



**ARLINGTON COUNTY
SPORTS COMMISSION**
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 414
Arlington, Virginia 22201



July 7, 2019

Honorable Christian Dorsey, Chairman
Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Blvd, Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201

Re: Marymount University Memorandum of Agreement

Dear Chairman Dorsey:

The Sports Commission recently learned of efforts between the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and Marymount University to convert the existing Memorandum of Understanding to a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and to offer the university expanded access to County sports facilities. Specifically, Marymount intends to add a tennis program and is considering adding a softball program. The MOA offers Marymount access to County tennis courts and the possibility of access to diamond fields. DPR has structured the agreement so as to provide access in a manner that does not disrupt existing users of the proffered facilities. These facilities would be provided to Marymount at current rental rates.

The Sports Commission is excited by the opportunity for the County to expand its athletic partnership with Marymount University. The institution is a valuable member of our community and both sides benefit from the relationship.

We are mindful, however, that Marymount's requests for more use of county sports facilities comes at a time of unprecedented demand for field and court space. The local sports associations and other groups and individuals, many of whom pay DPR user fees in addition to property taxes, are increasingly squeezed. And, funding for facility upkeep and replacement is always tight. As you know, funding for field maintenance has only recently been partially restored to its pre-2010 levels.

While we welcome the use of County sports facilities at times when they may be currently underused, we also believe DPR should consider the impact of such additional use on facility condition (including regular wear-and-tear and periodic replacement) and should price Marymount's access to the facilities accordingly. We are not aware of how the current rental rates were developed and what they are designed to cover and are concerned that charging such rates to Marymount – especially for any grass field locations – may not be sufficient.

We further expect that the level of access Marymount requests is likely to grow, both for tennis and softball and possibly other sports as well. While we again strongly support Marymount's efforts to grow their programs, we are mindful that the resulting demand could quickly outpace the County's ability to provide access while still meeting the needs of Arlington residents. We urge the County Board to closely review the MOA and thoroughly discuss these issues with staff before voting to adopt the MOA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shirley Brothwell".

Shirley Brothwell, Chair
Sports Commission

Cc: Arlington County Board
Mark Schwartz, County Manager
Jane Rudolph, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation