



AQUATICS COMMITTEE

Arlington, VA



June 18, 2021

The Honorable Monique O’Grady, Chair
Arlington School Board
Syphax Education Center 2110
Washington Blvd.
Arlington, Virginia 22204

Re: Unanimous Resolution on M-15 Policy and PIP (Aquatic Facilities and Programs)

Dear Ms. O’Grady,

The Aquatics Committee¹ reiterates our commitment to the priorities the School Board established in the M-15 Aquatic Facilities and Programs Policy and Policy Implementation Procedures (PIP) in April of this year. To that end, the Committee unanimously passed the following resolution at its regular monthly meeting on June 15, 2021:

The Arlington Aquatics Advisory Committee reiterates its prior unanimous support of the M-15 policy, and, in light of the imminent opening of the eagerly anticipated Long Bridge Aquatics Center, which will allow DPR swim teams and programs to utilize a 50 meter pool and state of the art facility, confirms the importance of APS Aquatics being allowed to implement and give space priority in APS pools to APS programs, for which pool space previously has not been available, including expanded developmental swimming for Arlingtonians of all ages.

As you know, the M-15 Policy and PIP allows APS Aquatics Management to control time and space allocation within the APS pools by setting, following student usage, all APS community-based programs as a priority. As a direct result of the School Board’s adoption of the Policy and PIP, staff is launching several new and exciting programs under the moniker “APS Swim School.” The Committee is proud to report that these programs focus on equity in access to APS’s pools and do much to further APS’s mission of “water-proofing” kids.

A summer session for APS Swim School will launch on July 12 and will have four basic curriculum levels:

- (1) Baby and Tots—designed to introduce infants and toddlers to water;
- (2) Basic—designed to provide a foundation of water-safety skills to children and adults, with a focus on self-rescue, air recovery, treading water, proper life-jacket use, etc.;
- (3) Stroke—designed to develop effective swim technique and endurance for children and adults advanced beyond basic; and

¹ The Aquatics Committee is a joint committee of the Arlington County Board and School Board. The Committee is charged with ensuring community engagement in the operation and use of the Arlington indoor swimming pools located within the three high schools and with making recommendations as needed on behalf of users to the County Board, through the Sports Commission, and to the School Board.

- (4) Swim Team—designed to provide an affordable transitional program from swim lessons to competitive swim teams in an supportive and encouraging environment.

Each session of APS Swim School (e.g., summer, fall, etc.) will consist of 8 lessons, and sessions will be offered at every APS school to provide equity of access. Lessons will be scheduled at convenient times² for families throughout the week and on weekends. An APS Swim School focused on fitness will also launch this summer.

Importantly, lesson fees have been set to be affordable: ranging between \$8.25 and \$9.65 per lesson, depending on the type of Swim School. Users may also opt to pay by lesson rather than in full up front. Staff designed this alternative payment schedule to circumvent a persistent hurdle in accessing pools and to promote socioeconomic diversity in swimming.

Staff will be announcing APS Swim School opportunities within the next few days, e.g., by flyers, Internet, and direct messaging to communities.

The Committee urges the School Board to allow staff to continue its implementation of the M-15 policy and PIP. Staff is looking forward to providing APS's community-based programs to a broad group of citizens during times that are most convenient for families—all while increasing operational effectiveness and recovering full costs. Although staff is expeditiously developing and rolling out these programs, staff is still challenged by a national shortage of lifeguards due to COVID restrictions. The Committee is confident, however, that staff is making good progress, and, importantly, using its resources to expand water access to children and families, without diminishing APS's current level of service to other community users.

Finally, the Committee is excited for the opening of Long Bridge Park and the unique opportunities this state-of-the-art facility will provide for Arlington citizens, and especially for advanced swimmers who will now have a facility specifically designed for training and competition.

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me with any questions.

Respectfully,

/s/

Dr. Kristi Rupert Sawert
Acting Chair

cc: Members of the Arlington School Board
Dr. Francisco Durán, Superintendent
Members of the Aquatics Committee

² For the youngest children, the time between 4:30 to 6 pm weeknights is considered "prime-time" in the swim world, because it is difficult to program classes after that time due to logistics with bedtimes, etc.



ARLINGTON COUNTY SPORTS COMMISSION
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 414
Arlington, Virginia 22201



June 21, 2021

The Honorable Matt de Ferranti
Chairman
Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Blvd
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Mr. de Ferranti,

The Sports Commission has reviewed the proposed FY2022-FY2024 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). We had modest expectations for this CIP and are, therefore, grateful that the CIP continues the county's investment in sports facilities. We appreciate how the CIP maintains existing assets and continues the synthetic turf program while beginning to plan for future facilities.

For the maintenance program, the replacement of the tennis courts at Bluemont will enhance these heavily used facilities and continue their useful life. We are also glad to see the continuation of the work at Alcova Heights to replace the basketball courts. Finally, the replacement of the track at Greenbier will not only benefit APS but also its many community users.

We are encouraged to see the continued commitment to synthetic turf program. The conversion of the Thomas Jefferson Upper field to synthetic turf will add needed rectangular field capacity. The replacement of the fields at Rocky Run and the Barcroft Community field will help ensure that these community assets will be usable for the foreseeable future.

Despite these important investments, future planning is essential. We are encouraged to see funding for planning the Arlington Boathouse which has the potential to be another incredible asset for county and the region. Future field investments are also essential. Therefore, we hope that the next CIP will restore planned funding for synthetic turf at Kenmore. The Commission's Field Fund Working Group will soon make recommendations about field fees and fund usage that could help expedite this critical project.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this feedback.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shirley Brothwell".

Shirley Brothwell, Chair
Sports Commission

Cc: County Board Members
Mark Schwartz, County Manager
Jane Rudolph, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation