

Arlington County Sports Commission

Meeting Minutes

**Date:** 4/28/16

**Time:** 7:00pm

**Place:** Langston-Brown Community Center

**Attending:**

Craig Esherick, Chair	Deb DeFranco, APS Liaison
Josh Colman, Staff Liaison	Ellen Killalea, Member
Shirley Brothwell, Member	Steve Severn, Member
Justin Wilt, Member	Heather Coccozza, Member
Regina Kouba, Member	Doug Ross, Member
Mauricio Coreas, Member	George Towner, Member

**Agenda:**

- I. **Approve Past Meeting Minutes**
  
- II. **Overview of Crumb Rubber**
  
- III. **Skate Park Discussion**
  
- IV. **Long Bridge Park Advisory Committee**
  
- V. **Yorktown Bathrooms (was originally item VI)**
  
- VI. **Yorktown Stadium Turf Field Approval (was originally item V)**
  
- VII. **Projects and Themes for 2016**

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**Agenda Item**

I. Approve Past Meeting Minutes (March 2016)

7:05-7:06

Action Items

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II. Overview of Crumb Rubber- discussion with Dr. Varghese, Robert Capper, and Jennifer Fioretti

7:06-7:34pm

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**Discussion, Consensus & Action Items**

Deferred to after meeting content to allow for numerous presentations.

Note: This agenda item was not completed- will be added to May agenda.

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Discussion regarding an overview of crumb rubber used in Arlington County, health effects and research, and communication of policy to public.

Craig- a lot of this has come up from a petition and article that's making its way around asking the county to stop using crumb rubber infills and remove from fields.

Bob Capper spoke about Arlington County fields using crumb rubber. Current inventory is 15 turf fields- 14 outdoor, 1 indoor. 13 fields have SPR rubber, while 2 fields have EPDM.

Differences- SPR started as tire and was repurposed as infill product. EPDM starts as new product- is not recycled. In the EPDM process you end up with less dust in the end. He's reviewed the petition and the article- the article says there's been no studies of SPR- there's actually been more than 40 studies (across many states). All studies have said there's no health risk playing on this. A lot of the issues raised about crumb rubber stem from an October 2014 NBC News story on a women's soccer team with players who had developed lymphoma or leukemia- crumb rubber was blamed as a reason.

EPA in conjunction with CDC and Consumer Products Safety Commission agreed to do a new study to look at athletes/parents and seek to fill data/knowledge gaps. Prelim findings expected by the end of the year.

How have jurisdictions reacted to crumb rubber? LA school district banned, NY city banned. DC is no longer installing. Montgomery county has passed a resolution that only plant based infills can be used.

Discussion regarding plant based infills and advantages/disadvantages. While one distinct advantage exists (retaining moisture, therefore will be cooler in the summer), there are disadvantages like- potentially needing irrigation system, problems with freezing, requirement of greater maintenance, greater cost.

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What do local jurisdictions use?

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Montgomery uses plant-based. Fairfax- continues to use SPR, but open to EPDM. Alexandria- uses SPR. Loudoun- uses SPR, open to EPDM or TPE (synthetic plastic rubber compound).

Arlington- DPR has been monitoring research, plans to continue to monitor research. Will monitor new infills- as new fields come down for replacement, DPR will make wise and cost effective decisions. A third field will get EPDM (Yorktown). DPR will continue to monitor trends and research.

Justin- questions regarding cost difference in infills. Bob- organic infills would likely be \$30,000 per year just for maintenance. It requires a higher level of grooming and work. Jennifer- in addition to maintenance, it is an organic material, meaning weeds can pop up and irrigation is a big factor.

Dr. Varghese spoke about health effects. When this topic first came up- neighboring health directors (Loudoun, Fairfax, Alexandria, etc.) spoke and were made aware of concerns. At that time, it was anecdotal reports- no real data.

Health directors were concerned and wanted to look at Northern Virginia data (specifically, the rate of cancer in youth up to age 29). What can we see?

Review of the Virginia Department of Health Cancer Registry. Reviewed data from 2002-2006 (before into of crumb rubber) and 2007-2012. Age groups were 0-9, 10-19, 20-29, 0-19. Reviewed cancer data for Northern Virginia, Virginia, and US.

Cancer rates were similar, no changes of blood cancer rates, no changes between first and second time periods, and no difference between locations. While they couldn't study crumb rubber itself, it's reassuring that they haven't seen any higher rates of cancer since introduction. Remind people that pediatric cancer isn't as rare as people think it is- current evidence does not suggest any link between crumb rubber and cancer.

Washington will do case control study- evaluate history of affected people to see if there is anything uniquely different. So far, no evidence of crumb rubber /cancer link. We'll continue to look, but so far reassuring.

Doug- Questions about data- will additional year of data be looked at once the information is available? Dr. Varghese- Yes, they should have another year to look at.

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George- difference in cost between EPDM and SPR? Bob- it's been comparable, not a significant cost over spr.

Shirley- questions about the study you're talking about- how do they go back? Dr. Varghese- they review the Virginia Cancer Registry- looking to see if there are differences since crumb rubber was introduced to area. They cannot have a "gold standard" study (where volunteers would be exposed to products- as a typical rule, they don't do that). So far no uptick/evidence of a problem. It's reassuring they haven't been able to find anything, still looking because of concerns, but can't say it's unsafe. No one is surveying non-cancer users.

Dr. Varghese- If concern is inhalation or digestion, he doesn't know if "natural" is any better. Don't assume that switching is necessarily safe.

George- what is our role with this? We're not going to redo all the fields at one time. Bob- have been replacing one a year, in a few years we'll go up to two a year. George- plenty of time for additional info to come out. Keep watching it, see what happens.

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III. Skate Park Discussion –  
Patti Hurst

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Patti Hurst and John Burgess provided an update on what's been happening with the skate park over the last month.

7:34-7:50

The condition of the skate park continues to be an issues. Problems continued over the winter- many crumbling tiles, some held together by duct tape. They've been working with DPR for patching and repairing- not confident they'll make it through the next winter.

Skaters are working on a Sweep before you Skate Campaign with mixed results. DPR does a sweep in the morning as well. They see the renovation project as something that is urgent.

Patti provided two pieces of information on the usage and expected lifespan. They estimate there are 1,100 skaters in the county based on population, usage statistics, etc. Believe there are many who don't use the park. This does not count roller skaters, scooters, and other users.

The expected lifespan for the proposed renovation is 20-30 years with proper maintenance. Based on info from Team Pain design expert.

Craig- how many years did we get out of the current park? Patti- 12 years.

Patti- 3<sup>rd</sup> thing to discuss. The county board approved the \$288,000 for design. Bob Capper is in charge of the project- they anticipate the upcoming CIP budget will include proposal for construction- anticipate the parks bond will include funding.

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Bob- total cost is just over \$2 million, which includes the \$288,000. Bob was the initial project manager when the skate park was built. It's the only skate park in the county- was initially built as an attraction and it was a big deal. Problems came about with the concrete- there were lots of issues with it. The people who built the initial park came from California- we liked the team at the time and there weren't many people doing skate park construction. Unfortunately, builders were likely unaware of the conditions of the Virginia climate. DPR & the County have a lot more experience now, Bob expects the next rendition to be better than ever- we'll bring back the appeal the skate park once had.

Craig- a concern has been raised- baseball, swimming, soccer all have to fundraise. What's the county's position in relation to skate park and cost recovery? Bob- we used to charge a fee, which required staff. The staffing cost was more than the money collected, resulting in the positions being cut.

Patti- they've been discussing fundraising, and while the amount of money to raise was out of their reach- they've been talking about how to keep the parks in pristine condition once it's built. Understands there is annual maintenance to be performed. Specifically, a sealant needs to be applied once to twice a year. It would cost about \$1,200 a year. Patti would volunteer to try to raise funds with their group to provide that maintenance to the park.

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IV. Long Bridge Park  
Advisory Commission  
Presentation- Toby Smith

7:51- 8:22

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Toby Smith came to the meeting to present the final recommendations of the Long Bridge Park Advisory Committee. Group was asked to develop a design within the budget that was approved in previous bonds.

Group specifically sought to work and assess whether there was still community support for this. Within that, knowing the budget situation was less, they needed to determine how they'd prioritize the elements. To do that, they engaged in significant outreach. Collected input via online survey, visits to area pools, county fair, farmers markets. Additionally, the PSMP showed a need/desire for this project.

The group evaluated the operating costs of the facility- how would it compare to other facilities? Looked at potential sponsorships/partnerships as well.

Key findings- needs suggested an aquatics center with fitness- pools was highest rated, followed by fitness center/area. High demand for swimming classes as well.

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Strong support in moving forward with the project.

Programs/Elements- strong support for 50 meter pool, leisure pool, fitness. Less support for diving, therapy pool.

Architecture- building should be nice, but not premium or iconic.

Energy Efficiency- this hurt the budget on the first go round- one of the main reasons for bids being so high.

Recommendations:

- 1) Move forward with a downsized facility at Long Bridge. Should not exceed the funds that have been previously authorized.
- 2) Primary focus should be on community needs- not regional competitive needs.
- 3) Core Program Elements- two bodies of water (50 meter and combined leisure pool with training piece).
- 4) Doesn't recommend therapy pool or dive tower unless there's a partnership agreement.
- 5) Fitness Area
- 6) Recommend pursuit of reasonable architecture and energy efficiencies.

Cost Related Recommendations- use new mechanisms for budget (construction manager to work with design group- committed to building facility at a particular cost, they have to eat cost if they go over). Previously wasn't allowed to use this process.

Set fees for particular programs- fees should be in line with what we've previously done- we're in the middle (DC- free, Fairfax- full cost recovery). We've looked at Arlington Mill for comparison.

Group has urged that there be a clear business plan- including a marketing team. Partnerships/sponsorships should be explored.

Discussion regarding previous design "Phase 4"- multi-activity center. It may not make sense for this location- it would add to the cost. No official decision made. **Information on this is included in project documents: [Long Bridge Park Project Documents - Projects & Planning](#).**

Recommendation that County Board move forward with funding for a fourth soccer field to be built over existing parking lot.

Discussion/questions regarding the multi-activity center. How would this affect the cost- where would it have been? Toby- evaluation on some of this still needs to be done- not currently recommending a new location.

[Specific language of the Advisory Committee's recommendation that was not in hand at the meeting discussion:

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“Determine whether significant savings could be gained by decoupling the aquatics facility from the future multi-program activity center (MAC) which is planned for Phase 4 of Long Bridge Park but not included in the 10-year CIP. Designing the 2012 project to mesh with this proposed future addition increased the building’s complexities and cost. Eliminating this requirement could provide more flexibility in redesigning the aquatics and fitness center as a stand-alone structure in the park. Furthermore, the indoor sports and recreation needs to be served by a MAC might be met more economically, and sooner, at another location. The Board should direct staff to explore possibilities.”]

Craig- how would we want to move forward? Heather- would like to see a copy of the official recommendations- we’ll share with the commission.

**Note: Link for final report can be found here: [LBPAC Final Report](#).**

Toby- not immediate urgency, but consideration at upcoming meeting would be good.

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V. Yorktown Bathrooms-  
Rick Barry

8:23-8:43

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Rick Barry and Linda Cox attended the meeting to discuss the situation at Yorktown (Greenbrier) bathrooms during the winter. County cut services for year round restrooms for a savings of approximately \$42,000.

Rick has found the county is very good at working with and responding to civic associations, leagues, PTA’s, etc. but tougher with unorganized groups (the track users of Yorktown fall into this group).

There is a tremendous amount of use of the fields/track- they are urging that the county consider these users when making the decision to reinstate use. Looking for more discretion in budget decision.

Craig- restrooms are closed from November 15-March 15.

Discussion regarding cost increase- \$42,000 was not available at a “per restroom” figure at that time. Josh will gather information on cost per restroom.

Discussion regarding security lights and time of lights and discussion of split in responsibilities of county vs. schools and facility ownership. Three different high schools with three different situations.

Deb- schools have agreements with the county on all facilities- schools has responsibility during the week- county has it during the weekends.

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VI. Yorktown Turf Field	<p>Questions regarding the number of users the park has and how best to quantify that. Discussion regarding other cuts- to rovers, etc.</p>
8:44-8:48	<p>Questions regarding cost- why does field seem so expensive for turf replacement? Additional work is being done besides turf replacements- work underneath field, drainage, etc.</p>
VII. General Updates/Information	<p>Brief discussion regarding Tuckahoe.</p>
8:49-9:05	<p>Shirley- discussion regarding Casino Night- money raised will be donated to three different groups including sports groups. Shirley will send details out regarding this event.</p>
	<p>Shirley- update on Barcroft 1 &amp; 2 from previous meeting- Groups were unhappy with decision initially, had a meeting two weeks ago. All baseball groups and scheduler were in attendance of meeting- they discussed with DPR that conversion of fields might lead to less play time in the spring. In the end, maintenance is the issue- maintenance of the mounds (and switching back and forth) will no longer be DPR's responsibility- that has shifted to the individual leagues. DPR will provide instructions- leagues will need to keep the mounds in good shape.</p>
	<p>Discussion regarding Skate Park. Steve- believes this is a done deal- thinks there is momentum behind it and that it's happening- done regardless of our input.</p>
	<p>Justin- construction may be a done deal- what happens after- fundraising, etc. may not be. Believes they can fundraise and volunteer more time- not anti-skating, just sees it as a cost issue.</p>
	<p>Discussion regarding alternative ways for them to get more money (membership, passes, etc.). Members believe we should encourage the county to ask for the group to raise more money and encourage fundraising.</p>
	<p>Discussion regarding Long Bridge- additional field. Reggie- would be nice if field could accommodate football as well. Field will hold soccer, lacrosse, ultimate Frisbee.</p>
	<p>Questions regarding 4<sup>th</sup> phase. Doug- not funded now, it's never made it into the CIP.</p>
	<p>Heather- presentation this month by POPS to the Arlington County Long Range Planning Committee. PSMP highlights will be sent to Commission members.</p>
	<p>Discussion regarding Yorktown bathrooms- agreement that bathrooms should be opened up- Craig will work on a letter and/or investigate ways to fund.</p>

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Adjournment at 9:06 pm

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Next meeting will be May 26 at Langston Brown Community Center,  
Room 109

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Christian Dorsey, County Board Liaison

Attest:

*Josh Colman*

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Josh Colman, Staff Liaison