



PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

**CALLED MEETING
Monday May 11, 2026, 5:00 p.m.
Parks & Recreation Conference Room
501 East Main Street**

I. CALL TO ORDER – Tina LaRoche

i) I-1 ROLL CALL

- (1) Board Members Present
 - (a) Mark Dennison, Chair
 - (i) arrived after Board Response to 1st Public Comment Opportunity
 - (b) Tina LaRoche, Vice Chair
 - (c) Campbell Buie-Moltz
 - (d) Amanda Burns
 - (e) Adam Courville
 - (i) arrived after Meeting Minutes Approval
 - (f) Marina Di Michele
 - (g) Patrick Healy
 - (h) Betsy Roettger
 - (i) arrived during Meeting Minutes Approval
 - (i) Jennie Taylor
- (2) Board Members Absent
 - (a) Paul Shockley
- (3) Staff Present
 - (a) Riaan Anthony, Director
 - (b) Kelly Ledbetter, Deputy Director
 - (c) Katie Lockhart, Deputy Director
 - (d) Lori Lawson, Administrative Assistant

I-2 AGENDA APPROVAL – Tina LaRoche

- (1) Motion to approve Agenda
 - (a) Motion: Healy
 - (b) Second: Buie-Moltz
 - (c) Vote – 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained
 - (d) Motion passed

I-3 MINUTES APPROVAL – Tina LaRoche

- (1) Motion to approve minutes from the 4/13/2026 Called Meeting
 - (a) Motion: Healy

- (b) Second: Burns
- (c) Vote – 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstained (Roettger)
- (d) Motion passed

II. PUBLIC COMMENT (FIRST OPPORTUNITY)

Jenny Temkin of Girls Rule the Court – Girls Tennis class summer registrations are going strong. Already has a list of girls who want to sign up for Fall. Has a wait list for Summer and would love to get more courts for Summer. Also noted that the Parks & Recreation Instagram account has recently had lots of good content. Fun to see the survey results posted. She forwards Instagram posts to her friends to help others get involved in programs and activities.

III. BOARD RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT

The Board thanked Ms. Temkin for coming and agreed that the Instagram posts are very useful and have been good.

Deputy Director Lockhart noted that Veronica Torres handles marketing for Parks & Recreation including the Instagram account and she will let Ms. Torres know about the compliments.

Mr. Dennison arrived and took over chairing the meeting from Ms. LaRoche

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS – RIAAN ANTHONY

Ms. Burns – Harper Ullrich and Ginger Craghead-Way, the Advisory Board student reps for this school year have finished their Board service and will be graduating this month. Beginning in August, there will be two new student representatives to the Board: Leo Ripple and Solly Schwartzman. Mr. Ripple was in attendance and was introduced to the board. The representatives will work as a cohort with CHS students to make sure information is shared. The Board welcomed Mr. Ripple.

Mr. Anthony shared a list of upcoming events:

- June 7 – Sunday Sundown at Washington Park
- June 21 – Play All Day Virginia for the longest day of the year. Pools will be free and there will be lots of planned activities throughout all our facilities.
- July 11 – Sounds of Summer at Tonsler Park
- July 26 – Sunday Sundown at Washington Park

The splash parks will open this Saturday, May 16, and pools will open the following weekend.

Deputy Director Lockhart shared several updates:

- The survey about the Fitness Court placement at Tonsler Park has finished. There was overwhelming support for placing the circuit course on the grass behind the playground. We will be going to Council in the next month for approval. Construction should begin in the spring / summer of 2027.
- Restrooms at Riverview Park are almost finished. They are completing the final punch list. Waiting on electrical inspection.
- Resurfacing at Belmont and Greenleaf Spray Grounds is happening.

- Tonsler Spray Park shade structures are being installed.

Ms. Lockhart explained that the original splash pad surfaces used glue down tiles, but the updated surfaces are being poured into place and will hopefully have a 10-year life span.

Mr. Anthony indicated that part of challenge with maintaining the splash pads is because scooters and bikes regularly drive over them.

Ms. Burns requested an update on installing shade structures at Jenkins Park. She is hoping these can be installed soon since the playground is in an underserved neighborhood and lacks shade and grass.

Ms. Lockhart noted that the whole playground has underground utilities which makes projects challenging, and she will look into this.

Ms. Roettger shared a report from the last Tree & Planning Commission meeting:

- State of the Forest report
- Focus on preservation because Charlottesville is only 10 square miles and we can't control private property
- Looking at a policy for vulnerable sites
- Critical slopes
- Looking at different types of plantings in Public Spaces
 - Steep slopes
 - CHS Courtyard
 - Want plantings that help bees and rain runoff rather than just grass that needs to be mowed.

V. ACTION ITEMS – MARK DENNISON

There were no action items on the agenda.

VI. INFORMATION ITEMS – MARK DENNISON

VI-1 Fees & Charges Presentation – Riaan Anthony

Mr. Anthony presented the Board with a proposed Rates and Fees Schedule for fiscal year 2027. During discussions about the Master Plan with the community, we received comments from residents asking why County residents are charged the same fees as City residents. Staff agreed that City residents should pay less than other people who use our programs and facilities. We looked at the existing fee schedule and realized that there needs to be a standard methodology and systematic approach for calculating fees. Staff determined that the delta between costs for residents vs non-residents should be 30%. Residency would be based on an honor system. We wouldn't be asking residents to bring in utility bills or leases to prove they are residents.

- Programs are already set up resident / non-resident rates. These will be realigned as needed to match the delta.
- Adult athletics have previously been one rate for all, so this will be a change for non-residents.
- Pickleball is the only admin fee that is changing for residents. Currently \$2 for everyone. Proposed fees are \$3 resident / \$5 non-resident.

- Shelters / Rentals previously had one rate, would like to change these to resident / non-resident rates. Current plan is to keep shelter rentals as all day rather than having multiple rentals of the same shelter on the same day. Ms. Lockhart noted that we don't currently have enough staffing to turnover the trash and restroom cleaning to be done multiple times per day per shelter.
- The Board suggested that staff consider implementing a tiered approach to program registration similar to what we use for Summer Camp that allows residents early access to registering.

The board discussed how the proposal compares to other localities' fees and what percentage of current costs are covered by fees.

- Mr. Anthony noted that staff looked at fees across Virginia and our prices are very reasonable compared to other localities. It's difficult to compare because fees vary due to subsidies and due to varying costs to offer programs.
- Not all the programs are self-funding. Mr. Ledbetter estimated that 60% of programs are paying for themselves.

Mr. Anthony noted that we currently allow residents to enroll first in our Summer Camp Program, and then registration opens later for non-residents. Multiple board members voiced support for residents having the first chance to register for all our programs.

Ms. Burns asked if it would be possible to provide free entry to the pools for youth ages 4 to 17

- Presumably the pool entry fees collected for youth in this age range is a small amount of revenue for the department
- Free pool passes have been offered to youth but require a parent or guardian to complete paperwork to get the pass
- This may be a barrier for kids who are the most needy
- Could other types of fees be raised to fund free passes for resident youth?

Mr. Anthony noted that he would need endorsement from the City Manager's Office to make pools free for youth. If the Advisory Board endorses this proposal, he will present it to the City Manager.

The board discussed and agreed that free pool entry would be very beneficial this summer since camps are using the Rec Centers so there are less opportunities for kids who aren't enrolled in camp to have a place to gather. They noted that staff would need to look at potential liability issues and the difficulties that could arise if a child gets hurt and we have no way to contact a parent or guardian.

- Mr. Anthony noted that outdoor pool revenue from daily admissions was approximately \$70,000 for 2025, and that Parks & Recreation splits that revenue 50/50 with the contractor who manages the pools.
- The board explored ways the revenue loss could be made up.
- The Chair suggested that the Board vote during this meeting on the free pool entry for this summer but postpone voting on the other fee proposals until the June meeting to allow time to gather community feedback.

Ms. Burns moved that the City's outdoor pools be free of cost for City residents ages 4 to 17 for the Summer 2026 season, pending approval by the City Manager. Mr. Dennison seconded the motion. Approved by a unanimous vote.

Discussion of the other fee proposals continued with members noting that it would be helpful to implement small fee changes over multiple years. The Board supported targeting non-resident fees for the increases and not increasing fees for City residents. The Board asked how the proposed programming fees compare to the County. Mr. Anthony responded that the County has very little programming and that many County residents come to the City for their recreational needs.

VI-2 Realigning Recreation Center Hours and Age Limits

Mr. Ledbetter presented staff's proposal for changing the hours for recreation centers and pools. Staff would like to make the operating hours more consistent across facilities rather than each facility having its own schedule.

Staff recommendations:

- Smith Aquatic is currently open Monday-Thursday until 8:00pm and closes on Fridays at 7:00pm. Recommending that Smith remain open until 8:00pm Monday through Friday.
- Key Recreation currently operates 12:00pm - 11:00pm on Fridays. Staff recommend closing at 9:00pm on Fridays because the facility is largely empty after 9:00pm. On average on a Friday, the Center will have around 60 kids using the open gym at 5:00pm. By 9:00pm, this drops to 2 adults and 0 kids. Staff asked parents and kids why they aren't using the gym on Friday nights and learned that many parents don't want their children out that late.

The Board discussed the recommendations and noted that in the past, Key Recreation stayed open until 2:00am on Friday nights. Mr. Anthony noted that participation dropped after a beloved community member who was very engaged with the kids stopped being able to attend.

Board suggestions included:

- Asking the Special Events Coordinator to arrange programming on Friday nights rather than just having an open gym so that kids have a place to be supervised and engaged.
- Inviting a DJ to participate in Friday night open gym.
- Inviting Tonsler League teams to practice on Friday nights and interact with the kids.
- Find more ways to make the community aware of the open gym hours.
- Poll participants to see what they would like to have during open gym.

Mr. Ledbetter will look at expanding the hours and programming at Key Recreation during the summer.

Mr. Ledbetter presented staff's recommendation for changing the age at which children can use the facilities without parental supervision. Currently the pools require children 8 years and under to be supervised by a parent or guardian. Other programs and facilities require children 7 years and under to be supervised. Staff would like to raise the age so that children 9 and under would need a parent or guardian in attendance at pools and facilities. Staff found that children

often aren't able to provide a phone number when they sign in, so staff can't reach a guardian when issues arise. Other localities tend to require children under 13 to be supervised by a responsible adult. Tonsler Park tends to have more younger unsupervised children than Carver and Key. Staff is looking into ways they can capture contact info for kids so they don't need to sign in every time, but staff has a way to contact an adult if needed.

The Board discussed. There were concerns that 9 seems young and that 10 year olds are now the "upper classmen" of the elementary schools, so maybe we should align with that. Some members felt that 12 or 13 is a better age to expect children to be responsible and to have contact information memorized. There were concerns that since our current rules are age 8 that jumping to age 12 would leave out too many kids who currently are able to use the facilities unsupervised.

Mr. Anthony noted that staff will continue to collect data on what ages are using the facilities, and we can revisit the hours and ages proposals annually. He recommended that the Board wait until the June meeting to vote on the proposed changes to allow time to poll the community and ensure that the public is aware of the proposal and that they can provide feedback at the Public Comment portion of the June meeting.

VII. CHAIRPERSON MATTERS – MARK DENNISON

Items introduced by the Chairperson.

VII-1 June Meeting Date Consideration

Mr. Dennison noted that he will be out of town on the date of the planned June meeting and that because July is such a busy time for staff, the Advisory Board doesn't meet in July. He asked if anyone wanted to reschedule the June meeting. Ms. Roettger and Mr. Anthony noted that they will also be out of town on the scheduled date. Mr. Anthony agreed to have staff send a poll to Board Members to identify a better date for the June meeting.

VIII. BOARD MATTERS

VIII-1 Rivanna Trail Camping

Mr. Healy made a motion that the Advisory Board ask the City Manager to forbid camping in any of the Parks & Recreation Facilities. No one seconded the motion.

The Board noted that they would like to know more about how the City Manager plans to handle the growing encampment.

Mr. Anthony noted that he sits on the City Manager's committee that works together to solve issues affecting the unhoused population. Parks & Recreation currently provides the vendor when the City organizes clean-up of the campsites. Staff also pull trash and swap out the sharps containers that have been placed near the encampment.

VIII-2 Trails Presentation from May Meeting

Ms. Taylor missed the May meeting and requested that the Trails Presentation that was given at that meeting be shared.

VIII-3 Garden Plot Regulations

Ms. Burns reported that a Garden Committee member asked if garden plots are officially designated as parks. The member wanted to understand if the regulations that prevent people on the sex offender registry from being in parks also apply to garden plots.

Mr. Anthony noted that the majority of plots are within parks except for the Michie Drive plots which are on public lands. Staff and community members should always call the police if there is a concern. Background checks are completed for all coaches.

VIII-4 Outdoor Pool Opening Hours

Ms. Buie-Moltz asked why the outdoor pools don't open until 11:00am and mentioned that many parents of young children would appreciate being able to use the pools in the morning hours before the kids need lunch and naps.

Mr. Anthony noted that at Washington Park, swim lessons and swim team practices take place prior to the 11:00am opening, but that staff can revisit opening Onesty Pool earlier. Ms. Buie-Moltz recommended a 9:00am opening. Another board member mentioned that the splash pads seem to be busy as soon as the sun is up so it would be nice if there were a pool open early as well.

The Board asked how staffing levels are for the pool season. Mr. Ledbetter noted that we are using the same highly qualified, reputable 3rd party vendor as last year to provide lifeguards and manage the pools.

IX. DIRECTOR'S REPORT – RIAAN ANTHONY

Mr. Anthony did not have anything additional to report.

X. PUBLIC COMMENT (SECOND OPPORTUNITY)

Jenny Temkin loved the idea of later hours for open gym basketball and suggested inviting HER Sports to participate. She also suggested that staff could hand out cheap business cards for kids to take home and have their parents provide phone numbers and known allergens.

Leo Ripple noted that Charlottesville Middle School houses 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, and that 6th grade seems like a logical cut off for using the facilities without supervision. It would seem unfair to students for 6th graders to need adult supervision and 7th and 8th graders be unsupervised.

XI. BOARD RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT

No response was given.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned.