

ANNUAL REPORT

TO: Jay Fiset, Chair, Arlington County Board
FROM: Heather Coccozza, Chair, Sports Commission
SUBJECT: Sports Commission 2016 Annual Report

The Arlington County Sports Commission serves as a conduit for information about sports and physical fitness programs among community organizations, agencies of the County government, and the Board. The Sports Commission offers recommendations and feedback on variety of sport related issues including: sport programs, adequacy and utilization of facilities, rules/policies governing participation in athletic programs, and more.

Meetings

The Sports Commission held 10 meetings in 2016. Meetings were held at Courthouse Plaza at the beginning of 2016, then moved to Langston-Brown Community Center (Room 109) from March-December. All meetings are available to the public, and the Sports Commission has a number of guests in attendance at typical meetings.

Membership

The Sports Commission dealt with a fair amount of turnover this year, including the departure of previous Chair (Craig Esherick), as well as a few longstanding members. Craig Esherick, George Towner, Mauricio Coreas, Ellen Killalea, and Asha Patton all completed their terms with the Sports Commission in 2016.

These departures led to a number of new appointments including Heather Coccozza as the new Chair of the Sports Commission. New members in 2016 are Justin Wilt, Jessica Paska, Drew Murray, Sherry Kohan, and Patricia Trapanese, John Bacon, and Larry Robertson.

As of December 2016, the Sports Commission consisted of the following members:

- Heather Coccozza, **Chair**
- John Bacon
- Shirley Brothwell
- Sherry Kohan
- Reggie Kouba
- Drew Murray

- Jessica Paska
- Larry Robertson
- Doug Ross
- Steve Severn
- David Tornquist
- Patricia Trapanese
- Justin Wilt

Staff:

Debbie DeFranco- APS Liaison
 Josh Colman- Staff Liaison

Member Activities

1. Established the Diamond Field Fund Committee with representatives from all diamond sports
2. Participated in seven Subcommittees, Task Forces and Work Groups and led one committee (see section below for details)
3. Began the initiative to help define certain policy aspects of the Sport User Groups (field sports)
4. Created the Gymnastics Expansion Project Workgroup to expand gymnastics into the 2nd gymnasium in FY2016, helped remove barriers and confirmed timeline for the full expansion
5. Created a Position Statement on the Sports Commission's view of county planning processes
6. Sent eight letters to the County Board (see section below for details)
7. Hosted a booth at the County Fair

Subcommittees, Task Forces & Working Groups

Members are involved in a number of working groups, subcommittees, and other advocacy work throughout the County.

- *Aquatics Committee- Doug Ross
 - This Committee reports to the County Board, through the Sports Commission, and the Arlington Public Schools Board. The Committee makes recommendations on the adequacy and efficiency of aquatic-related programs and facilities, engages stakeholders, and serves as a conduit for information about aquatic programs.
- *Arlington Youth Baseball Association- Heather Coccozza & Bill Murray
 - The AYBA works to improve the baseball experience for ballplayers ages 12 & under, focusing specifically on making progress towards the consolidation of youth baseball programs.

- *^Diamond Field Fund Committee- Steve Severn
 - The Diamond Field Fund Committee focuses on introducing and developing diamond field fund projects to be approved by the Sports Commission.
- Four Mile Run Valley Working Group- Shirley Brothwell & Justin Wilt
- Long Bridge Park Advisory Committee- Doug Ross
- PFRC for New Elementary School (NES) TJ- Jessica Paska
- Public Space Master Plan- Heather Cocozza
- Sports User Group Study- Reggie Kouba
- Williamsburg Lights Work Group- Steve Severn

*Reports to Sports Commission

^Chair this Committee

Aquatics Committee

Specific information regarding the activities of the Aquatics Committee are below. Specific questions may be directed to Jennifer Lainhart (Aquatics Committee Liaison).

As of December 2016, the Aquatics Committee consisted of the following members nominated by County Board:

- Donald Hesse, **Chair**
- Doug Ross (former chair member until replaced)
- Anna Necheles
- Diane Romanek
- Erik VandeMeulebroecke

And following members nominated by School Board:

- Cynthia Hilton (**Vice-Chair**)
- John Donnelly
- Jason Gray (leaving committee in 2017)
- Guy Land
- MacKenzie Kearney

The Aquatics Committee met five times in 2016 and addressed the following work:

- Addressed issues from members of the public which are included in the agendas posted online (<https://commissions.arlingtonva.us/sports-commission/aquatics-committee/>).
- Reviewed Superintendent's and County Manager's Proposed Budget for 2017 with regard to Aquatic Operations/Programs.
- Provided input and reviewed results of the APS Annual Aquatics Survey.

- Hosted an Aquatics Forum at the end of the year. Unfortunately, the forum was not well attended. The Committee plans to host one for early 2017 in a more electronic fashion.
- Designated a new Chair and Vice Chair for 2017 and review membership and charter.
- Review and Comment on Friends of Long Bridge Parks updates via Doug Ross.
- Annual (fall) walk through/inspection of all three pools.
- Developing guidelines for the use of pool lanes by non-lap swimmers.
- Updates on DPR waitlist for instructional programs.
- Security in locker rooms during shared use times.
- Held ongoing discussions of committee's charter revision issues (last revision was adopted by both Boards in October 2013).
- Considered need for comment on the proposed FY2017 APS budget in light of Committee's prior suggestions. Prior suggestions included Committee's 2014 Cost Analysis Report and Interim Recommendations and prior fee recommendation memos.
- Nauck Neighborhood Pool: review history and potential for future- Anna Necheles

Issues Addressed

The Sports Commission addressed, reviewed, or weighed in on a number of issues through 2016. Some of these involved communication sent to the Board, while others involved input to individual working groups, County agencies, and more. Important issues that were addressed include:

- 1) **Fencing of Bluemont Field #3**- In the spirit of compromise the Sports Commission came out in support of the adjusted project scope (reducing some of the fencing), while requesting additional monitoring of field maintenance to ensure quality control.
- 2) **Bathrooms at Yorktown HS**- Sports commission supports the long term goal of opening the Yorktown outdoor restrooms during the winter and encouraged the short-term fix of costs being split between DPR and Arlington Soccer Association (donation).
- 3) **Temporary Fire Station 10/Wilson Site**- The Sports Commission opposed locating the station on the HB Woodlawn athletic field, urging the board to choose a location that would not restrict the limited sport and recreational play.
- 4) **Powhatan Springs Skate Park**- While finding value in continuing to provide a skate park in Arlington, the commission questioned the costs relative to the use and requested that DPR consider reducing the cost, collecting fees to offset costs, or conducting an audit to ensure project does not repeat past mistakes.
- 5) **Long Bridge Park Project**- The Sports Commission supported the construction of the Long Bridge Aquatics and Fitness Facility. Additionally, the commission supported directing staff to explore other locations for the multi-program activity center (MAC), as well as working with the National Park Service to connect Long Bridge and the Mt. Vernon Trail.
- 6) **Artificial Turf Fields**- The Sports Commission supported building and upgrading additional artificial fields across the County.
- 7) **Williamsburg Lights**- The Sports Commission has a representative on the Williamsburg Lights Working Group and reviewed the Working Group presentation, as well as participated in a

question/answer session and public comment period with group members at a Sports Commission Meeting

County Board Communications

In response to some of these issues, the Sports Commission took the following positions (letters/statements are available online):

Statement/Letter	Date	Board/County Action in Alignment?
FY18 Budget Planning	12/4/16	To be determined in future
Bluemont Field #3	11/3/16	Yes
FY16 Close-Out Funds	11/2/16	No
Community Facilities Study	10/28/16	Yes
Yorktown Restrooms	10/2/16	To be determined in future
Fire Station 10	9/11/16	No
Powhatan Springs Skate Park	7/7/16	Yes
Long Bridge Park Project	6/10/16	Yes
Artificial Turf Petition	1/19/16	Yes

Completed Projects and Influenced Results

- Support DPR in the purchase and building of four new batting cages around the county
 - New batting cages were completed at: Westover, Tuckahoe (2 single batting cages).
 - Plans for cages at Stratford and Gunston
- Work with the County Board, DPR and the County Manager to expand the gymnastics facility at Barcroft one year earlier than proposed on the most recent CIP.
 - This was done when Friday afternoon and evening gymnastics classes expanded into the 2nd gym spring of 2016
- Provide support to the diamond field groups to encourage the county to refurbish three infields at Bluemont Park and also encourage the building of an additional diamond field at the Bluemont Park location.

- Project underway at Bluemont Field #3
 - County Board supported the Sports Commission recommendations in regards to the Bluemont Field #3 fencing and monitoring of field maintenance
- Yorktown outdoor restrooms were planned to be closed starting mid-November 2016 for the winter; however, Arlington Soccer Association provided partial funding through the Collaboration and Donation Policy with DPR to keep the restrooms open.
- Support synthetic turf project at Gunston.
 - Sports Commission voted to provide substantial Diamond Field Fund monies (\$190,000) towards construction of synthetic turf field at Gunston.