

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

NOVEMBER 21, 2024

Present: Geoffrey MacDonald, Hosea Mitchell, Jeffrey Fracher, Jenny Taylor, Mark Denison, Jessica Jackson, Kent Merritt, Leo Abrahamson (Student Member)

Absent: Amanda Burns, Ned Michie, Jeanette Abi-Nader, Jackie Webber

City: Riaan Anthony, Will Bassett, Justin Mckenzie, Annie Sechrist

Community: Katie Stranix, **Information Democracy:** Nina Broderick, Jake Rosenthal, Nate Fox, Hrishika Bista, Abby Boursiquot, Loghan Shahmugonathan **Cultivate Charlottesville:** K J Howard

Public Comments: None

Administrative Items:

ADMIN-1: October Board Meeting Minutes Jeffrey Fracher

- Jessica Jackson asks for edit to October minutes
- Minutes approved with edits at 5:36pm

Action Items:

A-1 Elections of Vice Chair Jeffrey Fracher

- Jeffrey Fracher nominates Kent Merritt
- Jessica Jackson approves nomination
- Hosea Mitchell seconds nomination
- Kent Merritt is approved as new Vice Chair

A-2 December's Board Meeting Riaan Anthony

- December Board meeting is on the 19th if Board decides to meet
- Mike Svetz will present final input session to City Council on Dec 16th
- Mike Svetz will present at final Open House at Carver Rec on Dec 17th
- Final opportunity for community input
- Dept recommends not having Dec 19th meeting but instead have Board attend one of the two presentations by Mike Svetz

Jessica J- After this presentation, they will take the community's comments and rework the plan?

Riaan A- Yes, as this is the last meeting we're making sure to get the word out to the community for their final opinions.

Hosea M- Do we make a final recommendation to Council? When do we do that?

Riaan A- We would like to move the January meeting to the 23rd so Mike Svetz can present the final plan and get the Board's blessing. Once we have the Board's blessing the plan will

- Go to Planning Commission in February, Commission will make recommendations
- Plan will go to City Council with recommendations at first meeting in March

Hosea M- I recommend Board members attend Planning Commission meeting on the second Tuesday in February at 5:30pm at Council Chambers

Jessica J- Will the Board be able to preview the final Master Plan before it is presented on Jan 23rd?

Will B- The plan will be ready by the end of the year and I believe it will be a part of a pre-meeting packet for everyone to review

Geoffrey M- Will we have time as a Board to draft letters in support of the CIP budget between now and the January meeting?

Riaan A- Yes, we should have time to draft those letters

Jeffrey F- OK, so we have agreed that in lieu of a Board meeting in December we will attend one of the Master Plan presentations?

Entire Board agrees

A-3 Move January's Board Meeting to January 23rd Jeffrey Fracher

- Hosea Mitchell moves to move January 16th meeting to the 23rd of January
- Jessica Jackson seconds the motion
- Motion is approved by Board

Jenny T- Do we have an option to Zoom into meetings?

Riaan A- Board members would have to write a remote policy and a charter that the Board would have to read and then invite the Board member to the meeting

Jenny T- Do we have a Covid policy?

Riaan A- I can't speak to Board guidelines but the City follows the CDC guidelines

Information Items:

I-1 Presentation- Katie Stranix, Asst Professor at School of Architecture

- Coordinates Design Studio for 2nd year undergrad students majoring in Architecture
- Meets 3 days a week for 4 hours
- Semester divided into 2 larger projects
 - Rivanna River in Riverview Park
 - Market Street Park
- 80 students were asked to design a pavilion and public space in Market Street Park
- Would love to have students present their work at a Board meeting
- Also would like a space to display other projects
- Designs are meant to spark conversation about what the park can be

Mark D- Is there a place where we could see your students work now?

Katie S- Yes, we have a Final Design review on Dec 9th from 10am-4pm. I can meet with members from either 8-10am or 4-5pm

I-2 Garden Plot Rules Justin Mckenzie

- Major changes include
 - Rental rates
 - Offer discounted scholarship rates
 - Lottery system
 - Term lengths for rentals

Jeffrey F- Where did we end up on the renewal question?

Justin M- Five-year limit

Jessica J- How did we end up with a five-year limit?

Justin M- Soil remediation, if we shorten the term limits gardeners will not get the full value of the plot

Jessica J- I would like for us to vote on the term limit before anything is finalized

Riaan A- Anything in this draft can be amended

- We are looking to do a step-tiered program
- Every year we're renewing and revitalizing garden plots
- Recommend we come to a resolution on garden plots so City staff can implement as we get new gardens
- This will allow City to raise prices without pushback due to upgrades to plots
- Michie Drive will be done next year, with new rules in place, we can give them a year's notice
- Azalea Park will be next and they will also have a year's notice of rule changes and of upgrades to plots

Kent M- Can this be implemented through the Dept or Council?

Riaan A- I would write a memo to the DCM with our strategic plan outlining our new rules, justification of those rules, and how we will implement it. The DCM will put a comment in but she will support it. I will then bring it to the Board and we can start implementing the plan

Kent M- Is there any regulation with regards to what can be grown?

Justin M- Yes, it is included in the document you have on the back page

Kent M- Can you make the rules more explicit that illegal substances can not be grown in the plots?

Justin M- Yes, we can

Kent M- Were you looking for a final answer tonight or was this just for discussion

Riaan A- This was us listening to the Board and putting something on paper of what we think the Board wants

Justin M- For this upcoming year we will be including in the rollout the Invasive Plant policy. Our rental rates, lottery, and term limits will be amended. 2027 is when all garden plots are expected to be completed

Riaan A- We can send out a notice giving our gardeners sufficient notice of the upcoming changes and hold an Open House for discussion of questions and concerns

Jessica J- Can we make clear that non-residents can enter lottery after all plots have been rented by new City residents and amend where it says new applicants get one spot to ALL applicants get one spot

Riaan A- Yes, right now we have gardeners who are grandfathered in with multiple or half plots but once they vacate it will revert back to one plot

Public Comments: None

Chairman's Matters:

C-1 Board Vacancies Riaan Anthony

- 2 vacancies
- 2 Board members up for renewal
- Chair can write a recommendation to City Manager to make sure both Board members get renewed
- Need to have a motion
- Board members need to reapply

Geoffrey M- Did we hear back from the City Manager about me being on the Board although I will not be a city resident?

Riaan A- I sent the opinion to our legal team who concluded there is nothing in the bylaws that precludes it. I then sent it to the City Manager with my recommendation that city residents be on the Board because they can guide the Dept and make recommendations. The City Manager would like to give city residents first priority to be on the Board but if we have vacant spots he will consider non-residents

Mark D- Did we get responses to our solicitation for new members?

Riaan A- Yes, we got 7 applicants. My recommendation is that we fill the 2 vacant positions and allow the 2 Board members who committed to reapplying to reapply. The decision the Board has to make is how to fill these positions. Interviews in the past were very taxing on City staff

Jeffrey F- Do you have a recommendation in terms of best use of staff time?

Riaan A- If the Board wants to do interviews, I recommend the Board comes up with a subcommittee and the subcommittee handles scheduling and conducting interviews. The subcommittee can then come up with a recommendation for the Board or we can as a Board meet and discuss applicants and make recommendation based off resumes

- January we will have new elections for Chair and Vice Chair
- Recommend Jeffrey Fracher and Mark Denison go to website and reapply
- Riaan or Ned Michie will write recommendation to City Manager

Board Matters: None

Director's Matters:

D-1 Jenkins Parks Update Riaan Anthony

- Removed heavy stone, more open area
- Added more trash cans
- Added more dog waste bags
- Added more signage
- Working on getting a shaded structure

D-2 FY '26 Proposed Budget Riaan Anthony

- Budget was submitted on November 1st
- Dept will defend budget on November 22nd at 1pm with Budget office
- We are seeing a stabilization in staff
- True cost comes from our Temp budget
- This year we will outsource all outdoor pools. This will help with lifeguard shortage

Geoffrey M- Is outsourcing the pools revenue neutral or are there savings with that

Riaan A- Only speaking to Onesty Pool, it was neutral

- **Riaan shows Board Internal Software program the Dept used to supplement the budget**
- Would like to highlight the Dept is getting better with budgeting by determining what we need to offer and perfecting what we already have

Jeffrey F- I would like to stress the need for a detailed letter to Council expressing why we need the money for these positions

Adjournment:

- Jeffrey F asks for motion to adjourn
- Kent M motions to adjourn
- Hosea M seconds motion
- Motion approved
- Meeting adjourned at 6:56pm

