring Group on Waterfront Construction

In the absence of John Bordner, the Commission's representative on the Monitoring Group, Hall reported that the Monitoring Group continues its regular monthly meetings reviewing construction activities. Its next meeting will be April 4, 2016 at 5:30 p.m.

Motorcoach Task Force https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/tes/motorcoach/2016-03-10%20Motorcoach%20task%20force%20mtg%201%20pres_FINAL.pdf

Mutty reported that the City has reconvened the Motor Coach Task Force to develop recommendations on motor coach parking and loading/unloading. He said eight of the 12 parking spaces likely to be displaced by development are located in or near the Old and Historic District. Mutty said four meetings are planned and the first meeting, held March 10, 2016, set criteria for choosing parking locations. He said there was also a consensus that the City's motor coach parking regulations need better enforcement.

Steve Sindiong reported that the Task Force chair is Stephen Klejst (member of the Alexandria Transit Company Board of Directors and Transportation Commission) and the vice chair is Melissa McMahan (Traffic and Parking Board).

Marina Subcommittee

Thayer reported that the Marina Subcommittee's April 14 meeting would include an orientation for the Marina's pleasure boat leaseholders. He reviewed recent maintenance improvements made to the Marina area. Browand reviewed improvements planned for the transition space between Founders Park and the Marina.

In response to Bennis' question, Browand said the Marina Feasibility Study is expected to be ready to brief at the May meeting. He said the study assesses potential marina sites, including costs, but does not recommend a specific site.

Staff Reports

Old Town Area Parking Study (OTAPS)

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/recreation/info/WCOTAPSUpdate15March2016.pdf>

Bergman reported that Council had reviewed the OTAPS recommendations and authorized staff to move forward with short-term proposals. He said actions requiring new funding would not be initiated until after the FY2017 budget year begins in July 2016. Katye North (T&ES) reviewed the draft Parking Management Work Plan covering FY2016-FY 2019. She said Council would review individual proposals in more detail as planning moves ahead.

Baum said the severity of Old Town's parking problems make it urgent for the recommendations to be implemented as soon as possible. North said the City Manager's proposed FY2017 budget includes funds for an additional parking planner and, if approved by Council, this will accelerate implementation of the Work Plan.

Waterfront Plan Implementation

Gammon (DPI) reported that the City has reached a key milestone for the Waterfront SAP by hiring a design consultant to begin the flood mitigation design and permitting process. He said data collection will begin shortly and preliminary design work will be done over the coming year.

In response to Auld's request, Browand said staff would be providing to the Commission each month the current updated timeline for Waterfront implementation activities.

FY 2016-FY 2025 CIP Proposed Budget Summary

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/recreation/info/WCFY2017BudgetSummary15March2017.pdf>

Browand reviewed highlights of Waterfront-related funding included in staff's proposed 10-year Capital Improvement Plan (FY 2017-2026). Among the highlights he noted were \$63.6 million for Waterfront Small Area Plan elements, deletion of waterfront dredging that could be restored later when the exact timing of Waterfront SAP elements in this area is known, increased funding for way finding and signage, a \$2.2 million increase for Oronoco Outfall remediation, and a \$75,000 increase in RPCA's budget for Waterfront maintenance, beautification and programming.

Browand said staff would also be working to further aggregate funding information related to Waterfront operation and maintenance activities. He noted funding for large maintenance items such as reinforcement of the seawall is included in the 10-year CIP budget and funding for smaller items such as trail resurfacing is in the annual RPCA operating budget. Hixon reported a variety of Waterfront safety and beautification improvements near the Marina have been made.

Reports from Commissioners and Announcements

There were no Commissioner reports.

Browand said questions about the Governance Subcommittee report should be sent to the Chair.

Francine Bromberg (City Archaeologist) reported that Friends of Alexandria Archaeology are participating in the City's Spring to Action to collect donations for the costs of conserving the historic ship discovered at the Indigo Hotel site. She said donations would begin March 20, 2016.

Adjournment

Hall adjourned the meeting 9:45 a.m.