



To: City Council
From: Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commission
Re: Annual Report for 2019-20
Date: June 18, 2019

Overview of Commission

See Appendix A for the list of Commissioners, meetings, and attendance records.

Mission and Vision of Parks Commission

To support and move forward the BPRW department mission and be the liaison between the City and the public

Issues/Projects Discussed and Outcomes

1. Issue - Penny for Parks and Transparency

The Department presented the idea to the Commission of bringing forth all community requests for Penny for Parks and the Department's scoring of the applications. The desire was for the Commission to review the process, ask questions, and then vote on the Department's recommendation.

Outcome – At the December meeting, the Department reviewed the proposals and scoring, and after discussion, the Commission approved the recommendations. For next year, the Department will send all applications in advance to give the Commission more time to read and better understand each application. Also, applicants will be encouraged to come and talk about their application to the Commission.

2. Issue – Off-leash dog policy and ordinance

Starting in 1998, the City adopted an off-leash dog ordinance with resolutions in 2000 and 2002. In 2011 the City created a task force to explore off-leash dog areas further. After two years of work, the task force put forth a final report with recommendations. There was no formalization of the advice in 2013.

The primary outcome of the task force was to make the ordinance broader and then have an operations policy that is approved by the Parks Commission.

Outcome - At the September meeting, the Commission voted in favor of the separation of policy from the ordinance. At the June meeting, the Director updated the Commission that the project is still moving forward but slowly. Once the ordinance is updated, the Commission will host public meetings for input on the adoption of the policy.

3. Project - Street Banner Program

The Department brought forward a three-tiered pricing program for the street banners program at the October meeting with a finalized version at the November meeting. The design of the three-tier model makes the banner program more affordable for small non-profit events and shift higher costs to larger events with substantial budgets.

Outcome – The Parks Commission provided constructive feedback at the October meeting with a suggestion of a survey to current users to determine budgets and event size. The Department brought forward the results to the November meeting, and pricing was set for three tiers.

4. Project – Burlington Bike Park

The Burlington Bike Park community group brought forth their project to the Commission for the second time with the desire for a vote of support from the Commission. The project was one of the topics at a public meeting as part of multiple Leddy projects, and there was community support for the Bike Park to be located at Leddy Park.

Outcome – The Commission voted unanimously to support the Bike Park location at Leddy Park.

5. Project – Leddy Park pavilion

A Leddy pavilion was a topic at two public forums. The Director noted this was also a suggested addition to Leddy at the Leddy public meeting and multiple staff have also made the request

Outcome – The Leddy pavilion was added to the 5-year plan. The original timing was the design in FY21 with construction in FY22. Due to the upheaval of capital projects due to COVID, there is a one-year delay.

6. Issue – Geo Cache Policy

Based on a comment by a community member, the Department developed a draft geo cache policy for the Commission to approve. The policy welcomed geocaches on most public parkland but required prior approval.

Outcome – A draft policy was presented but a final policy was not and this item will be brought forward to a future meeting for a final resolution.

7. Project - BTV Stat

The Department continued to present its BTV Stat presentations over the fiscal year with reports from Waterfront, Recreation, Planning, and the Parks Trees program. Due to COVID, not all 2019/20 presentations came in front of the Commission.

Outcome – New Commissioners gained a greater understanding of the work the Department is doing and the Commission as a whole shared interest in continuing to share BTV Stat presentations with Commission. Also, it highlighted the desire for the Commission to encourage more of the public to attend meetings as they are informative.

8. Project – Summer Volunteer Celebration

The Department brought forth the idea of a summer volunteer celebration that is hosted by the Parks Commission. The idea was a simple event at North Beach during the summer, where parking would be free for volunteers. The Commission would hold their business meeting and then follow with an ice cream social for all volunteers. The Volunteer of the Year and the Coach of the Year would be recognized at the event.

Outcome - The Commission voted in support of the event, and the first one has been postponed until 2021 due to the current pandemic.

9. Project – Parks Commission Retreat

With a relatively new Commission and a relatively new Director, the Commission welcomed the suggestion of the Director to hold a Commission retreat led by a facilitator. The agenda topics included: 1) Open meeting laws; 2) Role of the Commission related to Charter and ordinance; 3) Being an effective Commission; 4) Community engagement; and 5) Review of department goals with discussion.

Outcome – The Retreat was held in January with positive feedback. There is a desire to hold the Retreat annually in early fall with the addition of setting goals for the Commission. The suggestion was made to have the topics of Open Meeting laws and Roles of the Commission be held one on one with any new Commission member and the Director and not a primary agenda item for future retreats.

10. Issue – Meeting Schedule

The Commission discussed at the Retreat and after BTV Stat presentations that they wished more community members would attend Parks Commission meetings. There was a discussion on publicizing meetings through social media and a desire to have the meetings in more locations around the City.

Outcome – The Commission voted to approve the 2020 meeting calendar with 9 unique locations around the City. Due to COVID, the meetings were all moved on-line, and the topic will move forward to FY21 for continued discussion.

Challenges/Difficulties and Best Approach to Resolve

1. **Challenge** - Increased community participation in Parks Commission meetings

Best Approach to Resolve - Record meetings and make available to the public; when in-person meetings start up again, hold them in multiple locations around the City; and, utilize social media to publicize the agenda in advance to encourage participation.

Ongoing Work FY20 to FY21

1. **Project – Geo Cache Policy**

As noted in #7 above the final geocache policy will be brought back to the Commission in FY21

2. **Project – Dog Ordinance/Rules**

As noted in #1 above, the Commission is expecting to hold a public meeting regarding the off-leash dog policy in FY21

Ben Traverse, Vice-Chair

Andrea Todd

Fauna Hurley

Mark Barlow

Alex Farrell

* Warren Vinson Pearce was chair through the May meeting but then moved to North Carolina the end of May. Kaitlin Healy served her three year term but did not renew for a second three year term due to work obligations and to provide an opportunity for others to participate on the Commission.

Appendix A

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING ATTENDANCE RECORD JULY – JUNE 2020

<u>Date</u>	<u>Commissioners Present</u>
07/02/19	NO MEETING
08/06/19	Bossange, Pierce, Healy, Farrell, Todd, Traverse and Harris
09/10/19	Pierce, Healy, Farrell, Todd and Traverse
10/01/19	Pierce, Hurley, Todd and Traverse
11/05/19	Pierce, Farrell, Todd, Traverse and Barlow
12/03/19	Healy, Farrell, Hurley, Todd, Traverse, Barlow and Harris
01/07/20	Pierce, Hurley, Todd, Barlow and Harris
02/04/20	Pierce, Healy, Hurley, Todd, Traverse and Barlow
03/10/20	Pierce, Farrell, Todd and Barlow
04/07/20	NO MEETING
05/20/20	Pierce, Healy, Farrell, Todd, Traverse and Barlow
06/02/20	Healy, Farrell, Todd, Traverse and Barlow