



CITY OF RICHMOND
Recreation & Parks Commission
MINUTES

Wednesday, February 7, 2024, 6:00 PM
440 Civic Center Plaza

This meeting is held in a building that is accessible to people with disabilities.

Board Members: Joey Smith, Chair; Aaron Rowden, Vice Chair; Allison Blakeley, Secretary; Vacant, Treasurer
Commissioners: Maryn Hurlbut, Catalin Kaser, Dani Lanis, Samantha Torres

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Meeting called to order by Chair Joey Smith at 6:00 pm

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Joey Smith, Aaron Rowden, Allison Blakeley, Catalin Kaser, and Samantha Torres

ABSENT: Maryn Hurlbut (Excused), Dani Lanis (Excused)

Chair Smith provided a brief overview of the meeting procedures and the Mission of the Recreation & Parks Commission.

AGENDA REVIEW

Motion by Commissioner Torres to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Kaser, and carried unanimously by a voice vote.

OPEN FORUM

Email from Cordell Hindler was introduced to invite all to the Richmond Rotary Club meeting on February 16th at 12:30 pm at the Richmond Country Club for lunch at \$25.00 where Joe Sanger will present on the Make-a-Wish Foundation. In addition, he invited everyone to the Richmond Rotary Club Crab Feed on March 16th at Salesian's College Prep High School at 7:00 pm for \$70.00 per person.

ANNOUNCEMENTS THROUGH THE CHAIR

- a.) Chair Smith advised the Next Commission meeting will be held March 6, 2024
- b.) The balance of the Commission Trust Account is \$413.08
- c.) No membership changes

CONSENT CALENDAR

Commissioner Kaser voted to approve the minutes as written for the January 10, 2024 meeting, seconded by Commissioner Torres, carried with an agreed voice vote, with Vice Chair Rowden abstaining.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

Community Services Division – Recreation & Neighborhood Services

Ranjana Maharaj, Deputy Director for Community Services-Recreation, provided a detailed oral and visual report on upcoming and recent Recreation activities.

Parks & Landscaping Division

Tawfic Halaby, Deputy Director of Public Works, shared a verbal and visual report of the Parks and Landscaping updates throughout the city, including an update on the closure of Boorman Park.

Chair Smith advised that she witnessed at Stewart Playlot the automatic sprinklers were on despite there being heavy rains. Mr. Halaby advised he will investigate the matter and provide a response.

Commissioner Kaser asked for a listing of the capital improvement projects, their stages and who oversees each item. Mr. Halaby advised he was recently in a meeting on this issue in which details were digitally available and as the information is not yet available publicly, he will share via email with the City Engineer and Ms. Smith advised she will contact them.

AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS

a.) Sustainability and Climate Responsiveness Committee (Catalin / Maryn / Allison / Samantha)

No updates provided

b.) Youth & Associate Commissioners Initiative (Joey / Maryn)

No updates provided

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

a.) Election of Officers to the Recreation & Parks Commission

Commissioner Torres shared there was one set of nominations received for Joey D. Smith as Chair, Allison Blakeley as Vice Chair, Samantha Torres as Secretary, and Maryn Hurlbut as Treasurer. All nominees accepted the nominations as presented; Commissioner Torres motioned to receive the Election of Officers as presented, seconded by Mr. Rowden, and carried with a unanimous voice vote.

b.) Richmond Parks Master Plan Checklist Update

It was recognized that the provided checklist had computer updates however, Chair Smith suggested that when items are updated, that dates are provided for clarity going forward.

Secretary Blakeley inquired as to how often tennis courts are resurfaced, however as Mr. Hardesty was not in attendance, his expertise would be needed to properly address the timeline.

COMMISSIONER LIAISON REPORTS

Councilmember Robinson provided an update on street improvements needed to address the pavement index in Richmond as was presented at last night's city council meeting.

Commissioner Kaser voiced concern when paving to remove potholes, the smooth surfaces often encourage dangerous driving (i.e.: speeding, sideshow activity, and noise pollution) and she hopes that traffic calming measures will be considered to discourage this activity. Ms. Robinson stated conversations have taken place with consultants to try and reduce reckless driving in future planning.

In addition, Ms. Robinson stated council has approved funds to develop the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center to move the project forward to update the conceptual designs with the hopes that it can possibly be included in the capital improvement planning project in the next 3-5 years.

Lastly, there is going to be a Booker T. Anderson Community Center tour tomorrow, February 8th to address the issues on needed funding and time to complete the project.

Secretary Blakeley announced the death of the President of the May Valley Neighborhood Council. In addition, she shared how she learned how pickleball and tennis courts are shared in an Oakland location. Ms. Blakeley relayed concerns from the MVNC asking for more trees to replace those removed due to drought and that adult size tables and chairs have been stolen from May Valley Community Center. Ms Maharaj voiced concern as these items are a regular purchase for our community centers and Ms. Blakeley will check with the MVNC and advise.

Commissioner Kaser appreciated the recent parks tour and was concerned that there was talk to remove trees at Nicholl Park and she wanted to ensure that tree removal should be paired with tree planting.

Commissioner Torres provided an update on the usage of sports grounds at Tom Bates fields in Berkeley in which Richmond is gaining more game space. Lastly, Ms. Torres shared that the City of Richmond released a proclamation on the recent reduction in homicides, acknowledging sports clubs have helped to contribute to this drop and encouraged all to volunteer with youth programs.

Chair Smith shared she took part in the clean up on the Greenway and Unity Park on MLK day and she continues to check many of the city's parks.

Ms. Maharaj reminded the commission to complete and submit the 700 form from the City Clerk's Office and to provide feedback/concerns from the parks tour so she can ensure the items are addressed.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:48 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Christine George
Executive Assistant