

**PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, February 16, 2023

The Stafford County Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission held its regular monthly meeting Thursday, February 16, 2023, at The George L. Gordon, Jr., Government Center. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Michael Parkyn.

SILENT ROLL CALL

<u>Members</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent Reported</u>	<u>Absent Not Reported</u>	<u>Staff</u>	<u>Guests</u>
Vincent Applewhite	P			Brion Southall	Mikel Manchester
David Carpenter	P			Judy Sokolowski	Joe Brito
Eric Futrell	P				
Michael Parkyn	P				
Christopher (CW) Reed	P				
Jay Rucker	P				
<i>Martin Martinez, PC</i>	<i>P</i>				
<i>Susan Randall, SB</i>	<i>P</i>				
Voting members in bold					

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- The minutes from the January 19, 2023, meeting were unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Mr. Joe Brito provided a brief presentation of a proposed new road from 610 that would connect to Harrison Road; connection would require a river crossing and include a trail at Canon Ridge Golf Course and a covered bridge at Berea Church Road; project is part of the Virginia Greenway and is promoted by FAMPO.

Since Mr. Brito's time was limited, he was invited to request time on the agenda for the next Commission meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

- None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Rivere: Update on Commission's Request
Mikel Manchester reviewed Rivere's request for approximately 55.9 acres at Duff Green Park and said Rivere already owns 14.9 acres adjacent to the requested acreage. Pursuant to the Commission's request at the November meeting, Ms. Manchester presented a piece of property in the George Washington District, owned by Mr. Price Jett, who said he would sell it to the County at a reduced price.
The Commission questioned why the County would give up developing County-owned

property at Duff Green Park via a lease to Rivere, and purchase property elsewhere? The Commission's intent was for Rivere to find comparable property in the George Washington District the County would find suitable, and Rivere would purchase the property and swap it in exchange for the property at Duff Green Park. Ms. Manchester said the Commission's request was to find comparable property to replace the Duff property and was not aware Rivere would need to purchase the property for a possible land swap.

The Commission asked if Rivere had explored other areas on the Rappahannock River further east into King George, Fredericksburg, and west of Fredericksburg? Ms. Manchester said they had not, as the property at Duff was well-suited for their needs. She also said they were still in discussion with the City of Fredericksburg for a site near the former Embrey Dam that would also work well for their needs.

While the Commission agreed Rivere's idea is a good one, several members did not think it would be in the best interest of Stafford citizens for the County to lease the property at Duff Green Park for Rivere's project, because of the need for more ballfields and active recreational areas.

After much discussion and consideration, C. W. Reed motioned, and Eric Futrell seconded, to deny the request for Rivere to lease property at Duff Green Park. Motion carried 5/1; all in favor: Misters Applewhite, Futrell, Parkyn, Reed, Rucker; all opposed: Mr. Carpenter.

LIAISON REPORTS

- Planning Commission Liaison (Martin Martinez)
 - In reference to Rivere, there have been increased discussions about data centers in the region; there is an upcoming joint meeting with Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission about this and solar facilities; upcoming discussion in the next Planning Commission meeting.
 - Took 4-year-old son to play golf for the first time at the Gauntlet at Curtis Park recently, and he stayed for the whole 18 holes—incredible! Mr. Martinez said he, himself, had a great time and couldn't remember when he had so much fun!
- School Board Liaison (Susan Randall)
 - Talked with to Superintendent of Schools about advertising for parks and recreation summer jobs to students after spring break but not too far afterwards to help Stafford fill summer positions.
 - In budget season; the Board of Supervisors will begin reviewing FY2024 budget requests in March.
 - 20+ trailers are needed for additional school space
 - Stafford County Public Schools offers choral groups, bands, culinary art students, and other students to help with events, encouragement, and help around the house.

COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

- Eric Futrell
 - Thanked everyone for their input; learned a lot from our discussion
- C. W. Reed

- Thanked everyone for their input; after several presentations from Rivere, we made the right decision for citizens; the river can be protected without a botanical garden
 - Page 2 of staff reports has a photo with his daughter at the Make-a-Wish Gymnastics meet
 - Staff did a great job turning the Fredericksburg Expo Center into a gymnastics center; would like to see this meet held in Stafford
 - Visited Curtis Lake recently to fish and saw staff picking up trash and doing a great job
- Jay Rucker
 - Went to public meetings for Musselman Park and Carl Lewis Community Center; a lot of good input was given
- Vincent Applewhite
 - Thanked everyone for input on the Rivere project; it was the right decision to make for Stafford citizens
 - Received an email from a concerned citizen about there being no trash cans at Government Island, and people leave trash and doggie waste bags there. Brion Southall said trash cans are very limited at the park, as people take their trash with them, which is the County's "Leave no Trace" program. Visitors place their doggy waste bags at the entrance and take them with them when they leave. Mr., Southall explained having multiple trash cans in this park creates many issues within the park, including accessing the cans and carrying the trash out of the park due to weight and bulk of the trash and having to use a motorized vehicle on the trail to perform the trash removal. Mr. Applewhite asked if a sign could be posted requesting visitors to pick up and carry their trash out of the park.
 - Said there have been a number of car break-ins in parking lots and asked if the County had cameras installed at park sites' parking lots

DIRECTOR'S REPORT (Brion Southall)

- This is our 10th year hosting the Make-a-Wish (MAW) meet; event could not have happened without the Stafford Gymnastics Parent Association (SPGA); 84 SPGA volunteers assisted
- MAW meet was a collaborative effort with the SPGA, Dept. of Parks, Recreation, Facilities & Tourism's maintenance staff, Tourism Division, SPGA, nationally-certified gymnastics judges, and our Royals' coaching staff
- 948 gymnasts competed in the meet from 28 gymnastics centers in Virginia
- A public meeting will be held 3/9/23 from 6-8PM at Stafford Junction on two proposals for conceptual plans for Musselman Park.
- 111 people with disabilities attended our department's Valentine's Dance at the Rowser Building and had a great time
- We will hold a Job Fair on March 18 from 1-5PM at the Rowser Building

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:27PM.

:jls

Approved 3/16/23