

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

APRIL 13, 2026

Present: Mark Dennison, Tina LaRoche, Amanda Burns, Paul Shockley, Adam Courville, Patrick Healy, Campbell Buie-Moltz, Marina DiMichele, Betsy Roettger

Absent: Jenny Taylor

City: Riaan Anthony, Kelly Ledbetter, Chris Gensic, Evan Pilachowski (Asst. City Manager)

I. Call to Order Mark Dennison

- Mark Dennison calls meeting to order at 5:02 pm.
- Mark Dennison welcomes attendees to the new meeting space, time, and day, noting this transition as a positive step forward.

I-1 Roll Call Mark Dennison

- Board does attendance.
- Quorum is confirmed.

I-2 Agenda Approval Mark Dennison

- Campbell Buie-Moltz mentions previously discussed adjustment regarding timing of first public comment period was not reflected in the agenda.
- Mark Dennison acknowledged oversight and proposed observing attendance before making changes.
- He notes there is a second public comment period later in the meeting.
- Amanda Burns moves to approve agenda.
- Tina LaRoche seconds motion.
- 8 yays
- 0 nays
- Agenda is approved.

I-3 Meeting Minutes Approval Mark Dennison

- Betsy Roettger incorrectly listed as being present.
- Campbell Buie-Moltz points out minor spelling correction.
- Mark Dennison moves to approve minutes with corrections.
- Patrick Healy seconds motion.
- 8 yays
- 0 nays
- Minutes are approved with corrections.

II. Public Comment (First Opportunity)

- Amanda Burns reads emailed comment from Jackie Temkin.
- **Key Points:**
- Concern that updated policy was not proactively shared.
- Previous ambiguity in categorization created inconsistency.
- New policy still unclear for smaller programs (e.g. Girls Rule the Court, Girls on the Run).
- These programs are not formal leagues, may not be fully nonprofit, provide important, low-cost youth access.
- Jackie T. recommends staff revise policy language to explicitly include such programs and reduce interpretation ambiguity in categorization.

III. Board Response to Public Comment

- Adam Courville arrives.
- Patrick Healy wonders if Jackie T. concerns are based on pending City policy or an already adopted policy.
- Riaan Anthony clarifies that:
 - Policy not yet adopted.
 - Developed following Master Plan concerns.
 - Includes expanded classification categories:
 - Non-profit vs. for profit
 - Public vs. private entities
 - Policy will be presented to Board and shared with community for feedback.
 - Estimated 6-8 months before implementation.

IV. Announcements

Riaan Anthony

- Tonsler Park Fitness Court survey page launching soon.
- Cedar Hill Park engagement complete; results to be published.
- Kelly Ledbetter notes Skate Park 8-year anniversary event on April 18.
- Lower Washington ADA ramp ribbon-cutting planned.
- Farmer’s Market season launched; midweek market under consideration.
- Increased effort to attract local vendors.
- City has adopted new budget.
- Items funded include tree planting and \$500,000 for Master Plan.
- Items not funded include:
 - Certain park capital improvements.
 - School-related resurfacing projects.
 - McIntire bridge project.
- Betsy Roettger announces Tree Commission “State of the Forest” report, which she emailed to Board, has a presentation at City Council upcoming.
- Amanda Burns expresses excitement about Lego competition that was recently announced.

V. Action Items **Mark Dennison**

- None

VI. Information Items **Mark Dennison**

VI-1 Riverview Park Access Study Presentation

- Suzanne Moomaw gives brief background on study.
- Conducted by UVA Urban Planning Department and architecture students.
- Focus on traffic management, multi-modal transportation, and river access.

Traffic Management **Sean Borkowski**

- **Key Issues Identified:**
- Severe congestion and parking overflow.
- Limited emergency access.
- ADA accessibility challenges.
- Fragmented pedestrian and trail connections.
- **Parking and Traffic Recommendations:**
- Expand capacity from 35 to 62-65 spaces.
- Introduce:
 - o Angled parking-60 degrees.
 - o One-way circulation.
 - o Roundabout for emergency access.
 - o Mid-block pedestrian crossing.
 - o Maintain existing layout where possible to reduce cost.
- **Additional Strategies**
- RV/Trailer unloading areas.
- Traffic calming measures (low-profile for emergency compatibility).

Multi-Modal Improvements **Levon Najarian**

- Enhance pedestrian pathways.
- Improve trail connectivity (including Woolen Mills area).
- Add bike infrastructure (racks, shared lane markings).
- Explore transit access (potential bus stop or shuttle).

River Access and Programming **Holden Loder**

- Preserve or replace tree canopy.
- Add shade structures/pavilions.
- Introduce natural play areas.
- Improve stormwater management.
- **Technology Proposal**

- Parking availability tracking system (app/web based).
- **Goals:**
 - Reduce congestion.
 - Improve visitor decision-making.
- Concerns raised about surveillance and implementation logistics.
- **Board discussion:**
- Strong support for presentation quality and approach.
- Board has concerns regarding:
 - Equity and inclusive park use.
 - Scale of parking expansion.
 - Need for broader system level solutions.
- Board recognizes:
 - Data gaps (river usage, parking demand)
 - Need for further study and community engagement.

VI-2 Trails Discussion-Continued

Chris Gensic

- Master Plan unchanged for 30 years; projects move based on land acquisition and grant funding.
- Staffing identified as major need to advance trail completion.
- Advocacy focus should be on funding and completing interconnected trail system.
- Challenge: property acquisition, especially for neighborhood connections (e.g. Moore’s Creek area).
- Board requested improved transparency (public-facing progress map).
- Board suggested supporting neighborhood-level advocacy.
- Board recognizes complexity in completing trail connections.
- Evan Pilachowski, new Assistant City Manager, hired to help with property acquisition and funding processes.

VII. Chairperson’s Matters

Mark Dennison

- **Garden Plot Subcommittee**
- Formally established with Jenny T.
- No progress yet.
- Update expected next meeting.
- Amanda B. asks about work being done on garden plots.
- Riaan A. confirms:
 - Staff monitoring inactive plots.
 - Attempting reassignment where necessary.
 - Feedback indicates enforcement timing may need adjustment.
 - Subcommittee to review policy improvements.

VIII. Board Matters

Mark Dennison

VIII-1 Tonsler Park Outdoor Fitness Area-Community Input Survey

- Mark D. encourages Board to get the word out about survey.

IX. Director's Report

Riaan Anthony

- Riaan A. recognizes Aleania Carter for preparing minutes for Board for past 18 months.
- Announces hiring of new full-time Administrative Assistant starting in May.
- Role includes:
 - Agenda preparation.
 - Communication management.
 - Administrative coordination.

X. Public Comment (Second Opportunity)

- **Annie Stafford**
- Significant increase in Riverview Park usage.
- Over-reliance on single access point for river recreation.
- Suggested 0 High Street property to:
 - Reduce congestion.
 - Provide alternative access.
- Evan Pilachowski responds that:
 - Property under early discussion.
 - No formal plans yet.
 - Open to exploring interim solutions.
- **Allison Ewing**
- Concerns:
 - Preservation of park's natural character.
 - Opposition to overdevelopment (increased paving/infrastructure).
 - Questioning balance between public use and private commercial benefit.
 - Importance of honoring original community vision.

XI. Board Response to Public Comment

- Board acknowledges need for:
 - Broader community engagement.
 - Improved communication about upcoming changes.
- Board suggests:
 - Use of signage/QR codes for public input.
 - Incorporating historical context into planning decisions.

XII. Adjournment

Mark Dennison

- Mark Dennison thanks Board, staff, and presenters.
- Meeting adjourned at 6:35pm.