

# Sports Commission Meeting Agenda

Thursday, December 16, 2021

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft TEAMS

Time: 7:00pm-9:00pm

## *Commission Member Reports*

- Aquatics Committee Update
- PSMP IAC- Update
- Chair Updates
- Combatting Hate in Sports Working Group Update
- Communications Working Group – Update

## *Discussions*

- DPR Flag Football Team Parity Presentation and Discussion
- Gymnastics Hiring Discussion
- Field Fund Draft Letter Discussion
- Finalize 2022 SC Representation Responsibilities
- Discussion of Future Agenda Items

## *Other*

## *Public Comment*

## *Upcoming Meetings:*

2022 Sports Commission Meetings

- January 27, 2022
- February 24, 2022
- March 24, 2022
- April 28, 2022
- May 26, 2022
- June 23, 2022
- July 28, 2022
- August-TBD
- September 22, 2022
- October 27, 2022
- November 17, 2022\*
- December 15, 2022\*

\*3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the Month



Arlington County  
Department of Parks & Recreation  
Athletic and Facility Services

# Competitive Balance in Youth Flag

SPORTS COMMISSION  
DECEMBER 16, 2021



# OVERVIEW



- Introductions & Program History
- Youth Flag Team Composition
- Tournament Team Phenomenon
- Consequences
- Next Steps

# Staff Introductions

**Greg Anselene**

Manager of Sports Leagues and Field Management, Athletic and Facility Services

**Tyler Remerow**

Sports Programmer, AFS  
League Commissioner, Grades 1-6

**Patrick Leonard**

Sports Programmer, AFS  
League Commissioner, Grades 7-12

# Program History

## 15 years of NFL Youth Flag Football in Arlington

- 2nd Largest DPR Run Youth Sports League
- Polar Flag Football created in Winter 2021
  - 858 participants registered for 2022
- 1310 participants and 121 Teams in Fall 2021
- 332 Females (Most Ever)
- One of the Nation's Largest NFL Flag Programs
- National Tournament Presence



# Flag Team Composition Elements

01

## ROSTER LIMITS

- Games are 5v5
- Ten players per team
- Coach may request more
- No cap on request

02

## FORMATIONS PRIORITY ORDER

- Returning Players
- Player Requests
  - Coach / Teammates
- Coach Preferences
- School/Zip Code

03

## COMPETITION LEVEL

- Players/Team grouped by competition level
- Currently, there is no "Travel or Tournament Player" distinction

# Challenges

Flag Football Tournament Teams are **Less Equitable and Less Accessible**

There is **no current Travel Flag League** in our area

Elite players may have no Travel Flag experience, but are on **Travel teams in other sports**

Some of these teams **hold tryouts** outside of DPR season and play in DPR League

**NFL FLAG Regional & National Tournaments** occur during & after DPR Rec Season  
**ALL DPR Flag Registrants** are eligible to participate in NFL FLAG sanctioned tournaments

# CONSEQUENCES



## PARTICIPATION DECREASE

- Some team refuse to play "tournament teams" in an effort to force those teams out
- Alienating those elite players risks losing those teams
- Could deter future participation



## LACK OF PARITY

- Not enough "tournament teams" to form their own division
- Quality teams request to play down creating unfair conditions for beginner teams
- "Tournament teams" won 7 out of the 7 divisions they played in 2021



## GROWING TREND

- "Tournament teams" promise of travel after the league makes them more desirable to join
- Model is spreading to boys divisions
- Some teams are creating younger feeder teams
- Arlington representation in tournaments on the rise



# Next Steps

12.2021	<b>SPORTS COMMISSION</b>	Feedback and Questions	>
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1.22	<b>COACHES COMMITTEE</b>	Formation and a meeting of a diverse set of selected volunteers	>
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6.22	<b>DEVELOP SOLUTIONS</b>	Review recommendations and update Sports Commission	>
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8.22	<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>	During Fall 2022 Season	>
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ARLINGTON COUNTY SPORTS COMMISSION  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 414  
Arlington, Virginia 22201



Mark Schwartz  
County Manager  
2100 Clarendon Blvd.  
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Mr. Schwartz,

The Sports Commission is seeking your assistance to resolve the delays in the hiring process which is significantly impacting Arlington's gymnastics program.

Over the years, with the strong support of Arlington County, the Arlington Gymnastics Program grew to a size of over 2200 participants who fully utilize the first-rate Barcroft Park and Sports and Fitness Community Center. At its height, and before the impact of the pandemic, there were nearly 100 coaches and staff to support the program and all its robust activities. Now, there are only 50 (15 permanent employees; 35 temporary), but the number of participants, or demand, has not changed.

From our perspective, the hiring prioritization identified in the enclosed letter to you from the parents – who represent over 200 athletes on gymnastics teams and over 2000 participants in gymnastics programs who compete to be on the County teams – is within our reach to solve: there are applicants applying for open positions, and the program has a great need. The act of hiring will make hiring easier over time if there is a concern of a lack of staff to do the hiring.

In summary, the Commission is asking for your assistance to look into this matter. We appreciate your attention here, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

John Mingus, Chair  
Sports Commission

Cc: Christian Dorsey, County Board Member  
Jane Rudolph, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation  
Bill Ross, Park and Recreation Commission Chair

Encl November 22, 2021 Letter to County Manger from AAPA and AATA presidents



ARLINGTON COUNTY SPORTS COMMISSION  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 414  
Arlington, Virginia 22201



[ *need new ARL logo to replace the one on the right* ]

December 1, 2021

The Honorable Matt de Ferranti, Chairman  
Arlington County Board  
2100 Clarendon Blvd  
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Mr. de Ferranti,

The Sports Commission has reviewed the Field Fund Working Group Final Report, dated July 8, 2021, and we support the Report's findings. We urge the adoption of the updates to the Field Fund that are spelled out in the report.

The Field Fund started in FY11 as part of Arlington's cost recovery model. The fees set at that time have not changed since then. After some initial discomfort with the imposition of the new fees, sports groups have complied with the new requirement and become supportive of the field fund.

Field users have already seen benefits from field fund uses. By FY19 over \$450k in fees had been collected. About \$252k had been spent on diamond field improvements, and \$1.1m is to be used for the Thomas Jefferson MS Upper Field turf conversion that is in process currently.

As the field fund has been in place now for 10 years, it is an appropriate time to review the program. A Field Fund Working Group was created to explore adjusting the fees assessed, based in part on a review of other local jurisdictions' practices. The FFWG also reviewed how those funds are allocated in the different jurisdictions. The resulting report released last Summer offers five suggestions for the fees that feed the field fund:

- A modest increase to field user fees
- The adoption of a sliding scale that charges a slightly higher fee to players aged 9 and above based on field use
- The creation of a Travel Player fee
- To ease the impact of the new Travel Player fee, the group proposed that travel players who play in recreational and travel programs would be exempt from paying the recreational fee for that season
- Increasing the Adult Team Fee from \$100 to \$200


Additionally, it is recommended that the funds be used to cover the annual cost of two (2) additional maintenance staff, for an estimated cost of about \$150,000 per year. The FFWG then proposed that the remaining approximately \$300,000 would accumulate toward large capital investments in one fund (vs. the two separate funds, Diamond Field and Rectangular Field, that

exist now).

The Sports Commission supports the recommendations from the FFWG's Report, namely the five fee adjustments and the use of the fees to support both a unified field fund and provisioning for additional maintenance staff. The increased funding and staffing will work in concert to support the increasing levels of field use that we are experiencing in Arlington, helping to keep our fields in quality condition.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this feedback.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Mingus". The signature is written in a cursive style.

John Mingus, Chair  
Sports Commission

Cc: County Board Members

Mark Schwartz, County Manager

Jane Rudolph, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation