

Sports Commission Meeting Agenda

Thursday, November 17th, 2022

In Person/Virtual

Lubber Run Community Center

Time: 7:00pm to 9:00pm

Public Comment

Approval of Minutes

- Approval of October 27th, 2022 Meeting Minutes

New Business

- Pickleball Discussion and Presentations Pt.2
 - Richard Gold, President, Arlington County Tennis Association (ACTA)
- Combatting Hate in Sports Working Group Discussion

Commission Member Reports

- Chair Updates
- PSMP-IAC
- Communications Working Group
- Combatting Hate in Sports Working Group

Upcoming Meetings

- 2022 Sports Commission Meetings
 - December 15th, 2022

Sports Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 27th, 2022

Virtual Meeting

Time: 7:00pm to 9:00pm

Commission Members Present:

John Mingus, Chair
Justin Wilt, Vice Chair
John Bacon
Sherry Kohan
Drew Murray
Kristi Sawert

Jason Despain
David Lansing
Frank Tranfa
Nancy Sharkey

Commission Members Absent:

Greg Gimenez
George Thompson

County/APS Staff:

Greg Anselene, DPR
Tyler Remerow, DPR
Nakish Jordan, DPR
Debbie DeFranco, APS

Guests

Mark Lincoln
Adrie Custer
Robyn Garnett
Tim Dellinger
Helen White

Start

(7:03pm)

Public Comment

- None

Approval of Minutes

- September 22nd, 2022 Meeting Minutes approved
 - Motion – Chair, John Mingus
 - Second – John Bacon

New Business

- Pickleball Discussion and Presentations
 - Helen White, Arlington Pickleball Club (APC)
 - Background on Pickleball in Arlington.
 - Exponential growth of pickleball universally and in Arlington.
 - Current challenges regarding pickleball in Arlington is that there are not enough dedicated indoor and outdoor courts. Sharing the joint use courts with tennis and basketball is also problematic.
 - Proposed solutions include expanding the number of dedicated pickleball courts. Courts lined for multiple sports is not ideal but also helpful.
 - Glebe Park pilot program brought up. Noise factor of pickleball is also an issue. APC has taken noise into consideration for proposed pickleball court locations. Keeping two courts striped for pickleball at Glebe Park and acoustic fencing to be installed by end of year.
 - APC feels dedicated hours at multi use courts help to deal with conflicts and issues.
 - Nakish Jordan, Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)
 - History of DPR pickleball starting around early 2000's.
 - First pickleball classes added in 2009.
 - DPR began striping outdoor courts for multiuse to include pickleball in 2015.
 - 2017 marked the first basketball and pickleball multi use courts at Walter Reed.
 - In 2021 a Court Engagement Assessment was launched to assess future options for pickleball.
 - Six new indoor, multi-use pickleball courts added to inventory.
 - 11 additional outdoor courts striped between 2019 and 2022.
 - 20 total courts in DPR inventory.
 - Next step is to include dedicated single use pickleball courts.

Commission Member Reports

- **Chair Updates**
 - John Mingus, Chair - Those interested in spots commission should email Chair John Mingus
- **PSMP-IAC**
 - Nancey Sharkey – Kenmore field scheduled to be turfed in 2025. Field Utilization survey reup engagement in January.
- **Communications Working Group**
 - Justin Wilt, Vice Chair – None
- **Combatting Hate in Sports Working Group**
 - John Mingus, Chair - Next steps include renaming and implementation

Upcoming Meeting

- 2022 Sports Commission Meeting
 - November 17th, 2022

Adjourn

(8:33pm)

Christian Dorsey, County Board Liaison

Attest:

Tyler Remerow

Tyler Remerow, Staff Liaison

DRAFT

Arlington County Tennis Association

Current Challenges from Pickleball

National Snapshot - Tennis

Participation Going Up

- 2021 Physical Activity Council Sports, Fitness, and Recreational Activity Study:
- Despite the immense impact of the pandemic, the total number of tennis players ages 6 & older increased in the United States to 21.64 million in 2020 - a gain of 22.4% from 2019.
- 2020 brought forth the highest U.S. participation rate ever recorded in the PAC Study and specifically youth tennis participation has seen a surge of 36.6%.
- Core Tennis Participants increased by 27% and Non-Core Tennis Participation increased by 39% from 2019 to 2020.
- Additionally play times increased by 27.8% from 2019 for a total of 495.1 million times.
- Data and participation trends we've seen in 2021 continue to show similar increases as 2020 to tennis participation
- **Nationally, tennis had a percentage increase of 22.4% (3.96 million). In comparison, pickleball increased by 21.3% (0.74 million).**
- Source – USTA Mid-Atlantic Section

Tennis Participation is Particularly High in the Mid-Atlantic

- 2021 USTA Mid-Atlantic 2021 Tennis Participation Summary Report:
- The Mid-Atlantic ranks #1 in for the percentage of tennis players per population at 8.6%. We've consistently topped the country in this metric year over year.
- The overall number of Mid-Atlantic tennis players grew 27.3% from 2019 to 2020.
- **The average number of days played in the Mid-Atlantic is 26 (is above the National average), which is the highest of all regions who have an indoor tennis season.**
- 24% of former players and 2% of non-players in the Mid-Atlantic section stated that they intended to play tennis within the next year.

Gradual Decrease in Number of Public Courts in Arlington

- 1990s – around 103 courts
- Now – around 87 courts (counting the ones also being used for pickleball)

Demand for Courts

- Demand for court time is high, particularly at popular locations such as Towers Park and Virginia Highlands Park.

ACTA Numbers

- We have roughly 500 participants each season for our winter, spring, summer and fall doubles leagues.
 - 2022 Winter: 313
 - 2022 Spring: 542
 - 2022 Summer: 405
 - 2022 Fall: 572
- We have 82 players who registered for the 2022 singles ladder. They played more than 266 singles matches from March until the end of October 2022.
- We have more than 2527 email addresses on our email listserver.

USTA Programmatic Information for Arlington (2022):

- 511 Arlington residents currently participating in the USTA League program
- In partnership with DC Fray, the USTA offers a tennis program at Quincy Park
- 6 sessions were offered
- YTD total 496 participants in this program
- Due to court demand, the USTA has to limit the number of sessions offered.

Pickleball

- In a situation where we have a high demand for tennis courts combined with a gradual decrease in public courts in recent decades, pickleball popularity has exploded.
- Pickleball does not have many public courts and their supporters have pushed to re-purpose tennis courts and basketball courts for their usage.
- This creates a tension with the tennis community.

ACTA Position on Pickleball

- Most ACTA players are against either repurposing of tennis courts or making them dual usage with pickleball. Dual usage means distracting lines for tennis players.
- We support brand new pickleball facilities.
- Even though we are generally against losing any tennis courts, it may be wise to work with pickleball to find certain multicourt facilities that could be used for pickleball.

ACTA Position on Pickleball (continued)

- Otherwise, the County will make decisions about pickleball usage of tennis facilities that may or may not be in consultation with ACTA or pickleball representatives.
- For example, it is our understanding that Arlington County turned the Gunston tennis courts into dual usage for pickleball without input from ACTA or pickleball associations.

Consultations between ACTA and Pickleball

- ACTA has recently started having an ongoing conversation with pickleball representatives (Helen White and others) about the way forward.
- Pickleball has courts at Walter Reed in south Arlington and are attempting to turn Old Glebe Road courts into pickleball courts.
- Playing pickleball is louder than tennis and needs more space away from residential areas.

Ideas

- A couple of ideas could be adding pickleball courts to the Jennie Dean site in south Arlington or at Williamsburg school in north Arlington.
- Pickleball reps. want to use Bon Air courts. ACTA is against that, particularly while the adjacent Bluemont courts are in such poor condition pending the renovation of that site.

COMBATING HATE IN SPORTS WORKING GROUP

PRESENTATION TO THE SPORTS COMMISSION

JUNE 23, 2022

OVERVIEW

- Introduce Working Group Members
- Review Working Group Charge
- Summary of Working Group Approach
- Review Framework
- Commissioner Questions
- Next Steps

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS AND STAFF

Co – Chairs

- Megan Sheckles, Sports Commission
- Texas Williams, Sports Commission

DPR Staff Liaisons

- Gregory Anselene
- Nakish Jordan

Working Group Members

- Adam Balutis, Arlington Little League
- Shirley Brothwell, Former Sports Commission Chair, Member At Large
- Debbie DeFranco, Arlington Public Schools
- Robert Frederick, Black Parents of Arlington
- Mark Lincoln, Park and Recreation Commission
- Linh Nghe, Arlington Partnership for Children, Youth, and Family
- German Peri, Arlington Soccer Association
- Melissa Riemer, Arlington Soccer Association

WORKING GROUP CHARGE

The Sports Commission establishes a Combating Hate in Sports Working Group as a standing working group to better understand the prevalence of racist and hateful conditions in Arlington sports and support youth sports leagues' efforts to protect their participants from such conditions.

The Working Group is directed to:

- Collect information about the nature and extent of racist and hateful behavior in Arlington County youth sports activities;
- Conduct research to identify best practices for deterring and addressing racist and hateful behavior in youth sports;
- By no later than June 2022, develop a framework for youth sports leagues to consider in establishing league protocols for detecting, deterring, and addressing (including through restorative practices) racist and hateful behavior in youth sports;
- Identify and share information with youth sports leagues about resources for training their coaches, officials, and volunteers about unconscious biases and other relevant topics.
- Advise the Commission on this topic over time, including ways the Commission can leverage its platform to raise awareness, support youth sports leagues, and help ensure that sports activities occur in a safe and respectful environment.



WORKING GROUP APPROACH

- Discuss charge and circumstances giving rise to working group's formation.
- Shape working group culture and establish ground rules.
- Determine approach for getting started and building consensus.
- Develop Working Group Principles.
- Conduct benchmarking.
- Use benchmarking to learn about possible approaches.
- Identify top 3 benchmarking models and their attributes.
- Determine attributes that we want to include in our framework.
- Construct and review framework.

FRAMEWORK

1. Executive Summary
2. Guiding Principles
3. Policy and Procedures
4. Adult Pledge
5. Youth Pledge
6. Working Group Members and Staff Liaisons

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Purpose
- Background/Info on Sports Participation in Arlington County
- Charge/Meetings Held
- Overview of Work Conducted
 - Organizations Examined in Benchmarking
 - Three organizations selected: FIFA, NHL, USTA
- Summary of Framework

PRINCIPLES

- Ten principles that lay out our vision and values:
 - Three principles to anchor this work to the County's vision and definitional framework for diversity.
 - Three principles to anchor this work to the Destination 2027 Steering Committee report about health disparities and emphasize the role of sports in promoting health within traditionally marginalized communities.
 - Four principles to share our vision and values about the safety of the sports field for all players and the roles that sports leagues, coaches, umpires, and DPR play in protecting, promoting, and being allies.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

These policies and procedures set expectations for how DPR affiliated youth sports organizations (“Youth Sports Leagues”) will, at a minimum, set a tone for their participants’ on-field/court behavior. It further encourages Youth Sports Leagues to look for additional opportunities to incorporate principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion into their culture and operations. The overarching goal is to create a safe, supportive environment for youth sports through awareness, intentionality, and learning.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

I. Sports Commission, DPR, and Sports League Personnel Support Structure

Common among the benchmarked organizations was the establishment of a position whose primary role was to lead the organization's approach to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of its operations. The benchmarked organizations had also created a strong infrastructure to support and foster diversity, equity, and inclusion activities throughout the organization's global or national network.

The Working Group recommends the establishment of:

- Sports Commission Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commissioner (DEI Commissioner)
- DPR DEI Staff Liaison (DEI Liaison)
- League Lead Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer (Lead DEI Officer)

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

I. Sports Commission, DPR, and Sports League Personnel Roles

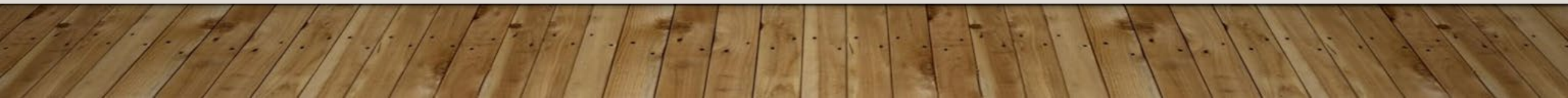
- DEI Commissioner and DEI Liaison will co-chair two Framework Implementation meetings each year to include themselves and the Lead DEI Officers.
- Names of Lead DEI Officers will be provided to DPR by November 1 of each year.
- DEI Commissioner and DEI Liaison will facilitate communication and information sharing among Lead DEI Officers and connect them to relevant County resources.
- Lead DEI Officers are responsible for communicating with DPR about Framework implementation, sharing information about DEI with their leagues, and answering questions that may arise.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

II. Policy and Guidance

Common among the benchmarked organizations was the establishment of clear policies and guidance to drive the organization's diversity, equity, and inclusion activities. This included strong value statements about diversity, equity, and inclusion; use of player and spectator pledges to reinforce support for diversity, equity, and inclusion; and a framework for identifying and addressing activity and behavior that runs counter to the organization's objectives.

The Working Group recommends:

- adoption of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement for the conduct of youth sports in Arlington County
 - requiring youth sports leagues to include the Statement in their registration systems so that every participant has to read and agree to abide by the parameters
 - requiring youth sports leagues to identify opportunities to further incorporate the Statement into governing documents and public facing communication
- 

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

“Other than to adhere to specific program requirements or residency standards, Arlington County sports activities and programs shall not discriminate against or exclude any individual for participation for reasons of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identification, sexual orientation, disability, or any other characteristic protected by local, state or federal law. Arlington County sports providers and participants pledge to contribute to a safe and supportive environment that is free of bias and discrimination and will not condone or engage in discriminatory speech or behavior.”

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

II. Policy and Guidance

The Working Group also recommends:

- encourage youth sports leagues to incorporate adult and youth pledges into their operations (various approaches offered)
- encourage youth sports leagues to develop internal procedures to guide how their organizations will address violations of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement that occur during official practices or games
 - Discussion about and support for developing such procedures will occur during Framework Implementation meetings of the DEI Commissioner, DEI Liaison, and Lead DEI Officers

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

III. Training and Educational Resources

The top three benchmarking organizations had all taken steps to provide diversity, equity, and inclusion training to their employees and develop other resources for raising awareness and developing allyship. Some organizations had also embarked internally with courageous conversations about race. Finally, some organizations made storytelling an important part of their outward facing communication (i.e., promoting achievements by minority athletes, celebrating national or local diversity programs, etc.).

In Phase 2 of its work, the Working Group will identify and recommend a series of training and educational resources to support Youth Sports Leagues in fostering Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; raising awareness; and combatting discrimination.

ADULT PLEDGE

I understand that combating bias and discrimination is the responsibility of all users of the County Sports Facilities.

I pledge to create and foster an environment of inclusivity as a participant in Arlington County Sports. I pledge to speak up and address any racist and hateful behaviors with a multi-tiered approach, supporting victims first, and allowing for education and awareness, respect and inclusion for anyone involved in sports in Arlington County. I pledge to act within the established Arlington County Sports Commission Guiding Principles for Combating Hate in Sports.

I pledge to encourage sports participation by members of any and all communities regardless of their background, race, or identities.

I pledge to honor and embrace diversity.



YOUTH PLEDGE

PROMISE

I Promise to

Respect all

Others, no

Matter their race, background or

Identity

Sports are for

Everyone

COMMISSIONER Q&A



NEXT STEPS

- Sports Commission Discuss or Revise Framework (July Meeting?)
- Sports Commission Re-align Working Group Leadership and Membership for Phase 2
- Phase 2:
 - Working Group conduct outreach to leagues, collect feedback
 - Update Framework based on feedback
 - Prepare for Framework Implementation

Combating Hate Working Group Next Steps

Next Steps

- Rename group 2 Options
 - Sports Are For Everyone – (SAFE)
 - Sports Are For Everyone -Respect (SAFER)
- Start process of rolling out framework

Approach for rolling out framework

- Winter 2022/2023
 - Meet with relevant staff/officials with each DPR partner league
 - Meet with each group individually
 - Share framework, pledges and request (per framework) they have a DEI point person
- Spring 2023
 - See if partner leagues that operate in the spring can begin incorporating pledge
 - Continue to meet with partner leagues with goal of full implementation by fall of 2023

Other Next Steps

- Find DEI specialist for Sports Commission
- Meet with leagues on an ongoing basis on implantation issues

Proposed Changes to Working Group Composition

- Chaired by Chair of Commission
- Other Sports Commission members
 - DEI specialist
 - Other at large
- Several members from partner leagues