

Sports Commission Charter **Adopted December 15, 2020**

Introduction: Arlington County is home to a physically active and healthy community. In 2019, the American Fitness Index, published annually by the American College of Sports Medicine and the Anthem Foundation, ranked Arlington as the most fit among 100 major urban areas in the United States. According to the 2019 Public Spaces Master Plan (PSMP), 87 percent of County residents participate in physical leisure-time activity, and demand for sports programming and sports facilities is ever-increasing. Sports programming is provided in Arlington County by multiple sources, including the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), non-profit leagues recognized as affiliate partners by DPR, and for-profit leagues renting space from DPR. In addition, physical fitness and competitive sports opportunities are offered to students in Arlington Public Schools (APS). DPR and APS both play a role in scheduling and managing the County's sports facilities, including fields, pools, courts, trails, gymnasiums, and community centers. The Sports Commission advises the Arlington County Board on issues related to the efficient, effective, and equitable provision of sports programming and management of sports facilities in Arlington.

Mission: The Sports Commission shall advise the County Board and facilitate sharing of information about sports and physical fitness programs, activities, and facilities among the Board, agencies of the County government, community organizations, and other County Board advisory commissions. It may conduct public meetings and hold hearings, prepare studies and reports, make recommendations, participate in planning processes, and appear before public bodies in furtherance of the above objectives. Jointly with Arlington Public Schools, the Commission oversees the Aquatics Committee.^[1] The Commission shall also carry out such additional projects and activities as directed from time to time by the County Board.

Governing Documents: Public Spaces Master Plan (PSMP); park master plans and area, sector, and other plans as they relate to sports programming and facilities; the Equity Resolution.

Functions and Scope: The Commission's primary responsibility is to provide the Board with advice and recommendations on the following topics:

1. The adequacy, equity, and efficiency of the County's existing sports and physical fitness programs, including but not limited to activities offered, policies governing participation, fees charged, and relationships among various activities.
2. The adequacy, accessibility, and equitable and efficient utilization of sports and physical fitness facilities, owned by Arlington County and/or Arlington Public Schools, including, but not limited to, fields, gymnasiums, swimming pools, tennis courts, and paths and trails used by runners and bicyclists, and any other facility or space used for athletics.

3. The rules and policies governing participation in and the conduct of County sponsored or supported athletic activities' allocation of facilities, and the efficiency, fairness, and transparency with which these rules and policies are administered.
4. The extent which Public Space Master Plan updates and implementation relates to the Sports Commission's mission.
5. The extent which area and sector plans impact or offer opportunities for the furtherance of Arlington's sports and physical programming and facilities, including but not limited to options for maximizing sports programming opportunities with the County's limited physical footprint.
6. The extent to which the annual DPR operating budget and the Capital Improvement Plan adequately fund and support the County's sports programming and facilities needs and objectives.

To carry out its advisory responsibilities, incident to the above, the Commission may:

- Provide outreach to, and solicit feedback from community organizations, local businesses, youth and adult sports leagues, George Washington and Marymount universities, and other local and regional partners.
- Solicit information from and interact with DPR.
- Hold hearings regarding ongoing or proposed DPR projects, proposed actions by the Board or County Manager.

Membership: The Sports Commission shall be comprised of 15 members, representing a diverse mix of sports and physical fitness interests and demographics. Sports Commission members are expected to serve as liaisons to the full range of Arlington sports and physical fitness interests, such that all relevant constituencies are fairly represented in group deliberations and the formulation of advice and recommendations to the Board.

Members will be appointed for two-year terms, and with reappointment, shall be permitted to serve no more than six (6) consecutive years (unless term limits directed by the State). All members serve at the pleasure of the Board.

A member of the Sports Commission who fails to attend three (3) Sports Commission meetings in a single year without providing advance notice to the Chair, or staff, may be asked to resign his or her remaining term on the Commission. The Commission Chair, after consultation with the County Board liaison, shall notify the member if such an action is warranted.

Chair, Vice Chair: The County Board shall annually designate a Chair, and may annually designate a Vice Chair, to lead the Sports Commission. The Commission may forward nominations for Chair and Vice Chair from the Commission's current membership to the Board for its considerations.

Committees: The Sports Commission may also create committees and working groups, as necessary, to accomplish specific Sports Commission missions and objectives, and the Chairman shall appoint committee leadership. Committee membership may include persons who are not on the Sports Commission.

Staff Liaison: The County Manager and the Superintendent of Arlington Public Schools shall each designate a person to serve as staff liaison to the Sports Commission.

Meetings: The Sports Commission will meet on a monthly basis, or as needed, to adequately fulfill its role and responsibilities outlined in this charter. Meeting dates will be determined by the Commission and advertised publicly on its website. All meetings will comply with Virginia Open Meeting requirements and the Freedom of Information Act. Agendas and meeting minutes will be made available to the public in a timely manner. The Advisory Group Handbook provides additional information on the conduct of meetings as well as communication protocols that should guide all members in their advisory group work.

Reporting to the Board: The Sports Commission will provide recommendations to the County Board policy, planning, programming and budgetary matters related to sports and physical fitness programs, access, and facilities. The Sports Commission will submit an annual report to the County Board after consultation with the Board Liaison. Sports Commission may, from time to time, be asked to provide comment at a regular Board meeting or Board work session.

Update of this Charter: From time to time, the group name shall review this charter to assure that it meets current needs. Any requests for changes must be processed through the Board Liaison.