

Sports Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December, 2019
Langston Brown Community Center
Time: 7:00pm-9:00 PM

Commission Members Present:

Shirley Brothwell, Chair
Justin Wilt, Vice-Chair
Dave Maher
Drew Murray
Kristi Sawert

Ryan Schaefer
Steve Severn
Nancy Sharkey
Megan Sheckles (phone)
George Thompson

Commission Members Absent:

Jessica Paska
Sherry Kohan
John Mingus

John Bacon
David Tornquist

County/APS Staff:

Greg Anselene, DPR
Peter Lusk, DPR
Ryan Amato, DPR
Kurt Louis, DPR

Guests

Steve Finn - Parks and Recreation Commission
Mark Lincoln- Parks and Recreation Commission
Kevin Jones- Arlington Senior Babe Ruth
Mike Murray
Scott Gerber- Arlington Travel Baseball

Approval of Past Meeting Minutes

[7:00pm-7:05pm]

Motion to approve November 25, meeting minutes as amended, seconded, and approved. No Abstentions.

New Business

[7:05pm-8:55pm]

- **Commissioner Recognition**

- Steve Severn was nominated and recognized by the County Board for his commitment to the commission through leading the Diamond Field Fund Committee
- John Mingus was awarded National Volunteer of the Year for US Youth Soccer (USYS). To win this prestigious award John also won Virginia and the East Region National Volunteer of the Year.

- **Athletic Field Maintenance – Kurt Louis, Parks and Natural Resources Division Chief, DPR**
 - Provided an overview of Athletic Field Maintenance which is located in the Parks and Natural Resources Division (PNR) of the Department of Parks and Recreation
 - Current responsibilities include:
 - Field maintenance including grooming and dragging diamond fields
 - Lining foul lines for DPR partner leagues and APS games
 - Cleaning dugouts and bleachers
 - Temporary fence installation and removal
 - Aeration, over-seeding, weeding, and edging.
 - Athletic Field Maintenance has a total budget of \$1,441,781
 - \$895,103 is allocated to personnel
 - 10 full time employees (1) Athletic Field Maintenance Manager, (1) Team Leader, (8) Crew Members and (2) temporary employees in the spring, summer, and fall.
 - \$547,785 is allocated to non-personnel to include nutrient management, field maintenance (aeration and top-dressing of fields) irrigation maintenance, fencing, and general maintenance and supplies
 - FY20 \$139,000 was added to the AFM budget, these funds were able to add two weeks of mowing to the spring season and increased ability to provide field maintenance.
 - Discussion of loss of funding in 2010, which affected staffing, and recovery of funding since that time. Current funding levels enable DPR to maintain its staff, but rising costs affect ability to provide maintenance.
 - Discussion of what AFM would prioritize if funding were increased. Kurt Louis discussed the addition of a synthetic field maintenance team, which would allow AFM to keep up with recommended synthetic field maintenance procedures.
 - Discussion about GMAX. The county is required to measure the GMAX and maintain records for each field. Historically the county has never had an issue with maintaining well above the national standards for GMAX which the standard test is set forth by American Society for Testing & Materials (ASTM) to certify that synthetic turf field is suitable and safe for play. Specifically, it is measuring the hardness and shock absorption properties of a turf field.

- **Field Fund Discussion- Peter Lusk, Athletic and Facility Services Division Chief, DPR**
 - Follow up to the field fund presentation and discussion at the November 25 Sports Commission Meeting.
 - As indicated in the Sports Commission Charter, the Chair has the power to create workgroups and sub-committees. SC is working on a charter for a Field Fund working group that will study the fees and make budget recommendations in 2021 for budget year 2022.
 - The working group will have broad representation from a number of Commissions. Sports Commission Chair will be asking for someone to represent the Sports Commission.

- **Baseball in Arlington Discussion- Ryan Amato, Greg Anselene, DPR**

- At the request of the Sports Commission following an initial discussion at the November 25 meeting, DPR is re-introducing the discussion of baseball in Arlington.
- Provided an overview of the current diamond sports offerings supported by DPR
 - One girls' softball organization (Recreation and Travel)
 - Three youth baseball organizations under the age of 12, Arlington Babe Ruth (Recreation and Travel), Arlington Little League (Recreation), and Arlington Travel Baseball (Travel).
 - Two baseball organizations ages 13-18, Arlington Senior Babe Ruth (Recreation and Travel) and American Legion (Travel)
- Arlington Travel Baseball has requested to expand their operations to 13+ as a partner organization.
 - ATB receives field space as a partner organization for its 12U activities; participants pay the \$8 resident/\$20 non-resident per player field fee.
 - It rents field space from DPR as a non-partner organization for the 13+ activities at rates of \$35-130 per hour.
- DPR seeks guidance from the Sports Commission on this request.
- Discussion of existing organization - Arlington Senior Babe Ruth is a partner organization for the 13-18 age range. What need is there for an additional program? ASBR requires its travel players to also play in the recreation program; ATB does not. ASBR would like ATB to require the same so as to preserve the recreation program. The groups met previously to discuss working collaboratively but could not come to agreement. Some questions about whether it's appropriate to require families to patronize certain programs if they prefer not to do so.
- Discussion of whether granting ATB partnership status at 13+ will erode ASBR's recreational program.
- Discussion of number of teams and field capacity – ATB has one 13U and one 14U team; they currently rent the space.
- Discussion of participant demographics – ATB players are Arlington residents; ATB also uses space outside of Arlington.
- Discussion of expansion of travel teams – do programs with in-house travel teams have to seek DPR's permission to expand the number of teams; what impact does travel expansion have on field capacity?
- Public Comment was entertained. All speakers addressed this agenda item (see section below on Public Comment). Comments were limited to two minutes per speaker.
- Commission Votes
 - Motion to continue the conversation to January and direct ATB and ASBR to submit written explanation on whether DPR should or should not permit ATB to expand to partner status for the 13+ level.
 - Motion Seconded
 - Discussion – continuing to January will not bring out any new information.
 - Vote: 2 in favor, 3 against, 4 abstentions
 - Motion to recommend expanding Arlington Travel Baseball to 13+ on a one-year trial basis.
 - Motion Seconded

- Discussion – concern about implications of granting this permission without any conditions or ability to reverse course.
- Vote: 3 in favor, 4 against, 2 abstentions
- Motion to recommend expanding Arlington Travel Baseball to 13+ on a one-year trial basis on the condition that ATB and ASBR meet again to try and resolve their differences and see if they can find a way to work together.
 - Motion Seconded
 - Discussion – none.
 - Vote: 6 in favor, 1 against, 2 abstentions.

Public Comment

- Mike Murray
- Kevin Jones
- Scott Gerber

Commission Member Reports

(9:15pm-9:20pm)

- Career Center Update
 - Update on career center plan to add parking to the Northeast corner of property
 - Motion to approve the basis of the letter as amended, seconded and approved.
- PSMP Post Implementation Update

Adjorn

(9:20pm)

Matt de Ferranti, County Board Liaison

Attest:

Greg Anselene

Greg Anselene, Staff Liaison