PARKS AND REC ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

FEBRUARY 19, 2026

Present: Mark Dennison, Tina LaRoche, Adam Courville, Jenny Taylor, Patrick Healy, Paul Shockley, Campbell Buie-Molz, Marina DiMichele, Betsy Roettger

Absent: Amanda Burns, Mira Masri

City: Riaan Anthony, Kelly Ledbetter

I. Call to Order **Mark Dennison**

- Meeting called to order at 5:34pm

II. Agenda Approval **Mark Dennison**

- Jenny T. moves to approve agenda.
- Adam C. seconds motion.
- 8 yays
- 0 nays
- Agenda is approved.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes **Mark Dennison**

III-1- Approval of January 2026 Meeting Minutes

- Campbell Buie-Molz points out 2 issues with January meeting minutes:
  - Paul S. employer is incorrect.
  - Her child is 3, not middle-school aged.
- Mark D. notes that while these items were not material to Board business, accuracy in the official record is important.
- Campbell Buie-Molz moves to approve amended January minutes.
- Betsy R. seconds motion.
- 8 yays
- 0 nays
- Amended minutes are approved.

IV. Public Comment (First Opportunity)

- Jackie Temkin
- Expressed interest in potential marketing opportunities related to upcoming events (including an international observance in April).
- Mentioned that April may present additional volunteer recruitment opportunities.

V. Board Response to Public Comment

- None

VI. Announcements Riaan Anthony

- **Special Events**
  - Father/Daughter Dance sold out both nights.
  - Winter Ball also sold out.
  - Lunar New Year will be on March 7th at Carver Rec Center.
- Board members were encouraged to review the department newsletter and follow links for volunteer opportunities.
- **Riverview Park Restroom Project**
  - Project has been in development since 2019.
  - After multiple bid attempts, a contractor was secured.
  - Installation of the modular restroom unit is scheduled for the following Tuesday.
  - Park will be temporarily closed during crane placement.
  - Structure is prefabricated and will be installed onto an already-prepared foundation.
  - Estimated completion is end of April
  - A ribbon-cutting event is being considered.
- **Washington Park ADA Improvements**
  - An ADA transition plan identified over 200 compliance violations across facilities.
  - Washington Park restroom renovations will be the first major ADA correction effort.
  - Work may begin in May, pending recap and reconstruction phases.
- **City Council Presentation**
  - Riaan A. will present the department's Master Plan update to City Council on March 16.
  - Board members are encouraged to attend in person or watch via available channels.
- **Engagement and Public Participation**
  - Low participation in two engagement meetings.
  - Feb 11th meeting had approximately 2 participants for fitness court at Tonsler Park.
  - Cedar Hill community meeting had approximately 4 participants.
  - Future engagement meetings planned with online platform surveys to increase participation.
- **Summer Programs and Facility Challenges**
  - Registration day is Feb 23rd.
  - Loss of access to two school facilities due to district-wide reconfiguration and gym usage for storage.
  - Two temporary solutions:
    - Application submitted to Albemarle County schools (decision expected mid-March).
    - Use of Carver and Tonsler facilities.

    - Greater emphasis may be placed on off-site camp programming
    - Adventure Camp continuation planned with adjusted scheduling.
    - Adjustments required due to earlier school-year end dates.
- Paul S. asks where Riverview restroom will be located in park.
- Riaan A. responds restroom will be located just beyond pedestrian crossing area near the current portable toilets.
- Board members expressed support for a community event to celebrate the restroom installation.
- Tina LaRoche noted unclear ADA signage regarding a ramp labeled "not a wheelchair ramp" in Forest Hill Park.
- Riaan A. agreed to review signage and improve clarity.
- **Program Registration Time**
    - Discussion included:
        - Current registration time is 10:00am
        - Past registration times have included midnight and 8:00am, both of which generated complaints.
        - Board members suggested later evening registration (e.g. 8:00pm) to increase accessibility.
- Paul S. inquires about early access to registration to better evaluate programs.
- Riaan A. states that this would be difficult to implement equitably but acknowledged the concerns regarding waitlists and program capacity.

VII. Action Items **Mark Dennison**

VII-1 2026 Meeting Schedule- Continued Discussion and Action

- Patrick H. arrives.
- Board continues discussion regarding potential changes to the regular meeting schedule.
- Primary issues include:
    - School Board representative has consistent Thursday conflicts due to official obligations.
    - Difficulty securing consistent meeting space.
- Survey results indicated no ideal meeting day.
- Board discussed different considerations for choosing a schedule including:
    - Importance of regular, predictable meeting times for public transparency.
    - Mentorship role between School Board representative and student representative
    - Recent schedule changes by the School Board (now meeting at 6:00pm), though subcommittee meetings continue to create Thursday conflicts.
- Riaan A. plans to research additional meeting locations including City Space and Parks and Rec facilities.
- Riaan A. is double-checking availability of Tonsler Rec meeting space.
- March meeting location to be confirmed via email.

- Mark D. wants to confirm meeting dates as March 19, April 16, and May 21.
- No meeting in July or December.
- Mark D. moves to affirm Thursday meeting times.
- Patrick H. seconds motion.
- 9 yays
- O nays
- Meeting schedule is approved.

VIII. Information Items **Mark Dennison/Riaan Anthony**

VIII-1 Board Budget Letter to City Council

- Mark D. states letter will be sent on behalf of the entire Board.
- Riaan A. recommends submission of letter a few days before City Council meeting to allow adequate time for review.
- City Council first presents budget in early March.
- Council typically has work sessions and public hearings throughout March with adoption in April.
- Board members encouraged to attend meeting and speak in support of letter.
- Meeting date is either March 2 or March 16.
- Riaan A. will confirm exact meeting date.
- **Staffing Requests:**
- ***Project Manager***
    - Rationale: needed for managing funded projects; insufficient department capacity
    - Requested for 3-4 years, consistently denied.
    - Current solution includes partnership with Public Works Director; Parks and Rec requests funds, Public Works provides project management.
    - Challenge for request is competing with major budget items (housing, schools)
- ***Inclusion Coordinator***
    - Rationale: City obligation under Title II; must provide accommodations for individuals requiring modifications.
    - Currently there is no formal inclusion coordination process or website information for requesting accommodations.
    - Temp staff is currently assisting; goal to make year-round position.
    - Coordinator would receive accommodation requests, conduct intake assessment, develop plan, and train staff.
    - Role is important because of legal obligation and equity commitment across all programming.
- ***Trail Coordinator***
    - Rationale: Trails identified as #1 attraction in Master Plan; trails have quadrupled since 2005.
    - Requested position for 3+ years; unable to advance due to competing priorities.

- Unable to start new trail projects despite backlog of approved CIP projects.
    - Currently one person managing trail fixes, planning, and project management.
- ***CSA/Program Assistant***
    - Rationale: position would help program expansion and creative program development.
    - CSA would assist with program delivery and expansion; address summer camp waitlists.
    - Currently temp staff assisting with summer camps.
    - Goal is to make position year-round to enable program expansion.
- Custodial staff is also a critical need, backlog of 25 parks for 4 staff members.
- Riaan A. notes that Master Plan identifies major projects requiring dedicated management capacity.
- Board member asks for clarification on CSA versus other positions.
- Riaan A. confirms that CSA is Customer Service Assistant.
- Minor update requested to spell out full position titles rather than acronyms (e.g. "Customer Service Assistant" instead of "CSA").
- Riaan A. will send updated letter to Board members the next day.
- Riaan A. will obtain any final feedback from Amanda Burns (School Board Rep) regarding educational partnerships/overlap.
- Board members consider wearing Parks and Rec branded clothing (shirts/apparel) for visual impact at Council meeting.

VIII-2 Board Bylaws – Update on City Attorney & Manager reviews

- Riaan A. gives update on bylaws.
- **Attorney Feedback**
    - Cannot modify electronic attendance policy to apply to only one section.
    - Must either include complete electronic attendance provision or remove entirely.
    - Cannot create selective application of policy sections.
    - Bylaws discussed and approved with City Manager.
- Board decides to keep electronic provision in bylaws.
- Two-week Board review period underway.
- Final vote scheduled for March 19th meeting to officially adopt revised bylaws.
- Upon adoption, updated bylaws will be posted to Board website as official bylaws going forward.

VIII-3 Preview of Upcoming Board Topics and Presentations

- Mark D. sent out solicitation form requesting agenda topics.
- Board member feedback was positive; process will continue with future solicitations.
- **March Meeting Topics**
- ***Garden Plot Survey Results Presentation***

    - Board members will discuss survey findings and community feedback.
    - Potential formation of a two-person subcommittee to review survey results, Master Plan, and community feedback.
    - Subcommittee can develop recommendations for Board consideration.
    - Recommendations will be presented in April meeting.
- Board members discuss different plans for promotion and engagement:
    - Follow up with survey respondents via email.
    - Reach out to community groups previously engaged.
    - Contact gardeners who recently signed up.
    - Market solicitation for discussion topics.
    - Promote via Parks and Rec Facebook page (weekly posts Thursday after Board meetings).
    - Engage neighborhood associations for promotion.
- ***Trails Program Overview Presentation***
    - Scheduled for March meeting.
    - Discussion will follow presentation.
- **April Meeting Topics**
- ***Fee Structure Discussion***
    - Related to waitlist management and program capacity.
    - Board will discuss how to meet waitlist demands.
- ***Sign-Up/Registration Process***
    - Comprehensive review of registration timing and process.
    - Discussion of accessibility and equity in program access.

IX. Chairperson's Matters **Mark Dennison**

- None

X. Board Matters **Mark Dennison**

- Betsy R. gives update on Tree Commission.
- Tree Commission working on projects including:
    - State of the Forest Report (annual presentation to City Council regarding tree canopy & programs)
    - Zoning considerations regarding tree preservation in future development.
    - Betsy R. will forward Tree Commission communications to Board members for more information.
    - There is no funding impact on Parks and Rec.

XI. Director's Report **Riaan Anthony**

XI-1 CIP Process

- CIP projects are prioritized from Master Plan recommendations.

- **Revolving Funds (Annual Ongoing Projects):**
  - Playground replacement plan ($200,000 annually).
  - Tree planting program (annual).
  - Invasive species/native species program.
  - Outdoor restoration of restrooms/facilities.
- **Master Plan Project Requests**
  - Park signage modernization.
  - Standardized trash cans across parks.
  - Standardized benches across parks.
- **Washington Park Development/Construction Documents ($2.5 million)**
  - Convert framework plan to detailed construction documents (design development phase).
  - Includes extensive community engagement regarding amenities.
  - Related to restroom installation and overall park redesign.
- **Greenleaf Park Access Management**
  - Park becoming popular due to enclosed nature.
  - Focus of project to improve ingress/egress.
  - Also address neighbor access concern and improve traffic turning radius for vehicles.
- **ADA Accessibility Improvements**
  - Address 200+ ADA violations identified in accessibility audit.
  - Phased approach to manageable improvements.
- **Downtown Mall Trees Replacement –Phase One ($2 million)**
  - Downtown mall study previously completed.
  - Phase one includes focus on Central Place & replanting dead trees.
  - Phased approach with one area at a time, not simultaneous projects.
- CIP projects were referred to Planning Commission for review.
- Initial discrepancy noted but resolved with communication.
- Planning Commission now understands all requests are Master Plan projects.
- CIP projects move from Planning Commission to City Council.
- Council conducts work sessions through March.
- Difference between CIP and General Fund budgets in Council work sessions.
- First week of April, Council adoption vote scheduled.
- CIP has budget competition including:
  - Schools requesting significant funding.
  - Unhoused initiatives ($7 million for Holiday Drive property; additional renovation costs needed).
  - Affordable housing projects.
- Riaan A. emphasizes need to maintain momentum with City Council.

XII. Public Comment (Second Opportunity)

- Jackie Temkin
- Discussed budget letter and funding requests.
- Suggested providing materials/information to help with Council advocacy efforts.
- Suggested outreach to non-profits for coordination.
- Expressed appreciation for Board and the work that they do.

XIII. Board Response to Public Comment

- None

XIV. Adjournment **Mark Dennison**

- Meeting adjourned at 7:10pm.