



## **Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes**

Thursday, Sep 4, 2025  
3:00-4:00 p.m.  
Bayside Recreation Center  
4500 First Court Rd

### **Call to Order**

Chair Phillip Hines called the meeting to order at 3:01 pm. A quorum was present.

### **Roll Call**

#### **Members Present**

Phillip Hines (Chair), Daniel Edwards (Vice Chair), Stephen Rockefeller (Secretary), Tommy Altman, Barrett Lankford, Ben Messer, Clinton Mills Jr., Kathryn Moran, Myra Payne, Eugene Towler, David Weiner, Debbie Wiggins

#### **Members Absent**

Alexander Amerine

#### **City Staff Present**

Ken Chandler, Michael Kirschman, Shirley Deibler, Chad Morris, Kara Shoup, Taryn Buckley-Thiel, Michele Meister

### **Approval of Minutes**

The August 7, 2025, meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

### **Correspondence / Public Comment**

Community member Tim Solnaic requested information on Shore Drive (Phase 3), adding 'No Biking' signs to Pleasure House Point, and an update on the Department's tree mitigation policy.

### **Old Business**

#### **Annual Report Approval**

Staff Liaison Taryn Buckley-Thiel reviewed the final version of the Parks & Recreation Commission's Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Annual Report. David Weiner made a motion to approve the Annual Report for submission to City

Council. Myra Payne seconded. Chair Hines put the motion to vote. All voted in favor of submitting the report. Staff Liaison Buckley-Thiel will submit the report to the City Clerk at the conclusion of this meeting.

## New Business

### All-Virtual Public Meetings Policy

At the request of the Deputy City Attorney, Staff Liaison Buckley-Thiel brought forth a new policy to allow the Commission to meet virtually. She listed the main highlights of the new policy, which establishes the regulations under which the Commission can meet virtually several times a year (5 max). Debbie Wiggins made a motion to approve the new policy. Tommy Altman seconded. All Commissioners approved the policy.

### Remote Participation by Members in Commission Meetings

At the request of the Deputy City Attorney, Staff Liaison Buckley-Thiel brought forth minor updates to the Policy for Remote Participation by Members in Commission Meetings. This policy was originally adopted in 2021. This policy establishes guidelines and conditions that enable Commissioners to remotely participate in meetings. Ben Messer made a motion to approve the new policy. Commissioner Wiggins seconded. All Commissioners approved the policy.

### ITA

Commissioner Weiner requested that the Commission be briefed by all parties involved with the Transition Area/Interfacility Traffic Area (ITA) development planning (Parks & Recreation, Economic Development) before a letter of support is drafted.

Director Michael Kirschman reminded the Commission that the department has tasked with reimagining the property labeled as the ITA in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan. The department's resulting \$190 million (unfunded) vision for the property includes a cross-country course, nature trails, a championship BMX track, a disc golf course, and more.

While the department would like to see the land be used for recreational uses, Economic Development would like to expand Innovation Park into the ITA property.

Chair Hines agreed that both department's needs should be understood by the Commission. Director Kirschman encouraged the Commissioners to watch the Director of the Virginia Beach Planning and Community Development Department's (Kathy Warren) City Council presentation about the ITA. Staff Liaison Buckley-Thiel will send a link to the recording. Chair Hines asked all Commissioners to watch the video and be prepared to discuss at the October meeting.

### Q&A/Discussion:

- 1) Could the department's proposed recreational amenities be moved elsewhere? Director Kirschman stated yes, but there are other impacts to consider (i.e. environmental), and City Council did not task the department with this directive, so the department is not looking into this option at this time.
- 2) Was the ITA discussed the City Council's recent retreat? Yes, but no next steps were established. Director Kirschman noted that internal staff meetings are occurring to explore all potential developments (recreational, business). City Council will make the final decision on how the property will be used.

## Staff Reports

None presented.

## Liaison Reports

### Police

Captain Michele Meister discussed the growing community concerns and safety impacts of e-bike usage. Use of e-bikes is growing rapidly. A committee of staff from various departments has been developed to get ahead of planning for the community's safe and legal use of e-bikes. This group has plans to enhance safety codes as they relate to e-bikes and conduct community outreach to ensure riders are aware of how to properly and legally use e-bikes.

### Lynnhaven Boat Ramp

On-site issues at the Lynnhaven Boat Ramp have improved. Police enforcement has picked up and the department has several security measures in place to improve safety. These include armed security on-site through the end of the year and digital signage relaying parking lot status on Shore Drive. A Flock camera to read license plates of those entering the site is coming soon.

The goal is to enhance safety without taking away from the user experience.

## Director Report

### Rudee Park

Rudee Park's development was recently granted City Council's approval, following a strategic pause for the department to answer their remaining questions. The next steps are:

- Moving forward with surface parking design/begin construction drawings (12-18 months and \$4M)
- Establishing a capital campaign committee with a goal of fundraising \$20M.
- Establishing the conservancy model (non-profit 501(c)(3)).

The new park should open around summer 2030.

### *Q&A/Discussion:*

- 1) What happens if funds to complete the project (\$50 million estimated) are not raised? City Council has granted the funding for this project. The fundraising efforts are to return TIP funding.
- 2) Who will be on the 501(c)(3) entity? Staff from various Virginia Beach departments and groups will form a board for the park and these individuals will form the official conservancy.

## Good & Welfare

Nothing discussed.

## Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Hines called for adjournment. No one opposed. Meeting adjourned at

4:31pm.

## **Attachments (4)**

- [Parks & Recreation Commission - Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Annual Report](#)
- [All-Virtual Public Meetings Policy](#)
- [Remote Participation by Members in Commission Meetings Policy](#)
- Rudee Park Presentation