

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 18, 2024
TO: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEMBERS
FROM: LAURA DURHAM, DEPUTY DIRECTOR
RECREATION SERVICES DIVISION
SUBJECT: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION DIVISION UPDATE ITEM

OSTP School Year Update:

We are currently offering Out-of-School Time programming at 12 afterschool locations which include (3) LINK Club locations, (2) ESSER locations, and (2) specialty programs (Youth Achieving Greatness and TR Achieving Greatness).

Current Summer Enrollment: 821

We are currently offering the OSTP Summer Power-On/ Power-Up program at 14 locations which include (2) specialty programs Camp Adventure and TR Camp Adventure.

Program Wrap-ups:

- On March 8, teens at the Patrick Henry Recreation Center attended the **Wizards vs. Hornets NBA game**. Teens and staff used the Metro bus which served as an educational opportunity to acquire practical skills in navigating public transportation systems. Teens enjoyed the game and were surprised with complimentary souvenirs.



- On March 8, the Durant Center partnered with the Boys and Girls Club of Alexandria to host a **Teen Glow Party**. We were excited to invite 110 local teens, ages 12-15 to enjoy our DJ/glow room, spray tattoos, Art Mobile activities, video game tournament, Tik Tok room, and of course pizza!



- On March 21, the William Ramsay Recreation Center hosted a **March Madness Teen Appreciation event**. The night consisted of a 3-point shooting contest, a King of the Court one-on-one challenge, and a 3-on-3 tournament. During the night, our teen participants were able to win trophies and/or silver medals while also building their teamwork skills, bonding with each other, and having fun in an organized safe space!



- On March 21, the Patrick Henry Recreation Center took part in **Teen Appreciation Day**. Participants enjoyed the Olympic games, free barber cuts, free manicures, game rooms, arts & crafts, a DJ, Mobile Art Lab, and a raffle.



- On March 23, Mt. Vernon Recreation Center hosted an **Egg Hunt and Art Pop-Up event**. Participants enjoyed searching for 650 eggs, as well as a creative arts and crafts activity for families. Children ages 1-4 years participated along with parents and siblings to enjoy a morning of fun and excitement.



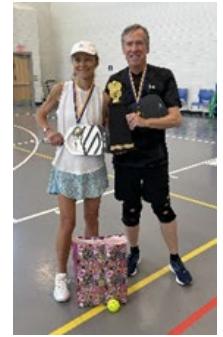
- On March 23, Leonard Armstrong Recreation Center celebrated **Teen Appreciation Day**. Teens enjoyed fun games, food, music, video games, picture walls, and karaoke.



- On March 23, Chinquapin hosted its 10th annual **Underwater Egg Hunt** with 117 participants!



- On March 24, several teams competed in the **Bloomin' Pickles Spring Showdown Tournament**, held at the Patrick Henry Recreation Center. All teams showed great sportsmanship throughout and gave it their all on the court. Bracket rounds were best of 3 with team "Born to Rally" ultimately emerging at the end of the afternoon as champions of Patrick Henry Rec Center's first pickleball tournament.



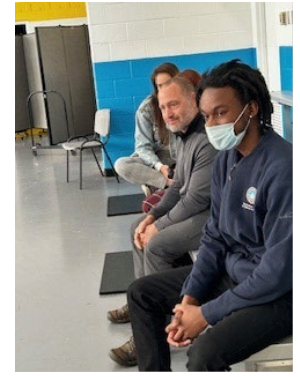
- On March 26, the Nannie J. Lee Recreation Center's 5 & 6-year-old participants were chiefs for the day and prepared a healthy snack for the other age groups. They enjoyed making "**One Tough Cookie**" with only 4 ingredients (Bananas, Oats, Apple Sauce, and Chocolate Chips).



- On March 27, Nannie J. Lee Recreation Center had a special collaboration with the **Mobile Art Lab**. Participants enjoyed making Easter bag totes and were able to design and express their creativity through art. They also enjoyed making paper roller coasters for STEM, using construction paper and imagination.



- On March 29, Nannie J. Lee Recreation Center participants had a special guest book reader, **Author Ruth Talbott**. What was special about this book is that Ruth wrote and dedicated this book to her father who loves plaid pants. To put the icing on the cake, this was her first appearance as a guest author, and it was her father's birthday who had no idea that she wrote this book about him...SO SPECIAL! The participants enjoyed the reading and the instrumental sing-a-longs that set the tone.



- On March 29, Nannie J. Lee Recreation Center participants enjoyed their last day of spring break with an **Easter EGGstravaganza!** The event included painting Easter eggs, tie-dye creations, and an Easter Egg Hunt!



- On March 30, Charles Houston held its annual **Egg Hunt**. Participants enjoyed games, food, arts & crafts, and most of all the Egg Hunt.



- On March 30, Leonard Armstrong Recreation Center held its annual **Free Health Fair**. The event promotes awareness and preventive care of all aspects of wellness in the Leonard Armstrong community. Over 300 participants from the surrounding communities enjoyed the shared resources. This event was collaborated with Alive Food Distribution, Heart of Love, and other organizations that came to distribute a wealth of information and resources to promote a healthier lifestyle.



Program Updates:

- During March, the Patrick Henry Recreation Center **Lego Lab** participants worked on various models and free builds based on popular franchises. Over multiple sessions, they managed to dismantle and fully recreate an X-Wing from Star Wars. Others managed to free-build a replica of a Pigling Brute from the video game, Minecraft, using only spare pieces, a reference picture, ingenuity, and determination.



- **Track and Conditioning** participants got back to some much-needed typical activities for Spring at Mount Vernon Recreation Center. Children from 7-12 years of age were invited to join the conditioning and training under Coach Jason's direction. While instilling discipline and work ethic in the youth, Coach Jason prepares participants to compete in the City's Track meet on May 10th.



- **Vaughn Poretz** was recognized at the Alexandria Sportsman's Club in March as the Recreation Department Athlete of the Month. Vaughn is a fourth-grade student at Douglas MacArthur School and a youth basketball player in the City's recreation league. His coach described him as being very coachable and stated he is a great teammate always looking to make his teammates better. Each of the last two seasons, he saved his best game for the championship game at ACHS, being the leading scorer in both games and being instrumental to his team winning back-to-back 10U titles. Vaughn is pictured with his parents and Recreation Coordinator, Tim Catron at the Old Dominion Boat Club receiving his award.



Upcoming Events:

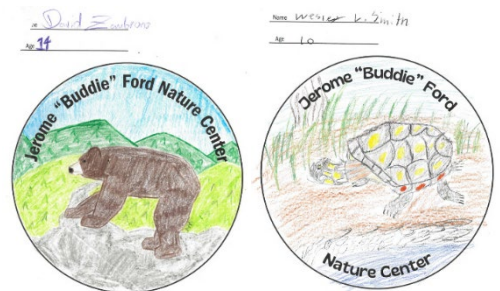
For a preview of upcoming events, please see:

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/rpca/rpcacommunity-activities>

- **Alexandria Spring Invitational Cheerleading Competition** – Saturday, April 20 at 2 p.m. at Alexandria City High School. Tickets are available online or in person on the day of the event. Teams from Charles Houston, Mt. Vernon, Patrick Henry, and William Ramsay will be participating along with Ft. Hunt, Fort Washington, and Gum Springs.
- Charles Houston Recreation Center will host a **Health & Wellness Expo** on Saturday, April 20 at 10 am. There will be 20 to 30 vendors demonstrating exercise, cooking, and discussing all things health.
- Mount Vernon Recreation Center will be hosting its annual **Mother’s Day Spa and Tea** on May 4th. Moms and daughters will enjoy great food, facials, massages, and manicures.
- **Alexandria City Track & Field Meet** – Saturday, May 11 at 9 a.m. at Alexandria City High School. For City of Alexandria residents ages 7 – 14. Participants can choose to enter various running or field events with an opportunity to advance to the MARPSA Regional Meet in June.
- Charles Houston Recreation Center will host the **Employee Work n Well Expo** on May 16th.
- The Community Outreach and Safe Place team is finalizing plans for the upcoming **annual community cookouts**. This event is designed to provide information about summer camp opportunities, outreach programs, Safe Place, City-Wide resources, and community events. The Community Cookouts are in partnership with RPCA, Alexandria Police Department, Alexandria Sheriff Department, Alexandria Fire Department, DCHS, ARHA, SAPCA, and other City agencies and local businesses and non-profits. Cookout dates will run from April 23 through July 13, at designated locations throughout the City.

Special Features:

- The Jerome “Buddie” Ford Nature Center held a **sticker contest** where community members could design a sticker for the Nature Center. Over 100 people entered the contest, and two winners were selected, Wesley Smith (age 10) and David Zambrano (age 14). The winners will each receive an official certificate and 10 stickers of their design. The two winners and ten honorable mentions are featured on the Nature Center website.



City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 18, 2024

TO: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEMBERS

FROM: JACK BROWAND, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, PARK SERVICES RECREATION, PARKS & CULTURAL ACTIVITIES JB

ITEM 5.a.: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION DIVISION UPDATE
PARK SERVICES

PARK PLANNING & CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

Bethany Znidersic, Division Chief

Capital Improvement Project Summary Update

- April Park Planning & Capital Development Report, Park Services (*Attached*)

Park Planning Project Updates

- Alexandria West Small Area Plan Update (*Attached*)

Sites Currently Closed or Partially Closed to Public Use for Capital Projects

- Holmes Run Trail (Site 1 – design & Site 2&3 – construction procurement)
- Four Mile Run Park Bridge (active construction)
- Eugene Simpson Stadium Park Dog Park (active construction)
- Joseph Hensley Park (active construction)
- Mount Jefferson Park Dog Park - (drainage redesign complete – in approval process)
- Charles Barrett Recreation Center playground – (active construction)
- Oronoco Bay Park boardwalk and piers - (closed for inspections and structural repairs)
- 5 West Braddock Road Pocket Park (landscape improvements)
- Miracle Field Landscape Beds (replanting project)

Ben Brenman LED Lighting Retrofits

Project Managers: Matt Melkerson, T&ES

The City will be upgrading the existing streetlight fixtures in Ben Brenman Park, Cameron Station Linear Park, and Armistead Boothe Park to LED technology starting April 23, 2024. There are numerous benefits to upgrading the existing streetlight fixtures, including significantly higher energy efficiency in furtherance of the City's EcoCity goals, and higher reliability resulting in lower maintenance costs. Work will be performed Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 3:30 PM and is expected to take approximately two weeks to complete. All park trails and roadways

will remain open during the upgrade of the fixtures. If there are any questions about the upcoming work, contact Matt Melkerson at matt.melkerson@alexandriava.gov.

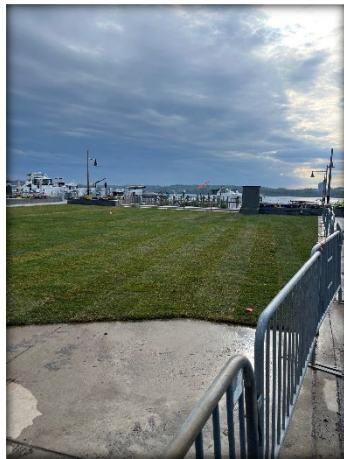
PARK MAINTENANCE

Derek Claytor, Division Chief

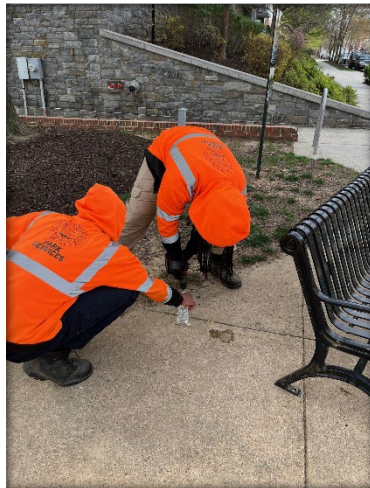
Division Update

Marina – We are very close to having the addition to the pier (near the Barca Restaurant) installed along with the new ticket booth.

Park District 1 – Sod replacement at Waterfront Park



Park District 1 - Bench relocation at Wythe St. Park



Park District 2 – Park Manager Shawn Miller - Overseeding of soccer field at George Washington Middle School along with painting our fields for the start of the season.



Park District 3 – Park Manager Christopher Watson - Trail Maintenance along the Dora Kelly Trail



PARK SUPPORT

Tonja Walls, Division Chief

Division Update

The City of Alexandria runs two community gardens, one at Chinguapin Recreation Center & Aquatics facility and near Holmes Run Parkway. The gardening season runs from March 1 through November 30 each year and there are 200 plots available for rent with priority given to Alexandria residents. This year, the City of Alexandria registered a total of 176 plots at Chinguapin and 24 at Holmes Run – 18 new gardeners at Chinguapin and six (6) at Holmes Run. Because of high interest in gardening, there are waitlists for both gardens.



Food Bank volunteers with donations from garden plot



Greens and Daffodils



Garlic



Geens, carrots, garlic



Dale May Memorial Grove – common area with perennials

G-max testing began on Tuesday, April 2nd on playgrounds. The purpose of G-max testing to reduce the severity of head injuries due to falls onto playground surface. Testing is done in accordance with American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standards. The testing equipment consists of a tripod, e-missile and a handheld controller. Pictures show testing at Tartleton playground.



Facilities Maintenance began Spring turn-ons at all drinking fountains/bottle filler stations, community gardens, and two public restrooms. The team has made all necessary repairs.

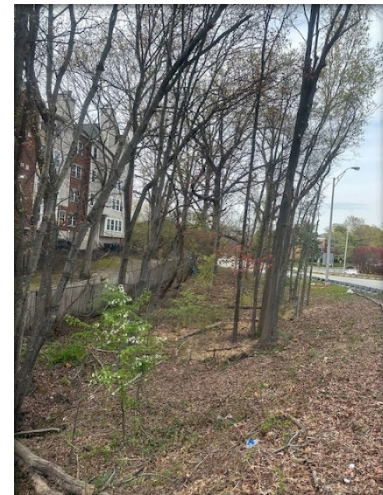


NATURAL RESOURCES

Oscar Mendoza, Division Chief

Division Update

- Urban Forestry planted a white oak at Windmill Park with the Mayor and City Leadership to commemorate our 275th year as a City.
- Urban Forest Manager, Phil Jubert, spoke at 3 neighborhood association meetings and the Beautification Commission. The intent was for introductions, provide a resource for the community, and to inform residents on how they can help our city tree canopy through volunteering (Tree Stewards, PARKnerships) and Alex311 ticket requests.
- State of Virginia Forestry Department donated a plaque at a ceremony to recognize Alexandria for being a Tree City USA member for the 41st year.
- Urban Forestry Department is developing plans to host a statewide forestry event, put on by Trees Virginia, in May. We are expecting up to 150 Arborists throughout the State to attend the event at the Lee Center.
- Urban Forest Manager Phil Jubert and Civic Engineer Camille Liebnitzky introduced to the Beautification Commission a Tree Planting Project currently underway by TES as a component of the Storm Water Management program.
- The Natural Land Management division remains engaged in inspecting, treating, and eliminating invasive plants across the city. This spring, Park Services will focus on inspecting and treating ephemeral and broadleaf invasive species.
- Clearing invasive vegetation along the fences at Wyndham Circle



Staff:

Bethany Znidersic, Division Chief, Park Planning & Capital Development

Derek Claytor, Division Chief, Park Maintenance

Oscar Mendoza, Division Chief, Natural Resources

Tonja Walls, Division Chief, Park Support

Park & Recreation Commission -Park Planning Report



April 18, 2024

Project	Project Description	Monthly Update	Status	Planning District	Target Completion Date	Assigned To	
1	Witter Recreational Fields Netting	This project will design and install netting along two sides of the two rectangular fields.	Construction is complete on the south side of the field. The north side of the field is anticipated to be complete in the spring. Coordination with user groups is in progress to minimize impacts to programs.	Implementation	District 1	04/16/24	Daniel Unkle
2	Robinson Landing Promenade Railings	Fabricate and install new safety railings along the Waterfront promenade between Duke and Wolfe St. (FY21 carryover)	The contract for the railings was awarded. Design is complete and fabrication in process. Installation is planned for May through June 2024.	Implementation	District 1	06/30/22	Jack Broward
3	Athletic Field Lights on Synthetic Turf Field Jefferson Houston	Design and installation of athletic field lights on one existing synthetic turf field. Field location to be determined through community engagement. Potential field locations in George Washington Middle School, Patrick Henry K-8 School and Recreation Center, Jefferson Houston K-8 School and Francis Hammond Middle School.	The Contractor is currently addressing punch list items. The DarkSky International Phase II Certification testing is anticipated in June / July of 2024.	Close-out	District 1	07/15/24	Daniel Unkle
4	Site See 2024	Calendar 2024 Art Installation	The newest Site See installation "Interstellar Influencer (Make an Impact)" opened in Waterfront Park on Sunday, March 24. Using metal, light, and mist the 1:2000 scale installation explores the impact of an asteroid that hit the earth 35 million years ago and created what is now the Chesapeake Bay. The installation will be up through early November, 2024.	Implementation	District 1	11/15/24	Diane Ruggiero
5	Potomac Yard Howell Park	New public open space in Potomac Yard per the development special use approvals and coordinated development district conditions.	Howell Park was originally approved to be dedicated to the City in 2008. City staff have completed the site walks and have accepted the construction of the park. Staff began maintaining the park in March.	Close-out	District 2	01/01/20	Bethany Znidersic
6	Simpson Dog Park Renovation	This project will address erosion and drainage issues in the Simpson Park dog park per the 2014 Citywide Parks Improvements Plan.	Contracting issues have delayed the completion of the project. The City has terminated the contractor and is working to complete the final project components. The dog park is anticipated opened to the community shortly after all safety issues have been addressed and additional updates will be posted to the project website as they are available.	Implementation	District 2	04/01/24	Bethany Znidersic
7	Mount Jefferson Park Improvements	This project includes the City responsibilities per the Development Special Use Permit (DSUP) conditions.	The procurement process for the dog park drainage materials is underway, with the longest lead items expected to be delivered within the next 3-4 weeks. The commencement of site work is anticipated by the third week of April with a duration of approximately two weeks for its completion. Following this, an additional 2-3 weeks are estimated for the establishment of the turf. The projected completion and opening date of the dog park is the end of May. Any outstanding punch list items for the park are scheduled to be addressed by this time as well	Close-out	District 2	04/17/25	Judy Lo
8	Colasanto Interactive Fountain Construction	This project phase includes funding for construction of interactive fountain.	The Invitation To Bid (ITB #1084) for the project closed in mid-April. The City is reviewing the bids and information received from the bidders.	Procurement	District 2	05/12/25	Bethany Znidersic
9	Four Mile Run Park Bridge Replacement Construction	This project will replace the existing bridge in Four Mile Run Park near the parking area for the two diamond fields at the end of Commonwealth Avenue.	Construction of the bridge deck and connector trails is complete. Backfill and trail edge stabilization is ongoing. Safety railing installation is planned for the week of April 22. The anticipated bridge opening is May 1, 2024.	Implementation	District 2	07/30/24	Jack Broward
10	Stevenson Dugout Replacement	This project will install two dugout structures at the existing ball field. Irrigation has been relocated and contractor is currently obtaining permits. Anticipated construction is July-August of 2023.	Installation of the new dugouts is substantially complete. The Contractor is currently working on punch list items. The remainder of the ball field fencing/netting is anticipated to be installed in spring of 2024.	Close-out	District 3	04/30/24	Daniel Unkle
11	Hensley Park Renovation Phase I	This project will renovate Hensley Park based on the Citywide Parks Improvement Plan concept (2014).	Construction is in progress and is anticipated to be complete in early 2025. Please see the project website for more information: alexandriava.gov/rpca/project/joseph-hensley-park-renovation	Implementation	District 3	01/01/25	Bethany Znidersic
12	Athletic Field Lights on Synthetic Turf Field Francis Hammond	Design and installation of athletic field lights on one existing synthetic turf field. Field location to be determined through community engagement. Potential field locations in George Washington Middle School, Patrick Henry K-8 School and Recreation Center, Jefferson Houston K-8 School and Francis Hammond Middle School.	The Contractor is currently addressing punch list items. The DarkSky International Phase II Certification testing is anticipated in June / July of 2024.	Close-out	District 3	07/15/24	Daniel Unkle