

---

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

April 16, 2024

The **Park and Recreation Commission** convened its meeting at **7:00 p.m.** on **Tuesday, April 16, 2024.**

<b>PRESENT (IN-PERSON)</b>	PRC Vice Chair, Commissioner Shruti Kuppa Commissioner Nelson Dimpter Commissioner Andreana Lin Commissioner Mark Lincoln Commissioner Claire Pascoello Commissioner Adam Rasmussen Commissioner Melissa Riggio Commissioner Alex Sanders Commissioner Gary Shinnors
<b>PRESENT (VIRTUALLY)</b>	<i>At-large Commissioner Nia Bagley, Planning Commission</i> <i>At-large Commissioner Gerald Brandt, APS</i> <i>At-large Commissioner Elizabeth (Lizzy) Stell, Sports Commission</i>
<b>ABSENT</b>	PRC Chair, Commissioner Jill Barker Commissioner Dean Foster Commissioner Neal Hunter
<b>STAFF</b>	Marco Rivero, DPR, PRC Staff Liaison
<b>PUBLIC COMMENTERS</b>	None
<b>OTHER ATTENDEES</b>	County Board Member, Susan Cunningham County Board Member, Takis Karantonis

- 
- [Link to Teams Recording](#)
- 

**SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS**

*Chair's Introduction and Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes*

- *Commission consideration of the February 20 and March 19 minutes.*
- *The February 20 and March 19 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 public comment was provided.

#### *Discussion with County Board Member and New PRC County Board Liaison, Susan Cunningham*

County Board member and new PRC County Board Liaison, Susan Cunningham introduced herself to the PRC and answered questions from the Commission. County Board member, Takis Karantonis also joined the PRC for the discussion. Many of the items discussed included the current Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Budget priorities, including but not limited to natural resource considerations, after-school youth programs and their functions (community center staffing and programming considerations), organizational and environmental sustainability, climate/financial resource prioritization and efficiencies, community well-being/youth engagement, leveraging community resources (i.e. Dorothy Hamm Middle School renovation and addition project had much coordination through various entities). FY 2025 County budget considerations: (1) climate/environment which includes (but is not limited to) funding for tree maintenance, invasive species removal, making sure nature centers are funded and that education of those centers expands to schools; (2) youth initiatives/recreation (curriculum development for APS); (3) workforce budget support.

Commission member recruitment is important and making sure that there are diverse recruitment and membership opportunities for the PRC. The current FY 2025 budget will emphasize changes on what the community centers' mission is and how they will be used for various purposes including education. This budget may also emphasize use mix changes within parks (function of small, urban parks, and other community spaces).

Other topics discussed included facilities and management of park facilities (especially as they are maintained and managed across facilities that include APS facilities), more land contributions/acquisitions to the County, Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) office considerations and recruitment for commissions, overall relationship between the County and APS (also costs associated with maintenance, management, and programming of these facilities), and privately owned public spaces and their development within site plan review. Other items included habitat restoration improvements throughout the County's parks and public spaces, Forestry and Natural Resources Plan (FNRP) recommendations on transfer of public space maintenance of APS outdoor spaces/fields to DPR (this may be something that will be done in a phased/gradual process). Expanded nature center hours is also important to note. Deer management at County parks continues to be challenging. Stormwater management throughout the County and invasive species management is important and continues to be worked on throughout the County.

#### *Staff Reports*

Mr. Rivero provided the staff reports ahead of time to the Park and Recreation Commission (PRC) and spoke specifically about the 2023 Bill Thomas Park Volunteer Award process and other added items highlighted within the report. Mr. Rivero also detailed the new Virginia General Assembly and Governor's approval of HB894 which details new requirements in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act electronic meeting procedures. HB894 will take effect Monday, July 1, 2024. County staff will learn more about implications with local advisory groups, committees, and commissions and relay that information accordingly to the PRC. **Question that requires further investigation (with the County Board and County Manager's Offices): Would there be in-person/virtual meetings flexibility if the PRC finds out that quorum would not be met for any particular meeting? This may require greater flexibility when advertising for meetings.**

### *Commission Member Reports*

Additional items discussed during this section included:

- PRC project/committee assignments were discussed further. The following assignments were made:
  - Commissioner Neal Hunter will now be the PRC's contact to the Forestry and Natural Resources Commission (FNRC).
  - Gateway Park, Park Master Plan and Design Guidelines will be a new subheading within the "Commission Member Reports" section and Commissioner Gary Shinnars will be tracking this process along with Commissioner Andreana Lin.
  - There was a reiteration/explanation of the Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) process and what that is composed of.

### *Other Business*

- Letters to the County Board
  - No additional letters were identified to be drafted for this month.
- Update on PRC Vice Chair Discussions
  - Commissioner Gary Shinnars will be serving in this role in the coming month. Current PRC Vice Chair, Shruti Kuppa will be serving in this role until then.

### **MOTIONS & ACTIONS/VOTES**

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

Meeting adjourned at **8:28 p.m.**