

**City of Alexandria, Virginia
PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION Regular
Meeting**

**Leonard “Chick” Armstrong Recreation Center
25 W. Reed Avenue**

**Thursday, May 16, 2024
7 p.m.**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order: Dana Colarulli, Acting Chair
2. Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items
3. Commissioner Reports & Announcements
4. Action Items
 - a. Approval April 18, 2024 Minutes
5. Items of Information
 - a. **Staff Report Highlights** - Staff
 - b. **Multiuse Hard Surface Court Maintenance Update**
Daniel Unkle, Urban Planner III, Park Services
 - c. **Youth Sports Advisory Board Discussion**
Laura Durham, Deputy Director, Recreation Services
Randy Little, Division Chief, Recreation Services
James Gibson, Chair, Youth Sports Advisory Board
 - d. **FY 2025 Operating & CIP Approved Budget Update**
James Spengler, Director
6. Next Meeting: June 20, 2024 – TBD
7. Adjournment

For reasonable disability accommodation, contact Jack Browand at Jack.Browand@alexandriava.gov or 703.746.5504, Virginia Relay 711. We request that you provide 48-hour notice so that the proper arrangements can be made.

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 16, 2024
TO: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEMBERS
FROM: LAURA DURHAM, DEPUTY DIRECTOR
RECREATION SERVICES DIVISION
SUBJECT: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION DIVISION UPDATE ITEM

OSTP Update:

Current 23-24 School Year: We are currently offering Out of School Time programming at (12) afterschool locations which include (3) LINK Club locations, (2) ESSER locations, and (2) specialty programs (Youth Achieving Greatness and TR Achieving Greatness).

Current Summer Enrollment: We are currently offering the OSTP Summer Power-On/ Power-Up program at (14) locations which include (2) specialty programs Camp Adventure and TR Camp Adventure.

Program Wrap-ups:

- Throughout April, the Jerome “Buddie” Ford Nature Center participated in many recreation center events, including **Science Night** at Francis C. Hammond Middle School and William Ramsay Elementary School. Nature Center staff also attended the **Del Ray Gardenfest**. They spoke to 176 people about insects and other animals they may find in their garden.



- On April 13, Winter Ballet participants concluded their program with a **Spring Dance Recital** at Lee Center. 75 dancers, ages 3-11 participated in the “Storybook” themed recital. This was the first performance for our new level of ballet, Intro to Pointe class. Special thanks to our wonderful ballet instructors, Ms. Elisa, Ms. Megan, and Ms. Paige, for their hard work throughout the session to prepare our tiny dancers!

- On April 13, the participants of the Nannie J. Lee Therapeutic Achieving Greatness Program and the Adult Social Club Program, enjoyed thier first game of **Miracle League Baseball**. The game opener was very, and participants had pleasure of working with volunteers from the Washington Nationals. In addition, we hosted Miracle League Baseball games for Middle and High School Special Education students on April 16 and April 17.



- From April 15 through May 10, Patrick Henry and Nannie J. Lee Recreation Centers collaborated with the Virginia Cooperative Extension to participate in the **Chick Embryo Development Project**. OSTP participants watched as incubators and heat lamps helped eggs slowly hatch into chicks. The youth learned about the stages of development chickens go through.



- On April 26, seniors at Patrick Henry Recreation Center enjoyed an **eco-friendly gardening workshop** with the Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia. The participants gain tips on horticulture therapy, composting, lawn care, and plant selection from trained volunteers supported by the Virginia Cooperative Extension.



- On April 28, the Durant Center hosted a **Superhero Brunch** for kids ages 2-12 with their parents. The superheroes in training were given capes and masks to decorate, along with other crafts, enjoyed breakfast snacks, and received superhero training from Batman and Wonder Woman. 20 little superheroes and their parents enjoyed the day!



- On May 3, Mount Vernon Recreation Center partnered with Mount Vernon Community School to participate in the **Annual MVCS Mile**. The MVCS Mile is a fundraiser specifically focusing on health and healthy habits. This yearly event includes a 1-mile race, fun activities, a raffle, and more.



- On May 4, Mount Vernon Recreation Center held its **Mother's Day Spa event**. This event celebrated moms as they bonded with their daughters over food, facials, massages, and manicures.



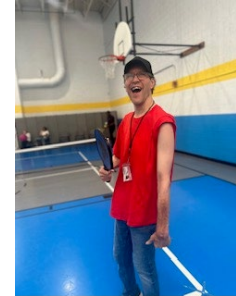
- On May 4, RPCA held one of its largest community events, **Rec Fest**. This annual event allows the community to experience many of the programs and offerings available through RPCA. The day was filled with fitness activities, arts & crafts, games, prizes, vendors, food trucks and a DJ. The event was scheduled to take place at Armistead L. Booth Park but was moved to Tucker Elementary School due to the in-climate weather.



- Patrick Henry Recreation Center's **Anime Society** participated in Rec Fest by debuting the Gundam suit project they've been building over the past several weeks. Modeled after the RX-78-2 Gundam, the fruits of their labor were on full display, much to the delight of onlookers.



- On May 8, Patrick Henry Recreation Center offered a **Pop-Up activity** for the St. Coletta's Greater of Washington Adult Day Program. Participants enjoyed modified and adaptive sport games such as Pickleball, Jumbo Bowling, Giant Ring Toss and Dribble, Dribble, Pass & Shoot.



- **Track participants** at Mount Vernon Recreation Center, under Coach Jason's direction have worked very hard this spring. While instilling discipline and work ethics in the youth, Coach Jason prepares participants to compete in the City's Track meet on May 11.



Program Updates:

- **The Alexandria City Cup Employee Series (City Cup) Softball League** is underway. Teams from RPCA, City Hall, DCHS and APD are competing on Thursday evenings at Four Mile Softball Field to be crowned City Cup Softball Champs. The Alexandria City Cup Employee Series was developed to improve well-being by making healthy choices and living an active lifestyle while competing against each other in a friendly/fun filled atmosphere.
- RPCA, along with many other City agencies, is hosting 12 **Community Cookout** events throughout the City from April through July. The cookouts provide an opportunity for neighbors to learn about City services and community resources. They include free food, face painting, games, and giveaways.
- **First Friday Teen Night** was held at Charles Houston Recreation Center on May 3. Teens participated in a basketball shootout contest, Tic Tok challenges, and pizza making. The next teen night will be held on Friday, June 1.



- The Charles Houston Recreation Center **Teen Gardening Club** began on May 8. The club meets twice a week to learn the fundamentals of growing their own fruits and vegetables.



- The **Teen Focus Group** held at Patrick Henry Recreation Center on April 11, discussed the harmful effects of vaping. During the session, Mr. Mike emphasized its negative impact on young lives. Teens watched an educational video that underscored the message, providing visual reinforcement to the discussion. They also participated in an interactive Kahoot game.



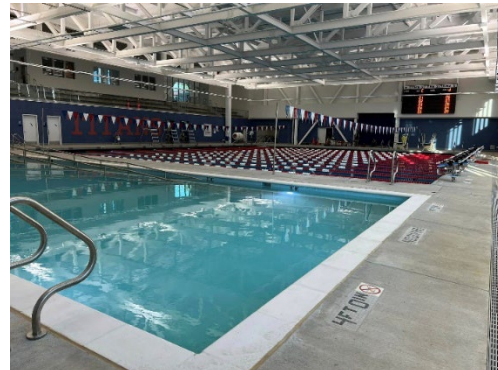
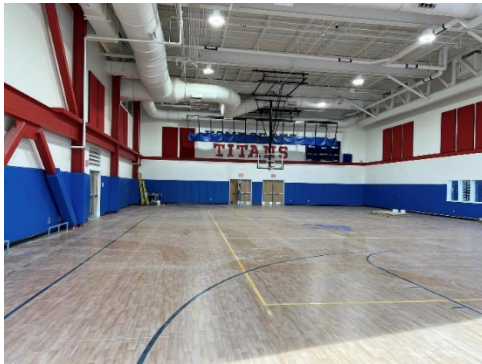
Upcoming Events:

- Saturday, May 18, is **Kids to Parks Day**. This event is a national day of outdoor play celebrated annually on the third Saturday of May. For more information on Kids to Parks Day in Alexandria visit alexandriava.gov/parks/kids-to-parks-day-2024.
- The Alexandria Boxing Club will host a **Youth Boxing Showcase** with matches at Charles Houston on May 18, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
- **Senior's Health & Fitness Fair** will take place at Lee Center on May 23, at 10am.
- **Outdoor Pool season** begins on May 25! Summer pool passes are on sale now. Come learn the basics of water safety prior to the summer swim season at Water Safety Day on Wednesday, May 15 at 6pm at Chinquapin, a free event offering water safety education and swim lessons for all ages.
- A **Memorial Day Ceremony** will take place at Mount Vernon Recreation Center on May 27th at 11:00am. The approximately 1-hour outdoor Ceremony will honor posthumous Medal of Honor recipient, POW/MIA, RANGER Hall of Fame inductee and Distinguished Member of the Special Forces Regiment Captain Rocky Versace, the 67 other Alexandrians who died during the Vietnam War and all members of the U.S. Armed Forces who made the ultimate sacrifice.

- On June 8, Charles Houston Recreation Center will host a **Men's Health Expo**. Participants will enjoy cooking demonstrations, class demonstrations, vendors, and much more.
- First and second place winners from the Alexandria City Track & Field Meet held on May 11 will have the opportunity to advance to the **Mid-Atlantic Recreation & Parks Sports Alliance Meet** on Saturday, June 15 at 9 a.m. at Quince Orchard High School in Gaithersburg, Maryland.
- On June 18, Charles Houston Recreation Center will host **SNKR Jam 24**. Teens will enjoy food, games, jams, and much more. Teens are encouraged to come dressed in their best sneakers.

Special Features:

Final touches are being made at the **Minnie Howard High School campus**. When it opens this Fall, it will include a new gymnasium that will be used for RPCA sports programs and an aquatics facility for school and community swimming that will be operated by RPCA.



Staff Updates:

- **Bailey Stapleton** joined the RPCA team as the Aquatics Recreation Manager for the Minnie Howard Aquatics Facility!
- Several staff, including Division leadership, completed the inaugural **Our Community Serves** course held in late April. Jametta Pettiway and Octavius Fulton were also accepted into the Chapman Foundation's facilitator program to instruct upcoming sessions of Our Community Listens.

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 16, 2024

TO: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEMBERS

FROM: JACK BROWAND, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, PARK SERVICES *JB*
RECREATION, PARKS & CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

ITEM 5.a.: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION DIVISION UPDATE
PARK SERVICES

PARK PLANNING & CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

Bethany Znidersic, Division Chief

Capital Improvement Project Summary Update

- May Park Planning & Capital Development Report, Park Services (*Attached*)

Park Planning Project Updates

- Hard Surface Court Update

Sites Currently Closed or Partially Closed to Public Use for Capital Projects

- Holmes Run Trail (Site 1 – design & Site 2&3 – construction procurement)
- Eugene Simpson Stadium Park Dog Park (active construction)
- Joseph Hensley Park (active construction)
- Mount Jefferson Park Dog Park - (drainage redesign complete – in approval process)
- Oronoco Bay Park boardwalk and piers - (closed for inspections and structural repairs)
- 5 West Braddock Road Pocket Park (landscape improvements)
- Miracle Field Landscape Beds (replanting project)

5 West Braddock Road Pocket Park

Project Managers: Daniel Unkle, Park Services

The City has completed a renovation project at 5 West Braddock Road Park to implement the recommendations of the 2020 Pocket Park Improvements Plan. The work was completed in May and includes new plantings, benches, and a pathway to enhance the park user experience and the visual appearance of the park.



PARK MAINTENANCE

Derek Claytor, Division Chief

Division Update

Schuyler Hamilton Jones Skateboard Park repairs Project Managers: Derek Claytor, Division Chief

A significant effort was directed towards the ramps and other equipment to make them more maintenance friendly. By doing this work in-house, we can now perform a more robust routine inspection as well as make repairs in a much faster manner and perform the work with Staff vs. Contractors.



Volunteer Day with Bishop Ireton High School

Project Managers – Jimmy Roland D-1, Shawn Miller D-2, & Chris Watson D-3

We are proud to have Bishop Ireton H.S. dedicate their student body to spend as many hours as possible to pick up litter in ALL of our PARKS! On April 19th approximately 300 students came out to support this initiative.



NATURAL RESOURCES

Oscar Mendoza, Division Chief

Division Update

Urban Forestry

Project Manager: Phil Jubert, Urban Forest Manager

1. Urban Forestry led efforts to plant a tree on Earth Day with City Leadership and the youth of Alexandria (**see photo**). The tree was financially sponsored by the Stormwater Division.
2. Urban Forestry led a volunteer tree planting event with the leaders of Volunteer Alexandria and PARKnership off Holmes Run Trail. This project was intended to reforest an area that has experienced catastrophic tree mortality in recent years due to flooding.
3. Urban Forestry Manager, Phil Jubert, was an invited guest speaker at a Beautification Commission meeting to give his perspectives on



what makes a “beautiful urban forest”. This was a high-level discussion meant to introduce basic concepts and philosophies to the Commission. At the event, the Commission announced a commitment to help financially support the planting of over 75 trees at Four Mile Run.

4. The Urban Forestry team designed their planting plan for the following fiscal year and have set the target at over 700 trees. This goal is more than 300 trees than our historic average and will be made possible through our cooperation with volunteer groups and broader civic engagement.

Project Title: Celandine Season at Monticello and Dora Kelley Nature Park
Project Managers: Park Services Staff

The Natural Resources Division continues its efforts to eradicate the invasive Celandine plant, recognizing the numerous benefits associated with this endeavor. These include preserving native plant diversity, maintaining ecosystem balance, and protecting water quality. By removing Celandine, we prevent it from outcompeting native species for essential resources such as sunlight, water, and nutrients, thus promoting biodiversity and supporting the overall health of local ecosystems. Additionally, controlling Celandine helps prevent habitat disruption and soil erosion, contributing to the protection of water bodies and associated aquatic habitats. Overall, eradicating Celandine enhances the resilience and sustainability of the environment.



PARK SUPPORT

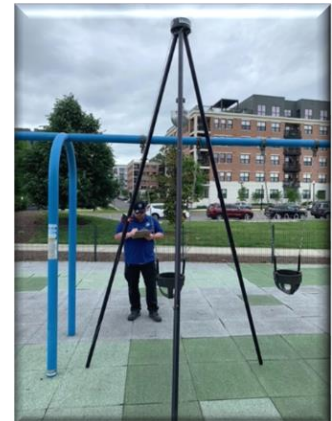
Tonja Walls, Division Chief

Division Update

Health & Safety Inspections

Project Managers: Brad Alger, Facility Maintenance Supervisor & Keith Beasley, laborer III

G-Max testing is currently being performed at Potomac Yards Playground. The purpose of G-Max testing is to reduce the severity of head injuries due to falls onto playground surface. Testing is done in accordance with ASTM standards. The testing equipment consists of a tripod, e-missile, and a handheld controller. The picture shows testing on a Single Axis Swing.



Vehicle Access Control

Project Manager: Michael Reid, Facility Maintenance Supervisor

Park Support instituted a new key distribution system designed to keep track of our fleet inventory and employees have been trained in the use of the key box. This new system makes it easier to know who is responsible for or assigned to a particular vehicle and allows the Division Chief to know where vehicles are at all times.

Park & Recreation Commission -Park Planning Report



May 16, 2024

Project	Project Description	Monthly Update	Status	Planning District	Target Completion Date	Assigned To
1 Washington Street Median Renovation	This project will renovate the center medians along Washington Street.	The landscape improvements are installed and complete in the Washington Street medians between Cameron Street and Duke Street. The improvements will be monitored for one year for establishment and any warranty work.	Close-out	Citywide	05/30/25	Daniel Unkle
2 Lee Center Tennis Court Renovation	Renovation of the two multi-use courts including full surface replacement.	The Construction contract was awarded and the work is scheduled for June and July. The construction has been coordinated with user groups and information regarding the project will be posted on the City website. The courts will be closed during the work.	Implementation	District 1	10/04/24	Daniel Unkle
3 Lee Center Basketball Court Surface Repairs	Repair of the court surface to address cracks.	The Construction contract was awarded and the work is scheduled for June and July. The construction has been coordinated with user groups and information regarding the project will be posted on the City website. The courts will be closed during the work.	Implementation	District 1	10/04/24	Daniel Unkle
4 Old Town Pool Replacement Design	Design for the replacement of Old Town Pool.	The owner advisor team contract was awarded in May. Site visits and kick-off meetings will be held in late May. Procurement for the design team is anticipated to be issued this fall.	Planning	District 1	04/30/25	Jack Broward
5 Simpson Dog Park Renovation	This project will address erosion and drainage issues in the Simpson Park dog park per the 2014 Citywide Parks Improvements Plan.	Contracting issues have delayed the completion of the project. The City has terminated the contractor and is working to complete the final project components. The dog park is anticipated opened to the community shortly after all safety issues have been addressed and additional updates will be posted to the project website as they are available.	Implementation	District 2	07/19/24	Bethany Znidarsic
6 Charles Barrett Rec Playground Construction	This project will implement and construct the approved design for the playground renovation.	The improvements are substantially complete and a soft opening occurred on May 3. Small items that do not preclude use of the playground will occur in May and June. New trees and landscape plantings will be installed in June and replacement fencing will be installed in July and August.	Close-out	District 2	08/16/24	Judy Lo
7 Braddock and Commonwealth Drainage Improvements	Improve drainage within park and install pollinator garden.	Landscape and site improvements based on the 2020 Pocket Park Plan recommendations were completed in May and the park is open to the community.	Close-out	District 2	01/20/27	Daniel Unkle
8 Hensley Park Renovation Phase I	This project will renovate Hensley Park based on the Citywide Parks Improvement Plan concept (2014).	Construction is in progress and is anticipated to be complete in early 2025. The restroom building was demolished the week of May 4 and the athletic field lights have been installed. Please see the project website for more information: alexandriava.gov/rpca/project/joseph-hensley-park-renovation	Implementation	District 3	01/01/25	Bethany Znidarsic
9 Armistead Boothe Restroom HVAC upgrade design	This project will provide design and engineering to upgrade mechanical systems to allow for all season usage	The restroom improvements plan is complete. Coordination with Dominion Energy is ongoing to upgrade the service to the site.	Planning	District 3	12/31/24	David Ghezzi