
**MEETING MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL-ONLY
ARLINGTON COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

September 24, 2024

The **Park and Recreation Commission** convened its meeting at **7:00 p.m.** on **Tuesday, September 24, 2024.**

PRESENT (VIRTUALLY)	PRC Chair, Commissioner Jill Barker Commissioner Erika Allen Commissioner Andrew Damitio Commissioner Daniel Garay Commissioner Neal Hunter Commissioner Shruti Kuppa Commissioner Mark Lincoln Commissioner Adam Rasmussen Commissioner Melissa Riggio Commissioner Alex Sanders PRC Vice Chair, Gary Shinnars Commissioner William (Will) Way At-large Commissioner Gerald Brandt, Arlington Public Schools At-large Commissioner Lizzy Stell, Sports Commission
ABSENT	Commissioner Nelson Dimpter Commissioner Andreana Lin Commissioner Claire Pascocello
STAFF	Marco Rivero, DPR, PRC Staff Liaison Michael Cullen, DPR Bethany Heim, DPR
PUBLIC COMMENTERS	None
OTHER ATTENDEES	None

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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

- *Introduction of New PRC Members*
 - *Erika Allen*
 - *Andrew Damitio*
 - *William (Will) Way*

- *Erika Allen, Andrew Damitio, and Will Way introduced themselves, spoke about their backgrounds and interest in the PRC.*
- *Commission consideration of the August 20 minutes.*
 - *The August 20 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 at this meeting.

23rd and Eads Park, Public Space Naming – Information Item

Bethany Heim, DPR, presented an information item for the proposed naming of the 23rd and Eads Park public space area.

PRC discussion included but was not limited to the discussion on the naming, including the interactions between the neighboring businesses, activities, and other features accordingly with the park. Support for “Restaurant Row Park” was expressed by some commissioners. Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board (HALRB) review of the proposed names would be important, especially considering two historical names “Firehouse Park” and “Zavarella Park”. “Zavarella” was identifying a family name as owners of a nearby business. Ms. Heim will reach out to County Historical Affairs staff to find out more about this name. Some commissioners disagreed with “Firehouse Park” as a potential name. Ms. Heim provided information on a public feedback form that will be live soon.

- [Presentation Link](#)

Review of 2023 Bill Thomas Park Volunteer Award Process and Awardee

- *PRC Vote on Awardee*

Commissioner Alex Sanders provided a summary of the 2023 Bill Thomas Park Volunteer Award review process, scoring, and selection of proposed awardee. Commissioner Sanders provided a review of this year’s nominees (5 total). The review Committee’s selection this year was for Caroline Haynes, for her dedicated service to the County’s parks and natural resources, the PRC (as a Commissioner and Chair), and other numerous contributions.

PRC discussion included but was not limited to PRC Chair Barker’s comments about Ms. Haynes contributions to the PRC, various County initiatives, and other important contributions accordingly. Ms. Haynes’ impact on recruitment and stewardship for the County’s various initiatives was important.

The PRC considered nominating Caroline Haynes for the 2023 Bill Thomas Park Volunteer Award, with Commissioner Sanders moving to approve the nomination, seconded by PRC Commissioner Riggio. The vote was **12-0 (of those attending in person and virtually at the time of adoption).**

Arlington 2050 Initiative Follow-Up PRC Discussion

PRC Chair Barker reintroduced the discussion on the Arlington 2050 Initiative and asked Commissioners to fill out the Arlington 2050 Vision for the Future, and five minutes was taken to do this work during the meeting (from 7:40-7:45 p.m.).

- What are your groups top three priorities?
 - The Commission discussed various items like land use/public space development, high urbanization, biophilic implementation within the County, sustainability, bicycle and public transit support, County demographics, accessibility to outdoor spaces, knowledge of public space operations, efficient use public spaces and affordability of the County, water drainage and erosion (as they relate to the County and public spaces as a whole).
- In 2050, what new issues will your Commission focus on?
 - Services for older adults/County residents including planning for various community centers, accessibility and mobility opportunities, having opportunities/programs available for children/youth to enjoy the County's public and natural spaces, impacts to climate change/water and erosion, maintaining and expanding tree canopy, among other items.

Staff Reports

Mr. Rivero provided the staff reports ahead of time to the Park and Recreation Commission (PRC). No additional updates were provided. Mr. Rivero reiterated an update from the Department of Environmental Services (DES) regarding the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) approved NOVA Parks' request to voluntarily withdraw the Arlington W&OD Trail Enhancements project and return the \$650,000 allocation of NVTA Regional Revenue Funds (70% funds) to the Authority.

Commission Member Reports

Additional items discussed during this section included:

- PRC project/committee assignments were discussed further. The following assignments were made:
 - 55+ (**William Way**)
 - Metro Market Square, Park Master Plan and Design Guidelines (**Andrew Damitio/Erika Allen**)
 - 6045 Wilson Boulevard Special GLUP Study (**Jill Barker**)
 - Hotel Pentagon Site – 2480 S. Glebe Rd. (**Jill Barker**)
 - Transportation Plan Advisory Group (**Daniel Garay**)
- **Mr. Rivero will include links to the project pages of new project assignments as they are provided by the County for future PRC meeting agendas.**

Other Business

- Letters to the County Board
 - 2023 Bill Thomas Park Volunteer Award (Nelson Dimpter/Alex Sanders)
 - Commissioner Dimpter will finalize this letter.
 - Kenmore Middle School Field Renovations (Timing of Letter)

- Commissioner Rasmussen provided a history of this effort for the PRC including a discussion on the Memorandum of Agreements (MOAs) that were considered and adopted by the County Board at its September recessed meeting.
 - Timing for this letter would potentially be considered during a later phase of this process (since this project is already included within the County's, adopted Fiscal Year 2025-34 Capital Improvement Plan for development) in support of the project.
 - Potentially have DPR staff provide an update on this effort at a future PRC meeting (Erik Beach or other staff as needed).
- PRC's Legislative Priorities
 - The PRC will put a letter together on the legislative priorities for the Commission. PRC Chair Barker will work on this accordingly.
- PRC Operational Items
 - Updated PRC Charter Discussion
 - PRC Chair Barker provided an update on the PRC Charter which was last reviewed and amended in 2019. The most recent update (2024) has been crafted and reviewed accordingly by PRC Chair Barker, Commissioner Pascocello, Mr. Rivero, Ms. Rudolph (DPR Director), and was shared with the County Board Office (PRC's County Board liaison, County Board member, Susan Cunningham). Discussion included various additions and edits to the Charter accordingly. PRC motioned to adopt the updated charter unanimously.
 - **Mr. Rivero will research how the Charter will be adopted accordingly (only by PRC or formally by the County Board).**
 - PRC Recruitment
 - PRC commission is full as of September 2024, but the PRC will be working on recruitment possibilities in the next several months as other current members will be stepping off accordingly.
 - Other Items
 - PRC Vice Chair Shinnars detailed some history on an item that was in front of the County Board a few months back for providing a financial contribution for expediting the renovation of Gateway Park (CoStar Agreement).
 - Partnership Groups: PRC Chair Barker detailed histories of various partnership groups including the Friends of Arlington Parks, Arlington Boathouse Foundation, and others that may provide some discussions with the PRC in the future.

MOTIONS & ACTIONS/VOTES

As recorded earlier in the meeting, the PRC moved **12-0 (of those attending virtually at the time of adoption)** to approve the nomination of Caroline Haynes for the 2023 Bill Thomas Park Volunteer Award. The motion was made by Commissioner Sanders and seconded by Commissioner Riggio.

Meeting adjourned at **8:33 p.m.**