



MEETING MINUTES

DATE April 22, 2024, at 3:00 pm
LOCATION Parks & Recreation Administration Room 101
2154 Landstown Road, Virginia Beach, Virginia 23456

1. WELCOME & ATTENDANCE ROLL CALL

Chair Bernick called the meeting to order at 3:00pm. Recorder Trina Harrell called the role. Chair Bernick asked the visitors to introduce themselves.

Name	Role or Association	Attend
Clay Bernick	Chair	√
Jarrold L. Katzer	Vice Chair	√
Richard "Tuck" Bowie	Committee Member	√
Vincent Bowhers	Committee Member	√
Francis Drumm	Committee Member	√
William W. Fleming	Committee Member	√
Maury Hill	Committee Member	√
Phillip Hines	Committee Member	√
Dianna McDowell	Committee Member	√
John Olivieri	Committee Member	√
Paige (Kathleen) Simmons	Committee Member	Ab
Cecilia Kocan	Student Member	√
Gavin Wehr	Student Member	√
Liaisons		
Barbara Henley	City Council Member	√
Chris Taylor	City Council Member	
City Staff		
Kenneth Chandler	City Manager's Office	√
Michael Kirschman	Parks and Recreation	√
Chad Morris	Parks and Recreation	√
Corinna Green	Parks and Recreation	√
Trina Harrell	Parks and Recreation	√
Lucia Whitlow	City Attorney's Office	√
Kevin Chatellier	Budget & Management Services	√
Guests		
Chris Freeman	Environmental Studies Program	√
Alexis Stewart	Environmental Studies Program	√



Name	Role or Association	Attend
Jeremiah Pinkard	Citizen	√
Noelle Pinkard	Citizen	√
Isabelle Chao	Flood Prevention Oversight Board	√

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

February 26 and March 25, 2024

A motion made by Richard Bowie and seconded by Vince Bowhers to approve the February 26, and March 25, 2024 minutes was passed unanimously.

3. NEW BUSINESS

a. Open Space Fund – Kevin Chatellier

Mr. Kevin Chatellier, Budget & Management Services Director, gave an overview of the Open Space Fund explaining the revenues and expenditures including operating, debt, and CIP transfers proposed for the next six years. The Open Space Fund receives revenue from \$.0044 of the meals tax, which generates over \$7M annually. Recent Council discussions suggest redirecting \$500K of the Open Space fund balance to help offset the proposed 2% real estate tax reduction supplementing general fund Parks and Recreation capital improvement projects or other needs identified by City Council. Several members asked questions regarding revenues and future development for clarification. As the debt from the initial program is starting to retire and the fund balance increases, there is potential to leverage a portion of the fund balance through bonds to develop the previously purchased open space sites that have been underutilized. Members thanked Mr. Chatellier for his presentation and have a better understanding of the Open Space fund to formulate recommendations in the future.

b. Undeveloped Sites Ranked – Chad Morris

Mr. Chad Morris, Planning, Design, & Development Administrator, reviewed a list of existing undeveloped sites previously purchased through the Open Space Acquisition Program through April 9, 2024. Using gap analysis, these properties were ranked by the highest need and the top four, including design, have an estimated cost to develop (in 2024 dollars) of \$30M. Properties ranked fifth through ninth have an estimated cost to develop of \$33M. Members were pleased that saving the trees and providing water access are preferred for almost all of the undeveloped sites. Mr. Morris will provide a list of the underdeveloped sites at the next meeting.

c. Tree Conservation Strategies – Alexis Stewart

Ms. Alexis Stewart, Environmental Studies Program student, researched and reviewed tree conservation strategies for Virginia Beach. In 2012, the City's Urban Tree Canopy was 38%. In 2014, based on the Urban Forest Management Plan, Virginia Beach adopted a goal of 45% UTC over the next 20-year period. Projects such as the Dominion Energy Coastal Offshore Wind Project negatively impact the total canopy but the City received \$1.1M to mitigate tree loss due to the project. Landscape Services will use these funds to plant trees in other areas of the City. The canopy also plays an important role by increasing property values, reducing the effects of sea level rise and reducing the turbidity in our waterways. Planting of trees is important to City leaders. She reviewed the tree requirements for residential lots of new construction, which is based on the size of the lot. Next, she discussed tree conservation ordinances and the penalties in Virginia regulating the preservation and removal of heritage, specimen, memorial, and street trees as defined by the Code of Virginia. By providing tax



credits, a tree conservation designation could be placed by the homeowners to protect the property under a live oak tree but the easement does not transfer upon deed transfers. Chair Bernick thanked Ms. Stewart for her research and the insightful discussion that followed.

4. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Update for Wilson property – City Council elected to not accept the dedication of this open space property due to usability and existing constraints.
- b. ITA Open Space Strategies Update – Clay Bernick
Chair Bernick continues to work with the other committees to bring forth recommendations and advised the document should be finalized soon.
Frank Drumm briefly reviewed the handout he provided regarding the Sentinel Landscape Initiative. Due to time constraints, he will discuss more in depth at a future meeting.
- c. Open Space Acquisition Process
Ms. Green discussed the current process with the Public Works/Real Estate Office and will discuss further at a future meeting.
- d. GIS tutorial
Ms. Green will provide step by step instructions at a future meeting but also reminded members to review the maps online and provide any feedback as necessary.

5. REPORTS

- a. City Council Liaisons – no report
- b. Student Members
 - i. Ms. Cecilia Kocan and Mr. Gavin Wehr – Reviewed the Eastern Shore Drive Phase I flood protection projects in the Shore Drive vicinity including the automated tide gates. They meet with the Flood Prevention Bond Referendum Oversight Board on the second Thursday of each month. The City participates in partnerships for coastal resiliency.
- c. Parks and Recreation Commission – Participated in Earth Day event
- d. Virginia Beach Parks and Recreation Foundation (VBPRF) – no report
- e. Green Ribbon Committee – Vincent Bowhers
Met on March 28th
 1. Continued planning for the North Landing and Albemarle Sound Estuarine Symposium scheduled Friday, April 26th at the Convention Center.
 2. Voluntary live oak preservation easement proposal presentation
 3. Budget and Comprehensive Plan discussion
- f. LRNOW – Vincent Bowhers/Clay Bernick
 - April 13th Cleanup – Charlestown Neighborhood
 - 70 volunteers (five in canoe/kayaks) and removed 1,029 lbs. of debris
 - For 2024 (including December), 5,674 lbs., 34 cleanups, 303 volunteers
 - Compared to last year, there have been more cleanups and volunteers but approx. same amount of trash collected
 - Next Cleanup will be May 11th at Thalia Creek Kayak Launch 9am - noon.
 - Upcoming Public Events
 - April 25th Blue Vinal at 6pm at Family Fun Experience (free)
 - April 27th Celebrate Trails Day at Newtown Road Light Rail Station 10am to 1pm
 - April 27th Plant and Seed Swap 10am to 3pm at LRNow Holland Road Office
 - May 4th LRNow Oyster Roast
- g. Active Transportation Advisory Committee – Maury Hill
 - Presentation of Park System Needs Assessment & Strategy Report



- Areas of need based on environmental, design, access and economic equities
- Anticipated cost \$837M - Actions include improving existing facilities, investing in underdeveloped parks, and acquire new park lands
 - Local Parks – estimated purchase need of 121 acres by 2036
 - City-Wide Parks – estimated purchase need of 992 acres by 2036
 - 46% of citizen surveyed favor additional taxes to support facilities/amenities
 - 50.1% needed to pass a bond referendum
 - A 1.28 cent increase would result in \$100M in bond funding
 - A 1.63 cent increase would result in \$150M in bond funding
 - Amenities ranked as high priorities include playgrounds, canoe/kayak launch, soft and paved trails, and outdoor fitness.
- VB Trail
 - Even though initially awarded a second grant, the City isn't able to utilize for phase 2 so surrendered funding.
 - Several access points will be needed for bordering communities and could result from acquiring open space.
 - Received funds from VDOT to maintain Dam Neck Road, Buckner Blvd shared use paths and at Lake Smith
- h. Clean Community Commission – Will participate in the Elizabeth River/Virginia Beach Trail celebration

6. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Citizen spoke in favor of preserving existing open space instead of new construction near existing vacant construction.

7. CLOSED/OPEN SESSION

Closed Session

Chair Bernick called for motion to convene a closed session at 4:35pm to discuss properties in Voting Districts 2 and 6. Motion made by Vincent Bowhers, seconded by Vice Chair Katzer, and unanimously approved to convene into closed session.

Open Session

Chair Bernick reconvened the open meeting and called for a motion to certify the closed meeting at 5:17pm. Motion made by Vice Chair Katzer, seconded by Francis Drumm, and unanimously approved to certify the closed meeting.

8. ADJOURN AND UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

- a. Next Open Space Advisory Committee Meeting May 20th.

There being no further business, the Chair entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by William Fleming and seconded by Maury Hill to adjourn the meeting at 5:20pm.

H.C. Bernick, III

Clay Bernick, Chair

Trina M. Harrell

Trina Harrell, Recorder



Distribution:

Mayor and City Council
Patrick Duhaney, City Manager
Parks and Recreation Commission
Open Space Advisory Committee
Kenneth Chandler, Deputy City Manager
Lucia Whitlow, City Attorney's Office
Kaitlyn James, Budget and Management Services
Kathy Warren, Planning Director
Emily Archer, Planning/SGA Office
David Trimmer, Agriculture Director
L.J. Hansen, Public Works Director
Kristal Johnson, Public Works/Real Estate
Michael Kirschman, Parks and Recreation Director
Frank Fentress, Parks and Recreation, Landscape Services
Parks and Recreation staff present



MEETING DATE: April 22, 2024

MOTION: Jarrod Katzer

SECOND: Francis Drumm

CERTIFICATE OF CLOSED MEETING

WHEREAS, The Parks and Recreation Open Space Advisory Committee of the City of Virginia Beach has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Code 2.2-3712 requires a certification that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Parks and Recreation Open Space Advisory Committee of the City of Virginia Beach, Virginia, hereby certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia Code 2.2-3711(A) to which this certification applies; and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the Motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered by the Parks and Recreation Open Space Advisory Committee.

VOTE: 10-0

AYE (list by last name): Bernick, Bowhers, Bowie, Drumm, Fleming, Hill, Hines, Katzer, McDowell, and Olivieri

NAY (list by last name): N/A

ABSENT DURING VOTE: Simmons

ABSENT DURING MEETING: Simmons

STATEMENT OF MEMBER INDICATING SUBSTANCE OF DEPARTURE: N/A

Trina M. Harrell

Administrative Specialist II

Parks and Recreation Open Space Advisory Committee