



Advisory Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting March 8th, 2023
MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE ADVISORY BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARKS
FALLS CHURCH COMMUNITY CENTER, KENNETH R. BURNETT BUILDING,
223 LITTLE FALLS STREET, FALLS CHURCH, VIRGINIA 22046

1 & 2. Call to Order & Roll Call

Jenna Schroeder called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. Members present were Jenna Schroeder, Leslie Rye, Liz Weatherly, Kathleen Tysse (School Board) and City Council Liaison, Caroline Lian. Student representative Caroline Carmody was also in attendance. Staff members present were Danny Schlitt, Director Recreation & Parks (R&P) and Katharine Wakeley, Senior Administrative Assistant R&P.

3. Receipt of Public Petitions and Board Member Petitions

None.

4. Minutes for Approval

Jenna Schroeder brought forth draft minutes from January 11th, 2023. After correcting Brendan Kelly's name, Leslie Rye moved to approve minutes, seconded by Liz Weatherly. Minutes were unanimously approved.

5. Recreation & Parks Director's Report

A) Changes to Falls Church City Schools' Start Times

- i. School Board has had discussions in recent months regarding impacts of sleep hygiene on mental health for teenagers. As a result, suggestions to push back high school and middle school start times by 25 minutes, and shifting back the elementary and preschool start times as well, have been considered for future school years.
- ii. Impacts of the shifted school day schedule on R&P programs was discussed.
 1. Impact on basketball schedule: later school end times means reducing the number of games that can be played in an evening due to the reduced access to the school facilities. 15 games a week would be eliminated by the 30 minute delay in dismissal.
 2. Also has potential to increase referee costs, which would also increase cost to registrant.
- iii. School Board has requested community feedback be submitted by the end of March.

B) City's Storm Water Pipe Bursting Project

- i. Will affect the area from Berman Park to at least Oak Street.
- ii. Berman Park Shelter will be unavailable during the project due to the large staging area required of the project. R&P is discussing the options available to set up a temporary picnic shelter near Berman Park in the interim.
- iii. Project may also impact Fellows Property.

C) Draft Policy for Commercial Use in Parks

- i. During pandemic, R&P let local businesses use the parks for commercial purposes, despite an unwritten rule that disallowed business to be conducted in the parks. Use of the parks proved to be beneficial to these businesses, and as a result, R&P has seen an increase in recent requests to use the parks for commercial purposes.

- ii. R&P drafted a commercial use policy for its public parks and Danny Schlitt presented it to the Board. Primary commercial uses in the past have included renting the sports fields, or use of the playground by local daycares. With the written policy, R&P aims to regulate future commercial use in its public parks and make the application process clearer.

D) Sport Court Lighting

- i. R&P has permission and funding to move forward with its sport court lighting project. R&P is now waiting on the lighting supply from the contractor.
- ii. Consideration will be made in regards to the replacement timeline so as to minimize the impact on residents.

E) R&P Programming Updates

- i. Sports: for the first time in its history, spring soccer registrations have surpassed those of winter basketball.
- ii. Special events: R&P is gearing up for Memorial Day. The City is considering getting more involved in Watch Night. Also getting close to making a decision whether to bring back Independence Day celebrations.
- iii. Classes: well into the Winter/Spring session. Gearing up for Summer Camps. Still looking for a Summer Camp supervisor position. R&P will look through the applications it has collected from the past three weeks and make decisions regarding the Summer Camp position soon.

6. New Business

A) Art Walk Presentation by Letty Hardi and Ariadne Autor

Before her presentation, Letty briefly mentioned plans to invite AARP to do a speaker series in the City later this spring, addressing public policy issues related to seniors. She suggested Rec & Parks might like to be a supporting organization.

- i. Self-guided public art tour that celebrates the variety of art in the City and makes it accessible to the community.
- ii. Was soft-launched as a website in 2021 using information gathered by student members of the Advisory Board of Recreation & parks and the Economic Development Authority.
- iii. Art Walk map and suggested routes created by Ari Autor and Mary Sellers can be found by visiting fallschurchva.gov/artwalk.
- iv. Next step will be the addition of signage with QR codes linking to the website. Samples were passed around in the meeting, and possible sign holders and locations were discussed.
- v. Sixteen of the listed art works are in City parks. The question for the Board is which works should be labeled and where the signs should be placed. Danny Schlitt volunteered to identify suitable locations.
- vi. Official launch with completed signage is planned for World Art Day, April 15th, at the Farmers Market.

B) Closed Session

- i. *Going in*: Upon a motion made by Leslie Rye, seconded by Liz Weatherly, and passed by a vote of the ABRP, the board went into closed session pursuant to Virginia Code Â§2.2-3711. (A) 11. Discussion or consideration of honorary degrees or special awards; [Recommendation for 2023 Grand Marshal] at 8:14 pm.
- ii. *Coming out*: Upon a motion made by Kathleen Tysse, seconded by Liz Weatherly, and passed by a vote of the ABRP, the board reconvened in open session at 8:37 pm.
- iii. Certification: Upon a motion made by Leslie Rye, seconded by Liz Weatherly, and passed upon affirmative roll call vote in open session, it was certified that (i) only public business matters lawfully

exempted from open meeting requirements and (ii) only such public business matter as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the closed session or meeting by the ABRP.

7. Old Business

- A) Capital Improvement Project (CIP) for Fellows Property has stalled. The Department of Public Works (DPW) is struggling with their own staffing and their project managers are stretched thin. R&P Director is exploring alternatives to get the timeline moving forward, but as of now, we will have to wait at least six months to procure an architect or designer through DPW.
- B) Operating budget overview: the City has set aside a large portion of the FY24 budget towards employee compensation in order to compete with surrounding jurisdictions. The budget (should it pass) should put R&P in a good position for the fiscal year.

8. Adjournment

Kathleen Tysse moved to adjourn; Leslie Rye seconded the motion. All approved, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

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