
**MEETING MINUTES OF THE HYBRID
ARLINGTON COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

January 17, 2023

The **Park and Recreation Commission** convened its meeting at **7:00 p.m.** on **Tuesday, January 17, 2023.**

PRESENT (IN-PERSON)	<p>PRC Chair, Shruti Kuppa PRC Vice Chair, Commissioner Jill Barker Commissioner Sarah Baryluk Commissioner Dean Foster Commissioner Colt Gregory Commissioner Neal Hunter Commissioner Gretchen Hickey Commissioner Mark Lincoln Commissioner Adam Rasmussen Commissioner Melissa Riggio At-large Commissioner Gerald Brandt, Arlington Public Schools At-large Commissioner Nia Bagley, Planning Commission</p>
PRESENT (VIRTUALLY)	<p><i>Commissioner Sergio Enriquez, participated virtually from Virginia (via Microsoft Teams) due to a personal family matter that prevented their physical attendance.</i></p> <p><i>Commissioner Peter Harnik, participated virtually from Virginia (via Microsoft Teams) due to a personal illness that prevented their physical attendance.</i></p> <p><i>Commissioner Kevin Manuel participated virtually from Rhode Island (via Microsoft Teams) due to a personal family matter that prevented their physical attendance.</i></p>
ABSENT	None
STAFF	<p>Marco Rivero, DPR, PRC Staff Liaison Alonso Abugattas, DPR Ryan Delaney, DPR Max Ewart, DPR Michael Simmons, DPR</p>
PUBLIC COMMENTERS	None
OTHER ATTENDEES	<p>County Board Member (and PRC County Board Liaison), Takis Karantonis Nelson Dimpter Alex Sanders</p>

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- [Link to Teams Recording](#)
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SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS

Chair's Introduction and Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes

- *Commission consideration of December 13, 2022 minutes.*
- *The minutes were adopted as prepared with no objections.*

Public Comment

** Park and Recreation Commission public comment is open to all with a 3-minute limit per person.*

- No formal public comments were provided.
- However, two prospective PRC applicants introduced themselves to the PRC (Nelson Dimpter and Alex Sanders).

PRC Discussion with County Board Member and PRC Board Liaison, Takis Karantonis regarding the Forestry and Natural Resources Plan (FNRP) Update

County Board Member and County Board PRC Liaison, Takis Karantonis, convened a discussion with commission members regarding the FNRP Update. County Board member Karantonis provided a quick update on the process to-date and the various review measures that continue through this year and in the future, including County Board consideration. Discussion points by the PRC included but were not limited to land acquisition funding for new public lands (for parks and natural resources), prioritization of public spaces within site plan projects, need for legislation/regulations that facilitate acquisition of public spaces/parks, waterfront/natural considerations, stormwater management needs, NOVA Parks properties and their relationship with County properties and coordination of quality improvements (trees, landscaping, and other measures), and potential coordination with NOVA Parks leadership, PRC, and County Board. Other items include, integrating with other interagency efforts (DES, APS, etc.), stormwater incentive program, environmental justice and equity with natural resource considerations, greater biophilic design within multifamily buildings and future of biophilic design/codifying these approaches, potentially rewarding good design; benchmarking for public amenities with associated, monetary and on-site contributions, and continued monitoring of these amenities is also important.

Security and Policing in Arlington County Parks

Michael Simmons, DPR, presented on security and policing in Arlington County Parks. Monitoring conditions within parks and maintaining active eyes on park/public spaces. Majority of calls are related to graffiti, vandalism, and off-leash dogs in areas not designated as dog runs/dog parks. For any public safety issues, the Arlington County Police Department (ACPD) should be called. Education and enforcement of park rules fall upon park rangers. Intervening in criminal activity is the ACPD's responsibility; park rangers enforce park rules and provide education as necessary on area resources (i.e., houseless individuals and potential shelters). Alcohol permissions in certain County parks through special events, but otherwise it is not allowed. Sleeping overnight in parks is not permitted. Park Safe

Program was discussed as a partnership with DPR/ACPD (two-strike system on violating park rules), park rangers try to deescalate any issues initially.

PRC discussion included identifying ranges/attire and what they use to communicate/enforce (cell phones, etc.), the number of rangers on staff (five rangers altogether) and the training necessary to enforce the park rules (issues with enforcing park rules with limited staff available), PRC can write a letter about the budget which addresses additional resources for park enforcement/ranger support or FTEs, regular communication with park staff and ACPD (some things are notified to DPR staff after investigations/cases are resolved), statistics are not kept on biases on who is violating park rules (only one "Park Safe" violation was issued in the last year), and mainly park rangers want to be proactive in educating community members and park users and not involving law enforcement if it is not necessary.

- [Presentation Link](#)

Brief Update on Deer Assessment Engagement

Alonso Abugattas, DPR, provided a brief update on the Deer Assessment Engagement process. Deer assessment is being conducted in three phases (taken by White Buffalo, Inc.). Potential problems if there are overpopulated deer and ecology can cause deer numbers above ecological carrying capacity, forests not regenerating, unhealthy populations and how they affect other flora/fauna, deer-vehicle collisions, damage to landscaped areas, tick-borne illnesses. Deer Assessment Plan public engagement timeline was discussed in greater detail as well. Final draft plan anticipated in late 2023 with Board action likely by the end of 2023. There may be a potential PRC presentation again in the summer 2023 (June-July 2023) to hear about the results of this process with a PRC letter accordingly.

PRC discussion focused on engagement/collaboration with nearby jurisdictions and what they are reviewing related to deer management and expanding upon the data being collected.

- [Presentation Link](#)

2023 Plan of Action for the Park and Recreation Commission

PRC Chair Kuppa discussed the 2023 Plan of Action for the Park and Recreation Commission and pending actions moving forward. Mr. Rivero will resend the draft letters to the PRC.

Staff Reports

Mr. Rivero provided the staff reports ahead of time to the Park and Recreation Commission (PRC). Mr. Rivero also detailed that the next PRC meeting will be a joint meeting with the Sports Commission on Thursday, February 23 (likely at 6:30 p.m.). This meeting will be a hybrid meeting, where the in-person location will be at Lubber Run Community Center (Hickory Multipurpose Room #121). Staff is currently working on formulating an agenda which may consist of a discussion on the DPR 2023 budget, CIP implementation work, field fund/rectangular field use, summer camp registration, ball recycling programs, and on-going pickleball efforts.

Commission Member Reports

Additional items discussed during this section included:

- None have been identified.
- Kevin Manuel will be stepping down from the PRC this month. Openings on Crystal Towers 3 project and Melwood Towers Special GLUP study, and PRC Chair Kuppa will be reaching out to PRC members on filling these projects.
- Bill Thomas Awards 2022 (Melissa Riggio would be the main contact, with an additional PRC member joining in), with the idea that an in-person celebration/recognition will occur.

Other Business

- Marymount University (Quincy Park Proposal)
 - Commissioner Harnik discussed potentially moving the recycling operation out of the current park space to another space (potentially the Buck Property).
 - There may be monies from the 3901 Fairfax Drive site plan that may be used for Quincy Park improvements (this would need to be investigated further).
 - PRC could potentially request that the Quincy Park master planning could be moved up in the CIP process. Commissioner Lincoln detailed those grassroots, community efforts would be needed to review how this item could be moved higher up in the CIP priorities.
 - PRC Chair Kuppa detailed that we are awaiting an official proposal for Quincy Park from Marymount University regarding their potential use of park facilities.

- Letters to the County Board
 - 2022 PRC End of Year Report
 - 2023 PRC Plan of Action

- PRC Membership Openings
 - The PRC has three (3) PRC member openings by the end of January 2023. New member considerations and applications are being reviewed.

MOTIONS & ACTIONS/VOTES

No motions and actions (with documented votes) were taken on any items presented at this meeting.

Meeting adjourned at **9:11 p.m.**