

Sports Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 22, 2016
Langston Brown Community Center, Room 109
Time: 7:00-9:00 PM

Commission Members Present:

Heather Cocozza, Chair
Steve Severn
Doug Ross

Justin Wilt
David Tornquist
Shirley Brothwell

Commission Members Absent:

Regina Kouba

Jessica Paska

County/APS Staff:

Josh Colman, SC Liaison
Michael Peter, DPR Finance & Budget Director

Deb DeFranco, APS Liaison

Guests Present:

Steven Finn, P&R Commission
Greg Patton
Pete Marsh

Patricia Trapanese
John Bacon

Approval of Past Meeting Minutes- July 2016

[7:05-7:07pm]

Review and motion to approve meeting minutes, seconded, approved.

New Business

Budget Presentation- Michael Peter, DPR

[7:08-7:39pm]

Michael Peter presented information on the FY17 operating and capital budgets, as well as the budget process.

Presentation can be found here:

- Operating Budget

- Starting point for DPR- they review base budget first, prior to getting board guidance. In the October timeframe, the County Board releases guidance.
- Plan for FY18 is to release info in October, allow for some public comment and vote in November. There will be an opportunity for public comment prior to guidance going to County Manager.
- Tax assessments are then finalized in January.
- Discussion regarding this timeframe as an appropriate time for the Sports Commission to involve itself in the budget process. The November timeframe is a good one- should be big picture ideas. The guidance is very general (principles for the budget). If Sports Commission is going to recommend ideas, they should be big picture, longer term items (more on the CIP side).
- Questions regarding a more granular budget picture- DPR can try to provide that information as requested.
- In February, process is more familiar to everyone. County Manager proposes a budget, the fee schedule comes out, there are department work sessions, public comment, etc. This is where conversations regarding additions, changes, etc. can happen.
- April is budget adoption- the fee resolution is part of that- with the new Fiscal Year starting in July.
- Discussion regarding FY17 budget- additions, investments, etc.
- Capital Budget
 - In even fiscal years, we deal with the Capital Improvement Plan budget (this includes maintenance capital- replacing playgrounds, synthetic fields, park master planning, etc.). The first few years is what we typically look at.
 - The PayGo budget covers capital projects- less than a 10-year lifespan; synthetic fields covered because lifespan is less than 10 (8-9 years).
 - Then, they review the next two years of bond referenda language (for next two fiscal years).
 - In May/June- public comment on CIP, in July adoption (as well as bond referenda language adoption).
 - The first two years of the CIP is where a lot of time is spent- typically what was in years 3 and 4 of the previous CIP rolls forward to years 1 and 2 of the current CIP.
 - Discussion regarding specificity of CIP and bond referenda language- specific parks/projects are typically identified in the CIP- bond referenda may be less specific (grouping together).
 - Discussion regarding field fund placeholder in CIP budget- the board approves the \$250,000 as a place holder and allows that money to be spent. It's then been appropriated so it does not need to be approved again.

Temporary Fire Station 10/Wilson Site

[7:39-7:42pm]

- Discussion regarding temporary fire station, Sports Commission sent a letter to the board.

- Vote upcoming on Saturday. County Manager recommended location be on field, still hopeful County Board will take a broader view.

Themes & Projects

[7:42-7:58pm]

- Discussion regarding themes and projects to focus on. Themes should be principles, things we want to get done. Heather collected input from commission members- discussion on these topics.
- Majority of themes are new this year. Ideally, SC looking for 3-5 themes to focus on.
- Discussion regarding theme 5- "Explore development of an Arlington Sports coalition." How can sport community work together better than in the past. Should the Sports Commission encourage this?
- Discussion regarding education of public on sports related issues (field issues for example)
- Top themes discussed:
 - 1-Advocate, educate and address the challenge that the demand for athletic fields and gymnasiums exceeds the supply in Arlington County
 - 2-New and updated facilities and green space in Arlington County should be designed and constructed to be flexible to accommodate multiple sports
 - 3- Use partnerships more creatively to facilitate the building of new facilities, the maintenance of current facilities and the purchase of more land to build more facilities. (Chamber of Commerce, local colleges and universities, sports franchises, local businesses)
 - 4- Develop a sense of when to push the County for support vs. seeking external support
 - 6- Improve coordination, communication, and understanding of processes with Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), the County Board, the School Board, other like-minded commissions, committees and working groups (including the Public Spaces Master Planning and the Community Facilities Study Task Force)
 - 13- Work to get the underserved and the full diversity of members (adults and youth) of our community more involved in sports activities and also in the ASC.
- Discussion regarding funding/budget- not wanting to give up on county funding for projects. Questions whether Sports Commission has involved itself actively in budget- writing letters, etc. Not as much previously, but that's why Michael came tonight- to teach process so Sports Commission can advocate for their issues.
- Sports Commission will work to condense themes (combine some topics) and flush it out next month along with projects to work on.

Service Approach for Sports Facilities/Fields

[7:59-8:18pm]

- Discussion regarding POPS Committee work (Heather is on committee). DPR has decided on eight strategic directions for POPS.
- “Homework” was given to help the POPS committee determine a service approach.
- Discussion regarding level of service- does the Sports Commission believe the numbers presented are appropriate? For example, questions on whether volleyball courts are needed in every community (represented with a 5 minute travel time from High Density Areas)?
- Benchmarking done with other similar communities- some areas Arlington has way more than average; other areas we’re below average. Benchmarking also shows that Arlington is doing pretty well overall.
- Consensus of group was that the level of service was appropriate as is and that nothing needed to be changed. There will be more opportunities for public input/comment on these ideas.
- Discussion on POPS and timeline: <https://projects.arlingtonva.us/public-spaces-master-plan-psmp-update/>

Fencing of the Bluemont Athletic Field

[8:19-8:32pm]

- Discussion regarding upcoming Bluemont Athletic Field meeting. Email sent out earlier that day (all commission members should have received). Public meeting on October 5, at 7pm at Ashlawn Elementary School to discuss fencing portion of the Bluemont project. Other, unrelated work will begin in the meantime.
- Discussion regarding why a fence is needed? Fences are generally on a baseball field. Reasons include- people walking through games, improving field quality, home runs can be hit, usage may be able to accommodate older age groups.
- Compromises may be on the table- moveable fencing (remove out of season).
- Discussions regarding Park and Recreation Commission- they wrote a letter against the fence based on two primary areas: not briefed on the project and questioning multi-use/open space implications.
- Discussion regarding Sports Commission writing a letter regarding the fencing- potential compromise to be offered? SC will decide how to move forward- try to make it positive.

Commission Position on Planning Processes for Development of Public Facilities

[8:32-8:37pm]

- Discussion regarding paper drafted by Justin. Involves understanding community input in planning processes, but also advocating for more sports involvement- and that the Sports community voice should also be heard.
- Sports community respects that local community will have input/involvement, but also that county facilities need to represent all county residents.
- Motion to adopt position statement, seconded, approved.

- Position has been posted on Sports Commission page here: <https://arlingtonva.s3.dualstack.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2013/11/Sports-Commission-Position-Statement-Planning-Processes.pdf>

Old Business

Skate Park

[8:37-8:43pm]

- Discussion regarding letter crafted by Sports Commission to board regarding skate park. Letter supported skate park, but with caveats.
- Discussion regarding process for skate park.

Gunston Turf Project

[8:43-8:44pm]

- Item removed- County staff will attend in October to provide an update.

Yorktown Restrooms

[8:44-8:53pm]

- Background on Yorktown restrooms, as well as other high school restrooms. Looking at long term solution.
- Justin updated commission on an offer to split funding with the county- while initially not as receptive- when a dollar amount was presented, county was more willing to move forward. Justin is starting the donation process and is hopeful it will move forward at this time.
- The commission agrees to support a letter in favor of opening winter restrooms beyond just this year.

Commission Member Reports

- Four Mile Run Valley Working Group- Shirley Brothwell
 - Shirley updated group on previous night's community forum- input from numerous associations, other commissions, groups, etc. Sports groups were also there.
 - Ongoing theme- every group has a vision for what it could be like.
 - Some associations want to remove one of the diamonds.
 - Shirley's presentation focused on unmet demand, lack of sport space, etc.
- Williamsburg Lights Work Group- Steve Severn
 - There will be upcoming public open houses- presentations will be given on why there should or shouldn't be lights.

- Some of the work has evolved into a sports vs. neighbors. Previous issues (Williamsburg, Discovery, turf fields, traffic) have added to issues.
- Neighbors have concerns with lights- health issues, wildlife, and more.
- Discussion regarding mitigation- hasn't started; neighbors don't want to go there at this point.
- Background on Yorktown and how lights have worked well in their situation- that should be included in the conversation.

[Meeting ends at 9:07pm]

Christian Dorsey, County Board Liaison

Attest:

Josh Colman

Josh Colman, Staff Liaison