



## MEETING MINUTES

**DATE** April 28, 2025, at 3:00 pm  
**LOCATION** Parks and Recreation Administration Building  
2154 Landstown Road, Virginia Beach, Virginia 23456

**Members Present:** Clay Bernick (Chair), Richard “Tuck” Bowie, Vincent Bowhers, Francis Drumm, William W. Fleming, Tangela Green, Maury Hill, Dianna McDowell, Stephen Rockefeller, Gavin Wehr (Student Member), and Cooper Stuart (Student Member).

**Member Absent:** Jenny Perry

**Councilmember Liaisons Present:** Barbara Henley and Joashua Schulman

**City Staff Present:** Michael Kirschman, Corinna Green, Trina Harrell, Jarrod Katzer, Kenneth Kemp, Stacy Emery, Lucia Whitlow, Kevin Chatellier, and Tim Copeland.

**Guest Present:** Claire Yoder

### 1. WELCOME, ATTENDANCE ROLL CALL, & CONGRATULATIONS

Chair Bernick called the meeting to order at 3:00pm and welcomed new member, Tangela Green. Recorder Trina Harrell called the role. Michael Kirschman congratulated member Tuck Bowie by presenting him with a certificate and award recognizing his 20 years of volunteer service to Virginia Beach.

### 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

February 24, 2025

A motion made by Francis Drumm seconded by Vincent Bowhers to approve the February 24, 2025, minutes, passed unanimously.

### 3. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Proposed Budget Update – Mr. Kevin Chatellier, Budget & Management Services Director, reviewed part of the presentation he previously provided to City Council as it related to the Open Space Fund and the Open Space Capital Improvement Project. The proposed Operating Budget includes partial redirection from the capacity of the Open Space Dedication, the Town Center TIF, and the Agriculture Reserve Program to support other projects such as design for the Law Enforcement Training Academy (LETA), Indian River Road Safety, and the Courthouse Modernization. The redirection will also fully fund the gap for Phase I of the VB Trail. The retention of .17% of the Meal Tax Dedication will keep staff and operations at 100%, meet current/future debt obligations, and maintains capacity for future options. He also explained how the capacity in each of the funds occurred over time. Since the dedication redirections are insufficient to fully cover the long-term financing need of all four projects, the proposed FY25-26 Operating Budget includes a recommended increase of .5% in the citywide meals tax rate to dedicate to the Major Projects Fund. Mr.

Chatellier answered questions from members and Chair Bernick thanked him for taking the time to meet with the committee.

- b. Elect Vice Chair – Former Vice Chair, Jarrod Katzer, accepted a position with Parks and Recreation and therefore resigned from the Committee, leaving a vacancy, including the vice chair position. Chair Bernick asked for nominations. Dianna McDowell graciously self-nominated herself as the vice chair, and William Fleming seconded. The nomination passed unanimously.
- c. West Neck Creek Corridor Workgroup – Mr. Bernick recommended a workgroup to review properties in the West Neck Creek area, specifically identifying any gaps along the corridor. analyzing options for land acquisition and/or improvements to existing open space. He recommended meeting once a month to review the corridor for potential properties. Dianna McDowell, Stephen Rockefeller, and Clay Bernick volunteered to participate on the workgroup.

#### **4. OLD BUSINESS**

- a. 3933 & 3941 Shore Drive properties – Mr. William Fleming received an email recently advising construction activity will commence soon on these two previously discussed properties. These properties are located on Shore Drive between Taste and Marlin Bay Drive. Site plans have been submitted, which show the two properties will share a driveway.
- b. Vacant lots near Crab Creek – Councilmember Schulman provided a status update based on meetings he recently attended.
- c. Fountain Trust property 40.94 acres – Mr. Tim Copeland, City's Real Estate Agent, advised the City recently closed on the 40.94 acres of the Fountain Trust property located on West Neck Road.
- d. Chair Bernick advised The Hampton Roads Conservation Land Trust Land Conservancy acquired a property located on Holland Road that the committee had previously discussed. The property had several restrictions and very specific maintenance requirements, most importantly the provisions of the carbon credits having already been sold.
- e. Discussion on classifying properties as natural areas. It was suggested and discussed that there be an additional park category that carries an elevated concept of land preservation by the department and City. Mr. Kirschman and Ms. Green responded by better explaining the categories that already exist in the park system, including Natural Areas and Open Space Preservation Areas, that are closest aligned to the request.
- f. Finalize Member Guidebook – The draft guidebook was distributed, and members were asked for comments. Chair Bernick suggested including the flowchart when acquiring properties. The Guidebook will be finalized during the May meeting.

#### **5. REPORTS**

- a. City Council Liaisons – All are welcome to participate in the budget public hearings.
- b. Student Members – no report
- c. Parks and Recreation Commission – no report
- d. Virginia Beach Parks and Recreation Foundation (VBPRF) – no report
- e. Green Ribbon Committee – Sponsored the Southern Watershed Symposium on April 11<sup>th</sup> at the VB Convention Center. Councilmember Henley mentioned an upcoming survey regarding the Southern Watershed expected from Public Works. An email will be sent to all members once its available.
- f. LRNOW – Vincent Bowhers
  - Cleanups
    - Lake Bradford – April 5<sup>th</sup>, removed 870 lbs. of debris – first time on the lake
    - Birdneck Launch – April 10<sup>th</sup>, removed 311 lbs. of debris
    - Lake Windsor – April 18 & 19<sup>th</sup>, removed 1,003 lbs. of debris
    - MOCA – April 20<sup>th</sup>, removed 249 lbs. of debris
  - Removed a total of 6,383 lbs. of debris for the year
  - Completed a tree planting at Courthouse Methodist Church on Princess Anne Road
  - Will remove several abandoned vessels at Pungo Ferry and the Eastern branch of Elizabeth River
  - 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Oyster Roast Saturday May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 12:00pm – 3:00pm – tickets available

- London Bridge Bike Path cleanup May 10<sup>th</sup>, 9am – 12:00noon 1356 London Bridge Road
- g. Active Transportation Advisory Committee – Maury Hill
  - Several ATAC members, staff, and guests, including Elizabeth River Trail (ERT), Planning Commission Chair, and citizens participated in a 3.2 mile walking tour of the VB Trail Phase I on Wednesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> from 1pm – 4pm, which started at the Norfolk HRT Transit Hub Newtown Road and ended at Marathon Consulting, Town Center.
- h. Workgroups – no report

## **6. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

No comments.

## **7. ADJOURN AND UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS**

- a. Next Open Space Advisory Committee Meeting May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025
- b. Planning, Design & Development Project Updates
  - Historic Kempsville Kayak Launch – Constructed wetlands has been graded and will be ready for wetland plants to be planted this spring. Kayak launch has been installed but not available for use while still an active construction site. The site will be an opportunity for future cleanups as debris collects frequently in the area.

There being no further business, the Chair entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Maury Hill and seconded by Francis Drumm to adjourn the meeting at 4:50pm.

---

Clay Bernick, Chair

---

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, Deputy Director, Economic Development
- David Trimmer, Agriculture Director
- L.J. Hansen, Public Works Director
- Tim Copeland, Public Works/Real Estate
- Michael Kirschman, Parks and Recreation Director
- Frank Fentress, Parks and Recreation, Landscape Services
- Parks and Recreation staff present