

Sports Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 27, 2017
Courthouse Plaza, Azalea Room
Time: 7:00-9:00 PM

Commission Members Present:

Shirley Brothwell, Substitute Chair for 4/27	David Tornquist
Larry Robertson	Patricia Trapanese
Drew Murray	John Bacon
Justin Wilt	Sherry Kohan
Jessica Paska	

Commission Members Absent:

Heather Cocozza, Chair	Reggie Kouba
Steve Severn	Janet Eichers

County/APS Staff:

Josh Colman, SC Liaison	Deb DeFranco, APS Liaison
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Please note: Agenda items may not be in chronological order.

Approval of Past Meeting Minutes- March 2017

[7:03-7:08pm]

Updated members present to reflect Patricia was in attendance in March.

Review and motion to approve meeting minutes, seconded, approved.

New Business

Underserved Populations Discussion

[7:08-8:22pm]

- Introduction of visitors and background information on the Sports Commission from Shirley.
- Background on the annual plan- topics chosen by Sports Commission to work on. The issue of underserved youth populations was one that the commission wanted to focus on.

- Discussion on the history of fee reductions relating to affiliate leagues. Leagues reported their scholarship policies. Barriers seem to be problems with language, transportation, ease of registration.
- Background and information provided on DPR fee reduction policies and eligibility.

VA Tech Fee Reduction Study

- Overview of the Virginia Tech fee reduction study currently underway.
- First part of the study is looking to see if fee reductions are penetrating the market.
 - The group will overlay registration information with the demographics of the county and see what areas may be underrepresented.
 - Group will identify areas for outreach.
 - The registration data looks at classes, camps, and sports.
- The second part of the study will look at whether the county is meeting the needs of participants based on income level. If the income levels were changed would we be able to accommodate more participants in the fee reduction program?
- Next steps: Group will continue to work and present findings/information to the sports Commission.

Out of School Time Commission- Jennifer Endo

- Discussion with Jennifer Endo from the Out of School Time Commission.
- Commission did a survey of principals and found that North Arlington students are over-scheduled, while South Arlington students are under-scheduled. Principals identified the same barriers - finances, transportation, language, administrative burden. Kids who are on the sideline want to sign up but cannot.
- Discussion on burden of going to an office to sign up. Accepting proof of income over email or via text would be a big improvement. Decentralized payment is another important part of this.
- Discussion on DPR verification. DPR accept APS verification, it just has to be done in person. Example discussed from Gaithersburg. They accepted all applicants without requiring verification. If someone requests the scholarship, they grant it. They've been very successful increasing participation in their programs.
 - This is similar to how some affiliate programs currently work.
- There also may be a barrier to having paper sign ups or paper registrations. People may be afraid to sign things.

Reuse and Replay- Mia Lee

- Mia Lee from Reuse and Replay joined the commission to discuss the program.
- The program is focused on reusing sports equipment and distributing it to those in need.
- They currently have over 1,500 items and give them away to places like ice rinks, charter schools, and more.

- Equipment comes in and is stored at Mia's house comma then gets moved out after that. They've partnered with "Leveling the Playing Field" which has given them huge loads of equipment.
- The local community has been very generous in donating equipment, uniforms, and more.
- They have so much equipment that they'd love to have a bigger place where they can store this type of equipment.
- Discussion on ideas for reuse and replay. The idea of approaching local businesses for storage, receive bags from businesses, or creating drop off points all over the county.
- You can find more information by googling Reuse and Replay.

Alex Berger- Baseball Program

- Overview of the baseball program at Drew Model School.
- Started a new baseball program available to all students. Program was almost like a case study. What would happen if you show up and do a baseball clinic at the school?
- Program was 100% free, all equipment was provided, and program takes place immediately after school.
- Program was open to everyone and attracted large numbers of kids who have never played baseball before.
- Discussion on what you can learn from this program.
 - Coordination with the school is important.
 - If you show up and make yourself available, kids will show up to play.

Dan Donaghy- Baseball Program

- Dan coaches a baseball team with 7 kids from Claremont on the roster. Had two kids from another school register, but then drop out as they didn't want to actually join. While looking for participants to fill the last two slots he reached out to the PTA president to see what options might exist.
- PTA President worked with the Principal to see if any children in the school would benefit from joining the team.
- Once he found out about Arlington Little League scholarship policies, was able to find additional students to join. Actually now has twelve kids on the roster- four of which have never played baseball before.
- Some parents donated equipment and supplies, the kids were very grateful and happy to have. Good experience working with the PTA on this.
- Kids have been very excited to play with their friends from school- and it's a good mix for the team.

ASA Program

- Overview of the ASA program.
- Discovered that conventional leagues were a problem for certain groups/location.
 - Transportation and logistics a recurring issue.
- ASA works to find an advocate at the school and create a program.
- This program combines tutoring and soccer- if you don't go to tutoring, you don't get to play soccer. It's a mix of soccer and life skills. Each program differs a bit from school to school.
- It's a free program. Important to note that even free programs can encounter problems- scheduling as an example. There can also be some hesitancy initially from the school.
- How was location decided? ASA looked at Title 1 heavy schools, participation rates, and floated the idea to school staff to see who might be interested.
- Program is mostly in elementary schools and a few middle schools.

Wrap-up Discussion and Consistent Themes

- Communication. Getting the word out on these programs is extremely important.
- Volunteers- these types of programs also require a lot of volunteers, or people willing to jump in and donate their time and effort.
 - Discussion on how to start these types of programs. Typically need outside people to guide or start this type of program. An individual school may be less likely to start its own program.
- Location- value of having these programs take place on school grounds. Easier to draw participants.
- Language- a big deal and part of the reason for success is being able to communicate with participant's parents. Principals and Vice-Principals who speak fluent Spanish have been a big help in putting parents at ease.
- Administrative processes- work on document regarding best practices for registration, etc.

Williamsburg Lights- Advocacy Discussion

[8:23-8:33pm]

- Discussion on upcoming County Manager's recommendation.
- Shirley is working on letter and will circulate. Current goal is to get the letter in front of the board and County manager before the May meeting.
- Discussion on advocacy via a letter-writing campaign. Involve outside groups, including those who may not be directly affected but have an interest/stake.
- This is an opportunity to set a marker in place for the next time this conversation happens as well.

Joint Diamond Field Use Overview and Discussion

[8:33pm-8:47pm]

- Discussion on 4MRV. In the interest of finding more space, the group wanted to see whether the two fields could be combined into a single field. Option was presented to the group in one of the sets of plans, however it does no longer appear to be in the current set of plans.
- Overview and discussion on how DPR currently operates joint-use fields of this nature. Information on where this occurs.
- Discussion of when the Sports Commission might be supportive of a multi-use field.
- Sports Commission may support when they increase flexibility but not a viable option when it's looking at eliminating a field. Multi-use can be a valuable option when looking at building new fields.
- Relating to 4MRV- removing one of the fields and making it multi-use would still be a net negative in available hours and playing time would be lost. Therefore, the commission would not support multi use for the 4MRV project.

County Board's Decision on Synthetic Turf for Gunston

[8:47pm-8:50pm]

- Gunston Turf project was approved by the County Board.
- Board seemed grateful for the public-private partnership. Like the agreement.
- It's a good step for the commission as well.
- Potential concern on moving forward on other projects and the county wanting to use private money.
- Josh will get updates on project and share with commission as available.

Old Business

Budget Meeting from County Board – Any Changes to DPR Operations or Capital in the Approved Budget

[8:50-8:56pm]

- Update on budget changes and approval.
- Concern for Sports Commission- mowing schedule changes due to \$50,000 mowing cut.
- DPR looking into schedule for next year- how this might affect sports fields and what could be done to mitigate.

Committee Reports

[8:56-9:07pm]

PFRC for New Elementary School- Jessica Paska

- Approved use permit- moving on to the building phase.

AYBA- Shirley

- Group hasn't met in a long time. Some members have been asking about a change to their charge/charter.
 - Likely unable to merge.

4MRV- Shirley

- Last set of drawings were more favorable to sports. Baseball fields were not affected by WETA building.
- Group meets with the board at the end of May for a working session.
- Open forum and presentation of drawings to public also upcoming.

JFAC

- Discussion on land swap- sports implications for both locations.
- Buck Property- fields seem to be one of the things that makes sense to put there.
- Need more info on land swap- worth continuing to advocate and include sports perspective on this.

Christian Dorsey, County Board Liaison

Attest:

Josh Colman

Josh Colman, Staff Liaison