

Sports Commission Meeting Agenda

Thursday, January 27, 2022

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

- Soccer Liaison Role Update- John Mingus
- Combatting Hate in Sports Working Group Update and Presentation- Texas Williams
- Review 2021 Annual Report Letter
- Review 2022 Annual Workplan
- Commission Member Status Update

Other

Public Comment

Upcoming Meetings:

2022 Sports Commission Meetings

- February 24, 2022

Sports Commission
Partner Organization Reach-out:
Soccer

John Mingus

1/27/22

Arlington Soccer Landscape

- Formal
 - DPR Partner Organizations
 - Youth-Arlington Soccer
 - Adult
 - Arlington Coed Kicks Soccer League
 - Arlington Women's Soccer League
 - Bolivian Veterans Soccer League (men, age 35+)
 - Old Guys Soccer League (men, age 50+)
 - DPR Programing
 - Classes/Clinics
 - Drop in
 - DPR Rentals
 - Social Leagues
 - Washington Premier/Capital Co-Ed
- Informal– pickup culture

Arlington Soccer

- Established 1970
- Programming from age 2 through end of HS
 - Pre-school programs are enjoyable, age-appropriate activities to children who are learning the game of soccer.
 - Recreational Soccer for Kindergarten through end of HS
 - Arlington Development— positioned between travel and recreation. Professional coaches assisted by parent volunteers
 - Travel— tryout based programs for kids age 8 and up
 - Top level teams at older age groups compete at highest level of US Youth Soccer
- 9,000 players across all programs

Impact of COVID

- Cancelled spring 2020 season, saw reduced #s in fall of 20/spring 21.
- continuing impact on some programs as a whole - such as residential camp
- ongoing impact on team practice and game schedules (cancellations)

Changes during COVID

- Masking for coaches, created reporting structure for COVID cases.
- Not related to COVID but added Futures Program
- Extensive Covid Protocol established and routinely updated
- Established relationships with county health department for continued review of cases and protocol
- Creation of masked division for one season of rec
- Constant communication with programs and members about protocol
- Established protocol for indoor clinics and events

Non-COVID challenges—either current or future

- Fields-access to turf space, lighted space
- Increasing costs for many items (i.e. health insurance, registration fees, background checks, etc).
- Questions about implementing changes in county fee structure

Ways Sports Commission could be helpful

- Advocating for more fields, guiding others to show how organizations use fields

Ways organizations can help Sports Commission

- If properly mobilized, organization can provide large number to advocate for issues under Sports Commission domain.

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

February xx, 2022

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

Dear Mr. de Ferranti,

I am pleased to provide the 2021 annual report on the activities of the Sports Commission.
If you or the other Board members have any feedback or questions about this report, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

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

John Mingus, Chair
Sports Commission

Summary

The 2021 annual report is a testament to continuity and dedication in difficult times. The Covid-19 pandemic continued to lead to unprecedented and ever-changing restrictions on the use of sports facilities, constrained the ability to carry out traditional sports activities, and disrupted the Sports Commission's plans for its 2021 agenda. Despite these many challenges, however, the Commission still had a productive year.

The Commission met 12 times. Our activities have been guided for several years by four priorities: (1) examining the capacity and use of recreational facilities; (2) understanding and supporting underserved groups and communities; (3) increasing our engagement with advisory Commissions and key stakeholders; and (4) participating in County projects and processes as warranted. We made progress in each area and adapted our agendas to discuss pressing issues.

Structure, Operations, and Membership

In December 2021, the County Board approved an updated charter which better reflects the Commission's role; relationship with the County Board, DPR, sports leagues, and other stakeholders; and its areas of focus. The Commission, which has 15 members, was fully staffed throughout most of 2020. Commission members included: John Bacon, Shirley Brothwell (term expired in July 2021), Jessica Deegan-Paska, Greg Gimenez (joined November 2021), Sherry Kohan, John Mingus, Drew Murray, Kristi Sawert, Steve Severn (term expired September 2021), Nancy Sharkey, Megan Sheckles, George Thompson, David Tornquist, Frank Tranfa, Texas Williams (joined August 2021) and Justin Wilt. Shirley Brothwell served as the Commission Chair through July 2021 and John Mingus served as Chair for the remainder of the year in 2020. Justin Wilt was the Vice Chair.

In 2019, the Commission identified over 40 sports, constituent groups, and advisory bodies that the Commission does or should represent. Our plan for commencing the learning process from this approach was disrupted by the pandemic, and we are working to resume outreach to inform our 2022 agenda.

The Commission has sole authority over two subsidiary bodies -- the Arlington Youth Baseball Authority (AYBA) and the Diamond Field Fund Committee.¹ In addition, the Aquatics Committee is a joint committee of the Sports Commission and Arlington Public Schools (APS) that reports independently to the School Board and through the Sports Commission to the County Board on issues related to the adequacy and efficiency of aquatic-related programs and facilities.

¹ The Arlington Youth Baseball Authority is charged with improving the baseball experience for ballplayers ages 12 & under, focusing specifically on making progress toward the consolidation of two league-run youth baseball programs. The Diamond Field Fund Committee consults with diamond field users to identify projects that should be funded using diamond field user fees.

The Commission was an official member of 3 County workgroups: the Public Spaces Master Plan Implementation Advisory Committee (PSMP-IAC);² the Field Fund Working Group (FFWG);³ and the Greenbrier Park Operations Committee.⁴ The activities of the first two are addressed in this report.

Issues Addressed in 2021

The Commission's 2021 deliberations and discussions addressed many of its four priority areas as well as several new issues, covered below under "Other Topics."

Examining the Capacity and Use of Recreational Facilities

- Budget – At a time of such intense financial pressure, we were pleased with the FY21 budget which allowed for the opening of Lubber Run and Long Bridge Aquatics and Fitness Center. Both projects are welcome additions to the fitness inventory, and particularly the aquatics inventory, and will provide valuable new space, amenities, and options to increase flexibility of usage across the County.

Similarly, the Commission appreciated funding to continue work on Jennie Dean Park and provide ongoing maintenance of the County's courts, fields, parks, and associated amenities, which is vital to keeping these assets in good condition

- PSMP IAC – In 2021, the PMP-IAC continued working on defining casual use space and determining more nuanced and accurate measures of field availability and utilization, taking into account factors that might affect field usage including, for example: field size/age group, realistic start and stop times given age of users and daylight hours, field surface (grass v turf), lights, etc. The PSMP-IAC recently received a briefing from DPR on a methodology for measuring field usage.
- Field Fund Working Group – In 2019, the Commission set up a working group to examine and make recommendations about the level and implementation of fees collected from permitted users of Arlington's rectangular and diamond fields. Information about the group's charge and its activities can be found on its website.⁵ As directed by its charge, the group examined information about the purpose and use of field fees; field fees and implementation in neighboring jurisdictions; and the nature of field maintenance in Arlington. In 2021, the group presented a final report to the Commission in 2021 and its recommendations have been passed to DPR.

² This group provides input and feedback to the county on the implementation of the PSMP. Focus areas include the Integrated Forestry & Natural Resources Master Plan; field utilization/lighting/turf; Zoning Regulation review; and casual use spaces.

³ The working group was established by the Sports Commission to examine field user fees and their implementation. Co-chaired by the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), the group includes representatives from the Sports Commission, Park and Recreation Commission, Fiscal Affairs Advisory Commission, and Arlington Partnership for Children Youth and Families. In 2021, it delivered its final report.

⁴ The Committee facilitates dialogue among Greenbrier Park users and the surrounding neighborhood.

⁵ [https:// Commission.commissions.arlingtonva.us/field-fund-working-group/](https://Commission.commissions.arlingtonva.us/field-fund-working-group/)

Underserved Groups and Communities

In June of 2021, the Commission established a Combating Hate in Sports Working Group (CHWG) 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 was 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; and
- 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.

Improving Commission Networks

The Commission improved its networks in 2021 through:

- continued investment in its relationship with the PRC;
- participation in official groups like the PSMP IAC and the Field Fund Working Group that allow us to meet and interact with representatives from other advisory bodies and parts of the community.

Continued expansion of its networks in 2021 will help the Commission build and leverage partnerships to improve its advisory and advocacy activities.

Participate in County Projects and Processes

The Commission's participation in County projects and processes was limited to the PSMP IAC and the FFWG.

Other Topics

- COVID-related Topics – We received multiple briefings from DPR about continuing changes in policies and programs due to COVID
- Gymnastics—We sent a letter to the county manager seeking information about staffing in Arlington gymnastics programs

2021 Annual Plan

Topics the Commission plans to address in 2021 include:

- PSMP implementation
- Increased interaction with all sports groups in Arlington and improved representation of their interests in Commission business.
- Ongoing impact of the pandemic on sports activity and options for increasing outdoor sports and fitness recreation.
- Implementation of the recommendation of our Combatting Hate in Sports Working Group
- Progress on various sports and recreation facility projects.
- Providing assistance to the County Board and DPR during the consideration of the CIP.
- Other issues that may arise that are consistent with the Commission's role and charter