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Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Joint Meeting with the Park Authority, Tuesday, December 16, 2025

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- Official Board of Supervisors page (Fairfax County): <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/boardofsupervisors/>

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[00:00:03] I'm going to go ahead and get started, folks.

[00:02:12] This is our December 16th, 2025, joint meeting of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and Fairfax County Park Authority Board, and it's been a little bit since we've had one of these, but wanted to have a check in with our partners on the Park Authority. And when I met with with Jay and Kyle talking about the agenda for this meeting, we thought, you know, we we keep it high level and see where the discussion goes. But obviously, some great things happening at the Park Authority. And before I turn this over to the chair of the Park Authority Board, I want to thank the members who are here and also acknowledge that many of us earlier today were at the celebration

[00:02:51] of life for Harry Glasgow and so a real champion of our parks that was lost and I said at that event it almost seems exactly fitting that we would be having a joint meeting with the Board of Supervisors and Park Authority Board on a day that we were reflecting on and remembering the huge contributions that Harry Glasgow made to parks and to Fairfax County and so we continue to keep his family and our thoughts and prayers that would be appreciated and again thank our authority members, board authority members for being here today and at this time I will turn it over to our chairman of the Park Authority Board, Kyle Stone.

[00:03:29] Thank you, Jeff. I'll keep this short and sweet. Jade told me all I had to do was sit here quietly and look pretty so I don't have very much to say. Thank you for the opportunity to come out here. We're looking forward to presenting you on what we've got going on the past year or so with the Park Authority system. A lot of good news to share and happy to do so.

[00:03:50] Good morning. Is it still? Good afternoon. Everyone, I want to start before the presentation starts. I want to introduce the gentleman to my right, Nigel Fields. He's the new Deputy Director for Planning and Development. He is replacing Amy Vosper, who's right back there, as this is what will be her last time in front of the BOS as a deputy.

[00:04:12] We had a retirement party last year. I'm taking a little bit of a point of personal privilege. Her retirement party last year, and we thanked her for her 10 years of service. Last night. This is why everybody's here. Everybody's here. Everybody's here to correct me. Thank you. It's last night. Yes. To celebrate her 10 years of service to the park authority and to the county.

[00:04:31] So a little point of the person. Okay. So as Chairman McKay had said, we're going to have a 50,000-foot view as to the wonderful park authority and all the wonderful things that we've done this year.

[00:04:52] So our theme for this presentation is 2026, a park system built for everyone. So, as it says, our job is to wisely invest in our parks so they remain beloved, accessible, and resilient. So, in 2025, FCPA improved the lives of our residents through 16.3 million visitations to our parks, rec centers, and golf courses.

[00:05:13] Not that any of you are looking at last year's presentation. That number is a little short from last year's number. It was a very wet year. So, there's a lot of rain this year. We track that because of our revenue fund and golf rounds. And so, it was a little bit of a wet year. It's still wonderful to have 16.3 visitations to our parks, rec centers, and golf courses.

[00:05:34] It's a little snapshot as to who we are. I say we are a medium-sized city. We do everything from the cradle to the grave for large projects, but we also have sort of everything. So amongst the 1.2 million residents, we have eight golf courses, again, a little bit more than 16 million in total visitation, Nine rec centers, 60 staff sites, and I bring that up because we are widely distributed across the entire county.

[00:06:00] We did an ice cream thank you to deliver ice cream to all of our staff at where they worked, and it took us six days to get to every staff. So it's 60 staff sites all across the county. With our summer surge, we're at 3,000 employees, 264 athletic fields, 177 summer performances, four lakefront parks 10 farmers markets 340 miles of trail this is where kyle likes to cut me off 424 parks and three nature centers so we wanted to talk a little bit about what we heard we value um community input very much we are very good at it and we are very good at looking at different

[00:06:37] innovative ways to reach out to the community not just through 7 p.m tuesday evening meetings but really getting out into the community and listening to what they um what they have to say and we do that on both a large and a small scale. And so an example of us doing that on a large scale is our parks count. Part of our parks count is our statistically valid survey that we do and asking residents what they value within our park system. And overwhelmingly from what we heard from the community was taking care of what you have. And so that is the number one, which is what you would

[00:07:12] see across the country at, I feel like I'm aging ourselves, this is our 75th birthday year, at a park the age of us. You have 75 year old park system, you have amenities that are, you know, 75, 60, 50 years old.

So overwhelmingly our residents really want us to take care of what we have.

[00:07:32] What we also asked is, we call it the \$100 question. The \$100 question is if given \$100, what would you spend that on? And so this is some results from the \$100 question. And again, what you're going to see is that repair, maintain, existing parks and infrastructure overwhelmingly leads.

[00:07:48] The gray bar there is the results from 2015, so we're tracking pretty much the same as we were originally when we asked this question. Not originally, but when we asked this question in 2015. And then we do it on a medium-sized, smaller scale as well.

[00:08:04] And so this is a really good example in Supervisor Lusk's district of High Blah Valley. So Highblow Valley Park next to Highblow Valley Elementary School, you can kind of see that in the box to the bottom right. It was a tennis court that was not very well used.

[00:08:21] It was a parking lot that really was almost a commuter, just leave your car there, parking lot. And we wanted to transform that space. And so instead of just saying, okay, let's replace the playground in kind or make it bigger, we really went out into the community at the school and we had, as our residents, what they wanted.

[00:08:38] And overwhelmingly, those residents were in support of the playground, which was one of the questions. And then greater accessibility, shade, more space, and multiple play structures. We also took that tennis court and converted it into a multi-pitch, which would be a futsal basketball court that's there.

[00:08:57] It is wildly popular if you drive by there any day. It is packed full of kids, almost as packed as Strawberry Park. You guys can fight over how many kids are there. But the community is just so appreciative of that amenity and that space. Jay, I'm going to interrupt you for one quick second because you mentioned we met with the school.

[00:09:17] Yes. It was way more than that. And I was Franconia's supervisor at the time. We went into the school and got the kids in the elementary school directly involved in the park planning process. And that's why it is so packed. And so I just want to commend the park authority for going from initial conversations to kids there in high school now.

[00:09:37] but they were involved in describing what it was they wanted to see happen at their park before this park was redeveloped this way. And I played on this park when I was a kid. There were decades where it lay dormant. It really didn't have anything that met the needs of this community in this area. And this community needed recreational amenities. And not only did they get them, they got the ones that the kids and the community embraced throughout the process. And it was the first time I've been involved in a park planning process where one of the first steps along the way was to go in and talk to the elementary school kids and make this sort of a school project

[00:10:14] with the support of the principal at the time. So I just want to point that out. It was a really great thing. We really do believe that every dollar is wasted if we renovate a park and nobody shows up. The entire point of a park and this park space is to be that third place for communities and allow residents to really take it as their own. And it's also a really good example when we talk about our PROSA plan of how that's it seems like that park is an inholding in Huntley Meadows but you can't get there and so as the to drive to the entrance to Huntley Meadows is actually pretty far around so if you just looked at as the crow flies and I'm gonna preempt the process slide as a crow flies for

[00:10:52] distance to parks and just said oh this park is right next there's Huntley Meadow then then this community wouldn't have a play space not to mention the fact that Huntley doesn't have a playground or any place to play futsal or whatever it So that's a really good example of really digging in and our park planners digging in to look at what's the best for the community.

[00:11:12] Similar situation was Greenbrier Pickleball Court. So I will bring Supervisor Herity into the conversation. Our pickleball study determined that this area of the county needed more pickleball courts. Greenbrier Park was determined to be an ideal fit for pickleball courts, largely due to us having to remove a court from.

[00:11:29] So next time, Kathy, I know, I know, listen, listen, ma'am, next time it's going to be bringing you in to talk about the new pickleball courts that are in Sully District. And so to be creative and not have to do a Greenfields development, as we all know, I'm sorry, Greenfields development that we all know is more expensive.

[00:11:49] We looked at the parking and we determined that a portion of the parking lot was underutilized and that we could fit some pickleball courts at the end of the parking lot, making that a lot cheaper. We went out to the community originally proposing four pickleball courts, and the community said, well, can we fit five?

[00:12:05] And so we went back, looked at it, and we could fit five. And so we changed the concept to five pickleball courts, and those were opened in the fall with temporary court striping, and the final surfacing and lines will be added in the spring. So this is a great example of being nimble and bringing things to the community when we have to take something away as quickly as we possibly can, because if we had to greenfield development, we wouldn't even be in construction until next year.

[00:12:33] Making smart investments using a data-driven capital strategy. We're currently working on our 2026 CIP, and in doing that and making sure that we are utilizing our funds in the best way possible, we are very focused on making data-driven decisions, and to make data-driven decisions, you have to be able to look at data very well.

[00:12:53] So one of my favorite tools that we use internally is our CIP online tool. So our CIP mapping tool tells us, tells me, tells everyone else where we've spent dollars, where we haven't spent any dollars. When if two things, if two playgrounds are a question as to am I going to do this one or this one, we want to look at how much that community has received in infrastructure and improvements.

[00:13:17] We want to lean into communities that haven't had investment. This shows me what we've invested the last 20 years. I'll play a little bit of a screenshot of a maybe. Okay, there it is. And so that's the county. I can zoom in. As you zoom in, you see those circles start to separate, and you can look at each individual project. I can click on a box here, and down will pop sort of where the majority of those projects lie. A lot of those big circles are going to be the rec centers. We also don't, but to look at that, we don't look at the rec centers and say, okay,

[00:13:52] because we've done HVAC and fixed the bathroom and piping at Franconia, we're not going to spend any money in that area that's not really the same as providing an amenity to to the public it always goes slower when you're like it's so I could also look at these by category and so that'll do that in a second hey Jay there it goes I can also look at it by category I believe this is going to be pulling down turf

[00:14:31] fields I believe and then we can look at the individual projects there so in addition to a CIP mapping tool that's not the only thing we have other decision factors, data-driven decision factors that we utilize. One of them is PROSA, our park recreation open space and access strategy. We look at equitable distribution of amenities using our

[00:15:10] PARA, which is a park authority racial equity index. We look at whether or not we can achieve that goal using community partners. That photo is in Supervisor Alcorn's district when we were able to create the futsal court at Stratton Woods Park. We look at the level of usage of an amenity. And for that picture, we utilized Clemmie Jontree and Supervisor Beerman's district, because that is a playground that's very well loved. It's 20 years old. If we looked at just saying that every playground had a 30-year lifespan, we can't, it just gets hammered. It's so loved, it gets hammered. So we have to look at the level of usage for that. And we also have to look at things like ADA accessibility, conditions assessments,

[00:15:47] and just general location, geographic location of amenities. And so what we then do is we put all of those together into a funnel and that pops up sort of that decision-making and that helps us inform what that 180 million which is our 2026 bond dollars are and my staff and Kyle specifically loves the bag of rocks that's right here it's like the greatest graphic in the history of the world at some point in time I created the graphic and now it lives on forever because it's it's iconic and all my graphic designers and my designers behind me are throwing up in their

[00:16:22] mouth a little bit every time they see it. But as you can see, it does show sort of how those large rocks like an Audre Moore Rec Center takes up so much space in that bag and how we have limited space for the deferred capital replacement renovations and things like new parks that everybody loves to cut ribbons on. Okay, so transformation and progress. This is some examples of new and improved places that we have created this year. We have \$97 million invested in facility improvements and renovations, including Mount Vernon Rec Center, so that's a little bit

[00:16:56] high, 6.5 acres of land acquired and more than 100 improvement projects completed. So here's some examples. Mount Vernon Rec Center, as you all know, we had a wonderful opening. Supervisor Stork's District for Mount Vernon Rec Center. That project added another sheet of ice. Again, hundreds and hundreds of people that show up every day and appreciate that wonderful new amenity that we provided to the county. Some smaller projects, well smaller in relation to Mount Vernon Rec Center, but Mount Vernon Woods Park is open to the public. We will have our

[00:17:31] official ribbon cutting and opening in the spring to celebrate that. That was another example of really innovative that started way before I even came on board four years ago. I believe there was barbecue and hot dog. We really use creative ways to bring that community out to tell us what they wanted to happen at that park. We just mentioned Highblood Valley Park.

[00:17:55] Rostell Park was another one that we opened this year in Supervisor Politics District and also Strawberry Park and Supervisor Politics too in Providence area. In addition to creating new things and cutting ribbons, we're also looking at modernizing what we have. And so these are some examples of when you have 424 parks and you have you know 28,000 acres you have a lot of stuff and so a lot of the things that you have to do is fixing stuff and I know that seems like it's obvious that you have to fix stuff but I remember um I'm sure Kimmel like is tired of hearing the

[00:18:29] story I remember getting a um docu-sign for fencing at um uh supervisor elect um Sizemore Heiser as I say right Sizemore Heiser um district of Wakefield and it was a million dollars and I said well

that's a mistake like you added a zero like what's what are we talking about and they're like fences but it's a million dollars there's a lot of fences at Wakefield Park I was like oh and I looked at as like yes there's a lot that's how much fencing costs to replace all of the fencing at Wakefield Park and so some examples are Franklin looks Park playground replacement and improvements we have Burke Lake golf site I have to I have to look I can't

[00:19:07] I'm trying to, I know, solar, yes, I can't, there it goes. The solar installation at Burke Lake, we have athletic court renovations countywide. We're working on our zero waste upgrade phase one.

[00:19:24] We've done that at 64, 67 sites. I mentioned it just now, Wakefield Diamond Field improvements. If you look at that photo, you see those brand new beautiful fences. Dugout replacements countywide, we've done those at 12 sites. Athletic court replacements countywide at nine sites.

[00:19:40] So that phase one of the zero waste upgrades are 92 parks, 382 recycling cans. And we'll be working on phase two this winter. Okay, then we have small site enhancements that make big community impacts.

[00:19:57] Some examples of that are the 80 accessible trails and improvements at Jefferson Manor Park. That seems like when you say 80 improvements, it's not a huge upgrade, but it really did transform that space of adding more walkways, fixing the shelter. It really does look like a total park renovation that we were able to add on to a project that was meant to increase accessibility to that site.

[00:20:22] Green Spring Gardens Arbor Reconstruction Project, the mini golf renovations at Lake Accatink Park, Great Falls Grange Park Improvements, Lake Fairfax Water Mine patio upgrades. We added a patio to the water mine, which is wildly popular, allows people a place to sit and eat lunch in the shade, whereas before it was a lot of sort of open dirt.

[00:20:42] And then dog park drainage improvements at West Grove Park. And then amongst all of those things, we also have our common maintenance. In order to, it's not so common, our maintenance. In order to maintain that many 424 parks, we have a lot of staff dedicated to everything from mowing to fixing fences to doing maintenance on the equipment to allow them to go out there and mow and fix fences and paint.

[00:21:12] And really, they're the stars that keep our parks looking the way that they do every day. And they are really worth talking about here. Okay, so we're going to switch gears just a little bit and talk about our other part of our mission, which is stewarding an action protecting natural and cultural resources.

[00:21:33] So protecting the past and educating the present, we have recently completed our cemetery study. We are the stewards of many cemeteries throughout the county, and we take that responsibility very seriously. from cleaning projects to inventory to interpretation.

[00:21:50] It's really important that we steward those resources in a manner which behooves the families that are interred there. We have public meetings at Gum Springs Community Center on December 11th to share the results of the Peak Cemetery Study and the ground-penetrating radar that we're doing.

[00:22:06] That's at Martin Luther King Jr. Park. And then we are supporting Supervisor Smith's commitment to advancing the story of Sully Plantation. We have been engaged this last year with a diverse senior advisory team to guide the creation of a new purpose statement and evaluate ethical approaches to interpreting the site's history.

[00:22:24] So the Sully project is a huge project that we're re-looking at Sully and looking at how we can really artfully tell the story and utilize the site in a way that really speaks to Fairfax County's very rich and diverse history. Our resident curatorship program, which is an award-winning program that people are trying Emily across the country our resident it was recently selected for the Leahy Lost Valley property in Vienna after the public engagement and assessment process and we've also received three applications for the drains will tavern property in Herndon and FCPA will be conducting a similar assessment of public

[00:23:04] and public engagement process for drainsville in early 2026 now stewarding natural resources so just by the numbers 1575 acres of natural vegetation and communities were classified and mapped. You can't protect what you don't know that you have, and so our ecological studies of rare plant occurrences, non-invasives, bamboo, all of those things are so important to being able to accurately steward our valuable natural resources. 19 parks and 173 survey plots were assessed for deer browse impacts. We work very in close coordination with

[00:23:41] the Wildlife Ecology Unit to look at places that we do want to do deer management, and we make sure that we are surveying before and after to make sure that all of the efforts are really accomplishing what they're trying to accomplish. We reviewed 73 permit requests, 1,180 acres we treated for invasive vegetation.

[00:24:03] We treat for invasive vegetation, majority of times it's to provide an ecological lift, but sometimes it actually increases the amount of parkland to an area. A lot of times when you have an overgrowth of non-native invasives, it's taking over active places that you can actively utilize parks. So if we talk about sort of on a scale the cheapest way that you could add parkland, it's to control non-invasives and add more usable space to parks, especially in those urban areas.

[00:24:29] 517 white-tailed deer were harvested from parks. 464 goose eggs were oiled. 37 acres of prescribed fire implementation. If you've never seen our prescribed burns, please reach out. It's really cool. This year we, I think we made it to Google Earth. So if you look at Google Earth in one of our parks, you can see it's in mid-burn, which is actually kind of cool.

[00:24:48] But it's a really awesome thing to watch. And we had four ecosystem restoration projects were completed. IMA and volunteer engagement. We love to talk about our volunteers. Volunteers are the engine that drives the park authority. 11,707 volunteer hours removing non-native invasive plants and vegetation.

[00:25:09] We had 504 Fairfax County Police Department volunteer hours harvesting white-tailed deer. Over 100 estimated customer inquiries that were addressed, partnerships fostered with federal, state, and regional, private, non-profit, and county organizations.

[00:25:26] And we're currently utilizing the \$400,000 funding from the Board of Supervisors to be treating the running bamboo, as we all, as we said when we came back. The one thing that we are sure of is the Park Authority did never planted running bamboo. However, it is our job not only to prevent that running bamboo to go onto private property, but also to be stewarding our valuable natural resources, and running bamboo has devastating consequences on the ecology of forests.

[00:25:55] I love this picture so much. It might be one of my favorite pictures. It was taken by us in our photo. This is not a Google image picture. It's great. So I'll pause here for a second. But the next section is

people and partnerships strengthening community connections. We had a – I'm going to do the same thing because I can't.

[00:26:14] some community events and as you all know we have a ton of community events but we try to pull out some specific ones to be talking about with some numbers so we had dog days at water mine we had 1,236 dogs attend that just the dogs not the owners just the dogs um mount vernon reopening 1,647 people attended the reopening of mount vernon the summer entertainment series we have an estimated 35,141 estimated attendees for 189 performances, 10 local series, and 14 venues.

[00:26:51] Earth Day, which is one of our largest events that we have, had about 7,000 attendees, and that was really a half, because halfway through there was a monsoon that blew everything out. So considering the weather, that's a wonderful number. Our Fairfax Fair Carnival attendance at Fry and Pan Farm Park was roughly 19,000.

[00:27:11] Wetland Awareness Day, which is a big event that we hold at Huntley Meadow, has 800 tickets reservation also with walk-up attendees. I love Wetland Awareness Day because so often we have events and we want to do that sole place and it's just about Huntley.

[00:27:29] Wetland Awareness Day is about everything. So everybody comes together, the state, feds, local, every organization has a table and you walk through Huntley and you can stop and you can learn about everything that people are doing for the environment. And it really is a wonderful event. Lunar New Year, we had 250 tickets and Lake Fairfax fireworks, which is also a wildly popular event, had 4,000 people who attended.

[00:27:53] We also had National Public Lands Day, September 27, 2025. We did that a little differently. Instead of having one event in one place, we spread that out across the county and had 11 service opportunities in all nine supervisory districts with county-wide participation. There's a little picture of Rosa Beerman and his son.

[00:28:12] Yes, did you you did both of the work that day most of it okay? Volunteer contributions 432 volunteer opportunities 113,000 actually 114,000 total volunteer hours and equivalent to 55 full-time equivalents That's how much volunteer hours that we had with people favorite kind of residents dedicating to our parks That's over nine almost 10,000 volunteers and a total value of three point nine million dollars in volunteer hours

[00:28:44] I would be remiss if I didn't take this opportunity to point out, as I always do, my board who's sitting here who are also volunteers, because I definitely do not pay them for their very hard work that they do for us. This was a spread that we had in Park Takes this year that gave them a little bit of background for each of our Park Authority board members.

[00:29:04] I know that's really small, but you can see that in Park Takes to read about all of our wonderful board members. And then we had the Ellie Doyle Park Service Awards that we had this year. This was at Laurel Hill Golf Club, and so that's when we celebrated all of the wonderful things that all of our volunteers have done for us throughout the years.

[00:29:25] So I will now pass it over to Deputy Director Sarah Baldwin, who will talk about recreation. Good afternoon, everyone. I get the pleasure of talking about the fun things we do and bragging a little bit about our staff and all that we've accomplished over the last year. So our first area that I'm going to focus on are summer camps.

[00:29:44] This is one of our strongest lines of business. and we run camps with the help of local vendors. We've been able to grow our camp offerings through partnering with local businesses. So during the summer of 2025, 65% of our camps were run by local businesses that took place within our facilities. This has allowed us to expand our offerings to things like robotics and cooking, where Park Authority staff are more focused on recreation or stewardship education type programming. During the summer of 2025, we grossed

[00:30:18] \$11 million in camps and we increased participation of about 2,000. So this is a strong line of business that continues to grow every year. But when we grow, we also want to make sure that we're still meeting the needs of our customers. And we do this by surveying our customers on a regular basis. If you've had children that have participated in our camps in the past, You probably received a weekly survey, and this is for us to get real-time information from our customers about what we're doing well and what they would like to see us improve. And so through those surveys, we're able to make quick decisions about things that we need to change to make sure

[00:30:57] that we're meeting our customer camp needs. All indications show that the constituents of Fairfax County are very happy with the camp services that we provide, with many folks saying that they would recommend our camps to others and that they are highly satisfied with the camps that the park authority is providing. Many of you are aware of the challenges that we've experienced during our summer registration in the summer of 2024. I'm sure many of your offices heard from your constituents when our system crashed during our first hour of registration. Thousands of people

[00:31:35] log on to our system within the first hour of registration, first minutes of registration to make sure their kids get in the camp that they want. So throughout the months, staff worked to evaluate how we're processing registrations and surveyed our customers to see what changes we could make for 25 to improve the experience for them. And with that, we came up with a recommendation where we split the county in half. We came up with blue team and green team and split the offerings, and all feedback from customers was overwhelmingly satisfied with the

[00:32:11] change that we made. We have some challenges with our current recreation management system, so we knew that we couldn't depend on the system to make those changes. We had to make those changes ourselves, and it was highly successful and something that we'll continue to do until we have a new system in place. Additionally, another one of our areas of focus is making sure that we're including people of all abilities in our programs and services. Our adapted programs continue to grow both with our popular award-winning adapted aquatics program as well as many new offerings for camps and classes for individuals with disabilities. In addition to that, we've

[00:32:49] made some changes where we're opening the water mine a little bit earlier so individuals with sensory issues can come and have a smaller environment, less people for them to participate in, enjoy the water mine. We're also having sensory-friendly tents at our larger events, so individuals, if they need a quiet space, can go to that area to decompress for some time.

[00:33:13] Another area of a strong line of business for us is our rec center memberships. Our rec centers struggled a little bit coming out of COVID, as did the rest of the fitness industry, as customers were slowly feeling more comfortable coming back into fitness facilities.

[00:33:30] In the last year or so, our membership has almost doubled. A lot of this is due to the reopening of Mount Vernon, changes in our membership payment structure, and our membership classification. So

since, I believe, 2023, we went from about 10,000 members within our rec centers to over 25,000 today.

[00:33:56] And then I can't not talk about the reopening of Mount Vernon Rec Center. this has been wildly successful. Within the first couple weeks of opening, I think it was in the first six weeks of opening, we welcomed about 45,000 people into that facility. As of last week, when I got these numbers, we had about 5,500 new members, and we're really driving the different lines of business, both rentals of our rooms there, as well as camp offerings. Within the first week of opening we welcomed hundreds of kids into the facility for our summer camp program

[00:34:33] and we're really delighted to see the the growth there which helps to sustain our revenue fund can i just interrupt you for a second because i'm going to compliment her as well to be able to for a project this large with a two-year construction to be able to open with camps and say nine months before that we're going to have camps and it was still an open shell and be able to get those camps in was a Herculean effort that staff real I mean I think that the the boxes were all in the in the closet it was stressful and they did a wonderful job of being able to still have camps there that

[00:35:08] summer um I believe like weeks after a week the door a week after the doors opened so so the Mount Vernon team has really done a phenomenal job reopening the facility but it really was a team effort for everybody in the park authority really pitched in to make sure that could happen despite the challenges from risk management? We got through those. The other facility that we'd like to talk about and brag about is Patriot Park North. This is our first venue into sports

[00:35:41] tourism. It's been highly successful. This is our third year running tournaments at Patriot Park North. We continue to see strong net revenue, cost recovery with our operations of that site. And this, again, is another team effort between the management of Patriot Park North, our park operations staff who are maintaining and helping during tournaments, our marketing team that is marketing the site, and then the support that we receive from Visit Fairfax and other partners in the county.

[00:36:14] We're growing the lines of business at Patriot Park through tournaments. This year, I believe we have 35 out of the 52 weekends are scheduled with tournaments. These are organizations coming in from around the country to host tournaments at Patriot. Of course, we're hosting camps there, and we're renting the facility to other organizations for them to run camps. We have rentals of all kinds. MLB has come in. We've had college showcases.

[00:36:41] And then we're hearing from colleges along the East Coast that have challenges with practicing outside during the winter months, and so are coming down and practicing at Patriot Park North. Switching to the other side of our mission in terms of stewardship education, we continue to grow our programming on the stewardship side of things.

[00:37:03] The Stewardship Educational Center has been wildly successful with 92 field trips happening last year. Our Wonder Wagon has been also wildly successful where we're able to reach communities that may not be in close proximity to our nature centers.

[00:37:20] We're bringing nature education to them, and our volunteers are also growing. Within our nature and historic sites, we really cannot run these facilities without our volunteers, so we continue to grow our volunteers with a 24% increase since 2024.

[00:37:40] In addition to that is golf. One of the best things that came out of COVID or one of the only good things that came out of COVID was the resurgence in golf. Last year, we netted \$4 million in our golf

operations. We're well above the national average in terms of the rounds played at our facilities.

[00:38:01] And we've done this through a variety of different means. We've employed new technology. We have a notify app where golfers can receive a notification when tee times are open because it's very hard today to get a tee time at most of our sites.

[00:38:17] So this is a way for us to not lose revenue, but to respond to our customer needs and let them know when we have rounds available for them. We've also ensured that we're meeting the needs of individuals with all abilities. We offered in partnership with the Virginia State Golf Association Adapted Golf Program at Burke Lake, which was well attended and well received by the community.

[00:38:43] In addition to that, we continue to partner with George Mason University and their golf team. Laurel Hill is the home of George Mason. And in return for them, using Laurel Hill, we were able to use the George Mason Fieldhouse this summer to offer camps, which allows us to expand our camp offerings.

[00:39:03] And with that, I will turn it over to Nigel. Good afternoon, everyone. And I get a chance to talk about the things we're looking forward to in the coming year. So at the Park Authority, we're doing our part.

[00:39:20] to assist with the food insecurity within the county, and we have five of the locations that have the SNAP benefits and also offer the Virginia Fresh match benefit, and the combined SNAP benefit and Virginia Fresh match in 2025 during our season this year was over \$100,000 worth of benefits just for this year. So it is going well, and we'd like to extend that in the future. So moving from the five locations where we offer this benefit to moving to as many of the markets as possible,

[00:39:56] up to 10 if possible. So regarding the bond schedule, clearly we'll be talking about this more in the coming year. But just to give you a snapshot of where we are now, we're in that part where right now for the project prioritization, our goal is to move toward public engagement in around April time period with the final bond package prepared for May 2026.

[00:40:21] We would like to engage the Park Authority Board for a vote in late spring of 26 going into the summer for a broader public outreach, working with our park partners on that outreach that they will be leading so that we can be prepared for a vote by the Board of Supervisors in June to be on schedule for a public vote in November. We have partnered with NCS and the public schools to have a more of a comprehensive county-wide approach to playground. As Jay was mentioning earlier, we have a data-driven approach for how we do a lot of our work. So when we're thinking

[00:40:59] about analysis with the CIP, with PROSA, having good data makes a big difference. So knowing what equipment is located where across the county to meet all the needs of our community is our approach. So we're glad that we've gotten the agreement with the neighborhood and community services, the public schools, as well as some additional funding that we were able to receive to do a comprehensive look. So this will take us a little while to do, but we're glad to have a fuller sense of where those deserts may be and begin to think about where facilities and funding

[00:41:30] may be needed to build the playgrounds that we need for our broader community. We heard from our these assessments when it comes to our urban parks and the urbanization within parts of the county that people would like to make sure we have a little bit more of a simplified approach. And this is exciting for us to find ways to refine our approach to looking at the urbanizing places within the county to

make sure that we're creating those types of experiences in more dense spaces that take advantage of, let's say, pocket parks or public

[00:42:07] plazas are those green spaces and kind of common green spaces looking at linear parks connections between spaces and so coming up with simplified approaches and standards for urban parks we'll just continue to refine that as our county continues to urbanize but importantly here we want to make sure in the coming year that we're looking at the proffer language and working with our our county partners to ensure that when we have proffer opportunities that the language is written in a way that we can make use of it. As I've heard Director Cole mention that kind of what's the use of us having these resources if we can't actually unlock them. So one goal is for us to look at that language and find ways for us to make sure the flexibility is

[00:42:46] there for us to really take full advantage of those proffers when they're available. We're going to move forward with our strategic and master planning with the first portion of our master plan to relook at our vision, mission, and values to ensure that they are aligned or make any adjustments there, followed by the specific actions and the implementation of the strategic plan. Clearly, we will engage our park staff, board members, and have plenty of public engagement. Everybody plays a role in how we move forward with our master plan

[00:43:19] and strategic plan that gives us a sense of these next five years from 2026 to 2031. And just wanted to touch back upon a comment that Director Cole made regarding the bag of rocks. And so we're looking forward to focusing on Audrey Moore in particular for our next bond and being able to raise the level of community service there. And with funds that may be available also focusing on some upgrades at Frickonia and Providence. But when we have one big project,

[00:43:55] if you will, like a rec center that is within a bond, and that is happening on a six-year cycle, That takes us about 54 years, more or less, to get through all of the locations. So this may be the best approach. It may be the only approach that we have, but I think it's something we really want to consider in terms of how we look at these facilities, many of them that were built around the same time that will, in many cases, need significant, more than upgrades, sometimes replacements, and what's the best approach for us to do that?

[00:44:22] But we're excited that we can move forward with these. That's our anticipation in the coming years. But we need to think about our approach going beyond that. I think that's it. We have a video, I think, if we want to share.

[00:44:42] Hi, I'm Jay Cole, Executive Director of the Fairfax County Park Authority. And I'm Kyle Stone, Chairman of the Fairfax County Park Authority Board. 2025 has been another impactful year for the Park Authority. There has been a lot of hard work to maintain our 422 parks, nine recreation centers, eight golf courses, 334 miles of trails, 360 playgrounds.

[00:45:02] I think they get the idea. We've certainly got a lot of ground to cover. Almost 24,000 acres to be exact. And despite the challenges of this year, the Park Authority has continued to develop, maintain, and improve our parkland and recreational sites as good stewards each season. Our park system is best in class because of you, our staff, our volunteers, and our community.

[00:45:23] We're here to say thank you. To our staff, every single person here at the Park Authority plays a critical role in making our sites destinations for recreation and fun for the whole family. Day after day,

you've been out there prepping fields, protecting our natural and cultural resources, fixing trails, clearing snow, lifeguarding, leading camps and programs, and so much more.

[00:45:44] It's your talent and can-do spirit that maintains the heart of our agency and keeps our parks vibrant and full of life. And to our volunteers, our advocates, the foundation, and the community at large, thank you for your advocacy, your trust, and most importantly, your support. Whether it's registering your children for our spring and summer camps, celebrating cultural heritage, golfing at one of our premier courses, volunteering over 110,000 hours, and sharing your passion for history and ecology with us, or enjoying one of our summer entertainment series concerts, or shopping at one of our 10 farmer's markets, we appreciate you being our why here at the park.

[00:46:20] Our parks are your parks, places to come together, to thrive, and to play. On behalf of all Park Authority leadership and the Board of Supervisors, thank you to staff, volunteers, and our residents for all you've done to make a great year for Fairfax County Parks.

[00:46:36] Cheers to 2026. We figured showing the video at the end might soften the questions slightly. That's that whole idea. Any complaints, go to Amy Vosper behind me. Compliments can go to Nigel.

[00:46:54] Thank you very much. Thank you for the presentation. A lot to chew on. And unlike Kyle, I wouldn't have cut you off because we don't tout these numbers enough. And I think most county residents enjoy the park in their community but have no concept of the vast enterprise that you're running and certainly have no concept of the varied activities that you're involved in.

[00:47:20] They might think of a rec center. They might think of a golf course or a kid's playing field. They have no idea all the things that the Park Authority does. And so for that, we're very grateful. And certainly, as you mentioned, and were highlighted in the video to all the volunteers that help run the parks and the amazing professional staff.

[00:47:38] And so a lot here to celebrate, a lot of progress. And, you know, I'll just say, having been with Supervisor Stork and Supervisor Alcorn at the reopening of the Mount Vernon Rec Center, Having driven by there a few times since, I don't think I've gone by there where the parking lot is not completely packed.

[00:47:56] And so it is a testament to you put in the facilities and the high quality that people will follow and want to use those. And so I know it's like a beehive of activity there. And I should have said this at the beginning, but we are happy to have with us the supervisor-elect from Braddock District, Roshna Sizemore Heiser, I announced earlier at our committee meetings that she's getting sworn in at 5 today.

[00:48:19] uh so she's in listening mode um but i'm going to speak for her for a moment because the excitement that came out of her when you mentioned audrey moore i want to make sure for the record was seen by everyone so i take care of that for her um but i i and then lastly i just want to comment um because i think the radar for many of us went up high uh when the proffer flexibility was mentioned and so i know i've run into this situation park authority has run into this situation. I know our staff is looking at streamlining some of the things that we do through the development process. Our deputy county executive Jen Miller is

[00:48:57] working on an initiative to promote housing that was approved by this board on my board matter several months ago and one of the things she's looking at is streamlining the process but in streamlining the process I think this is a good lesson for our staff, for the board, for the Planning

Commission that That we like specific proffers because we don't like people walking away without doing what they have committed to the community to do.

[00:49:22] But by the same token, they've got to be usable to the park authority. And we have got to be more flexible, period. We're facing an affordable housing shortfall that is dramatic. A housing shortfall that is dramatic as a nation. And Fairfax County is not unlike the rest of the country dealing with this issue.

[00:49:40] And there are many times where we run into very clear requirements that stop projects from moving forward or proffers that are written so specific that they're almost impossible to implement the way you, as a park authority, feel like they should be implemented.

[00:49:57] And so we need to be relying on you more often to make sure that language is flexible enough to meet the needs of the impact of some of these developments on park facilities and also opportunities to expand or improve facilities. And so my antenna went up on there, and I know the county executive is working with Jen Miller on some things for us.

[00:50:19] I would add this to the list of, you know, streamlining our process is one thing. We want to do that. time to mark it's important but by the same token once a case is approved we got to make sure the commitments that are made to the community can can be implemented and we hear you loud and clear on that and we'll continue to work to to improve that and we know no two developments are alike no two magisterial districts are exactly alike so there's not this three sentences of normal language you can use in every case but we do have to figure out ways to make sure we're not leaving anything on the table. And so I appreciated that, like I appreciated the rest of the presentation.

[00:50:58] And so with that, I'm going to turn to Kyle to see if he has any comments, and then we'll be happy to... No, we can go right to questions. Okay. And we can go right to questions. And this is for not just our board. We talk a lot, too much. We also want to hear from the Park Authority Board any questions or comments you have from us as well. This is two boards participating together. Questions or comments from folks? Supervisor Lusk. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Really appreciate the presentation.

[00:51:32] Very informative. But I do have a specific question. So looking at slide 13, I did like the analogy of the bag of rocks. The thing that I notice is that there is a rock. It says Providence or Franconia rec center. So I guess, can you help me understand what is the process for deciding Providence or Franconia? And then second, is there any possibility that both

[00:52:07] Providence and Franconia? There's 100% possibility, not within my \$180,000 million No, bag of rocks. So the original bag when we were associating that other rock was Providence or Franconia.

[00:52:24] Throughout the process, I can't say what it is definitively because that needs to be voted on by our boards. But we started leaning a little bit more towards Franconia because of Providence's stick belt.

[00:52:40] Franconia is a brick-like monstrosity of a thing. So you could do work in Franconia without having to demo the entire thing. So worst case, we can do sections. Where we're leaning towards is rock of Audie Moore. It's great.

[00:52:56] It's just going to continue to get bigger and bigger and bigger as construction costs get more and more expensive. And so the reality is that rock is likely, when we get to our 2027 bond, just going to,

say, rec centers. And then we need to figure out how best, as that Augie Moore rock gets bigger, that rec center rock is going to get smaller.

[00:53:13] We have to figure out what we're going to be doing with that as we figure things out. So I don't think that there is an opportunity to do both or to really even do one whole one with the 2026 bond. There's just not going to be enough there there.

[00:53:30] That doesn't mean that we can't do something. And this is what Nigel was alluding to as if it's a facelift, if it's doing the design of Franconia, it's important to know exactly how much it's going to cost so that when we do the other thing, we can give you that. There's also other things that we need to be looking at, things like block grants, things like – so we need to know the cost of it so that we can know what we're asking for.

[00:53:52] And so I think that we're going to know that a little bit closer to when we're finishing up the design part of Audre Moore, and let's really look at how much and what the rock of Franconia looks like, and then we can all work together to strategize about how to get it. Jay, on that point, I think we know the answer to this, but for the public maybe watching, can you help us understand why the Audre Moore Rec Center cost has grown so dramatically?

[00:54:15] What are the drivers of that, and are there any strategies we can think of to try to head that off in the future? So costs in general or construction costs are going up, if Supervisor Stork knows, you know, it's speculating. So when we were doing the Mount Vernon Rec Center, Mount Vernon Rec Center is wonderful.

[00:54:34] The reality is that that project kept going up and up, and if I could have cut it down, I would have, but we had already engineered and had designs for the roof line, so we couldn't have taken it back to one sheet of ice. And so I say that to say that, you know, when you look at Audie Moore and Mount Vernon, they're going to look different.

[00:54:49] So for the for more money than we spend on Audie Moore, I mean, for at Mount Vernon, Audie Moore is going to be a slimmed down version of a rec center just because of all of the construction costs that have gone up through COVID. And so at some point in time, when we're talking about Mount Vernon and the costs, you know, there's a moment where I had to decide I'm either going to be the smartest person or the dumbest person, because it's like it's like stocks.

[00:55:10] I got to take it at this cost. I got to take it now and hope, not hope that costs keep going up, but wonder whether or not they go up. Because if they go down, then I'm going to be the one who paid more money than is needed. So it's material costs. It's permitting costs. It's all of these things that are creating the situation where everything is just costing more money. It's one thing that we're looking at, however, because we do believe, and this is when I say we, it's not just the park authority. It's the park authority, it's schools, it's DPWES, that I think things might be artificially a little bit higher here. And so one of the things that we want to work

[00:55:48] together on is possibly bringing in a third party to be looking at why things, is that what it is? Is that how much it costs? Why are things more elevated in this area? Is there things that we could be doing to lower those costs by bulk ordering supplies? Is it our design bid contract?

[00:56:06] like what are the things that are there it's not us so it's not me saying this about dpws let's get in the same room and figure out is there ways that we can reduce costs because when we're talking about rec

centers and and projects of this size even three million dollars that's a whole park if i can cut all you more down three million dollars i can i can renovate an entire um park i can't do franconia if it's three million dollars less that i need a little bit more of a of a cut down but i mean it's a very big point that we're we're trying to figure out how to get those down. Yeah, and I think that's an important context for people to understand because it is a

[00:56:40] question we get asked a lot, and I do think it's something we need to continue to take a critical look at moving forward, and the comparison you just made to, you know, what that means for other facilities, I think, as a system is important for us to continually evaluate. Supervisor Oleski.

[00:56:57] And then quickly, just a couple more points. First, I want to thank you for the work that you're doing specifically in the most vulnerable communities, so Hiber Valley, Malvern and Woods, Muddy Hole, making a difference for those residents. So thank you so very much. I also wanted to ask if it would be possible on slide 36 where you've got the Malvern and Rec Center, would it be possible to get that same sort of report for Frank County? I just think this is interesting to see and have and would be interested in having something similar for my own Rec Center.

[00:57:30] Yes, that's a very easy ask. And then last, I was going to ask on page, I think it's 43, which is the SNAP. So really appreciate the work that's being done, obviously, in providing, for those that are food insecure, the opportunity to get additional fruits and veggies.

[00:57:52] I think that's phenomenal. So I appreciate what you're doing on those five. And I heard you say you want to expand that to 10. I know. What's the timing? what do you think anticipated or what's the thought around timing for those five additional facilities? So the SNAP program is run through a partnership. So we are seeking partners to help us with the administration of that program. We have different partners that are supporting us now. So any leads anyone has on entities, nonprofit entities that would want to partner with us to administer the SNAP program is really what we're looking for, for the additional five sites.

[00:58:29] Okay. I'm certainly open to having a conversation about that offline. So just appreciate and acknowledge the importance, particularly now at this particular time, the struggles that people are having around food. So thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Yeah. And I think we've been made well aware of this in a recent committee meeting about the federal impacts to the SNAP program too, which are working in the opposite direction of what we're trying to do and something that we're going to continue to monitor in our federal legislative package as well because there's a lot of moving parts here and unfortunately they're not moving in the right direction even though the

[00:59:07] park authority is uh supervisor alcorn then supervisor harry uh thank you i also have a question on the bag of rec slide um i know there's a line for rec center uh the one supervisor district that doesn't have a rec center is hunter mill so where's reston that's somewhere in 2044 I mean, at a six-year, I can be more blunt than Jake can be.

[00:59:34] With a six-year bond cycle, you know you've got two more rec centers that you're, you know, we're looking at 32 more realistically for Supervisor Lusk, and then you're at 38 for Providence. So either the bond increases, the timeline decreases, or there's some kind of inter-cycle bond related toward rec centers.

[00:59:55] Those are the options. Okay. I support more money for parks. I'll put it that way. Thank you. Supervisor Alcorn will be here at that date you mentioned. So, Supervisor Herity. A couple of things. Let me start with my thanks as I did in the last week when I found out how short three minutes was when you're speaking.

[01:00:18] Anyway, thank you to the Park Authority Board for all you do and for Amy. a couple of a couple of comments um was i going to say sports tourism on the slide we had a sports tourism task force meeting yesterday uh where we we talked a good a bit about patriot park north and what's not in the numbers was the the benefit from the baseball to the baseball community monday through thursday um and it's all being paid for by sports tourism dollars what's not on here is the impact of the hotel rooms and all that kind of stuff. So I wanted to make sure I

[01:00:55] gave that bit of color to that. I had the same reaction, I think, that the chairman did when I saw the flexibility in urban parks, because my experience in a couple that I'm doing, urban parks have driven up the cost and driven out the timeline of housing units. So I don't know much of this is you and how much is the ordinance but is the flexibility going to include the ability to have those improvements be done off-site or are they still going to be required to be done on-site?

[01:01:31] So one of the flexibilities that we need to be talking about especially when we're talking about urban parks is not building what I call tree boxes. So if you put the burden on a developer for a small piece then they have to do parks and they have one little bench and then one little tree box and the whole community has no park. And so we need to be looking at ways that we can sort of group together costs with a a goal in mind what park do we want to do and then have them contribute towards a park that we want to build so that the community can see that this is the park this is the central park this is the tyson's park this is the rest in park you know whatever which would help with the timeline because now they're not trying to construct this small i call it a tree box the small tree box urban park well and the worst part of it is i hear from people all the time is the tree boxes don't get

[01:02:09] used which makes it worse so you're you're adding cost you're slowing process down for something that really doesn't provide the benefit we really want. Parkway Woods is the one that drove me crazy because we have a lake half a mile in one direction or a quarter mile in one direction, less than a half a mile, and a lake about a half a mile in the other direction.

[01:02:31] Anyway, so we really need to work that. The last one to come back to costs and maintenance is a big issue, and I've got a budget question in on this, so you can just punt it to the budget question, but how much is the board's zero waste, our board's zero waste requirement causing the park authority to spend on a one-time basis and on a recurring basis?

[01:02:55] I mean, we presented, when we met with all you all in the fall, that was one of the slides. I don't know, Sarah, if you remember the numbers off the top of your head. She's pretty good at that. I don't have the numbers off the top of your head. But I think roughly. I don't know that she had recurring costs, though. We did, because the people were the recurring costs. So if we assume the full three phases, it's, I'm going to use the round numbers, so nobody hold me to this, it's about \$1.8 million when all three full phases are implemented on people. And then it's \$2 million worth of capital expenditures, which have some lifetime. So I don't know what that is, but so that's what you're looking at. Okay. And what's your total maintenance

[01:03:30] budget? Total maintenance. Sorry. \$20 million. \$20. Okay. So it's about two out of 20. It's about 10%. The benefit of zero waste is not only for the recycling program. It also is adding additional bodies to our crews, right? So previously our crews would spend two to three days a week just picking up trash. Now we're able to spread that out among different staff or have dedicated crews that are just doing trash and recycling. So adding more bodies is allowing us to improve the

[01:04:05] maintenance within the parks. But I guess just to put a fine point on that, there's only one of the three phases implemented to date. So we did get additional capital funds for phase two and three through carryover. But in terms of the recurring costs, it's only roughly one-third of that because only two of the six maintenance areas have had the bodies implemented at this point in time. So for Claire, the numbers you gave me was for one-third. That's for all three. Okay, that's what I thought. Yeah, that's for all three. And I was going to mention the flexibility part because I remember that from our presentation. And there's another piece of this that we're not talking about,

[01:04:42] which is, frankly, the embarrassment of going to one of our facilities and not being able to recycle stuff. When we talk about sports tourism, I was at one of our fields last fall with my kid's team who had teams come in from other parts of Virginia, and they're like, where are the recycling bins?

[01:05:01] And they just threw stuff next to the trash can, tried to separate it themselves. So there's a cost, a reputational cost here as well. Whether we're going to be leaders on this, I mean, recycling is not new technology. We're behind doing this at our parks, and it's one of the reasons we made sure the capital costs were in there to complete this.

[01:05:21] The other thing I'll mention is from an equity standpoint, I appreciate wholly why the park authority started with one part of the county, but we can't have different recycling rules in one park from another park. And so this is absolutely a high priority to get done and does give you the flexibility and personnel to do other things.

[01:05:40] Supervisor Stork, then Supervisor Palchuk. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to start by saying we had a conversation this morning about economic development. And we know the key part of that is obviously our educational systems, the smart people that are here, the people that want to make a difference.

[01:05:56] We have all those pieces. Another key part of our community is, if you will, what our soul is, if you will, And our soul of our neighborhoods and our communities, parks, and ways of connecting with each of us and having neighborhoods that can get together, and our parks are a key part of that.

[01:06:16] I think there's no doubt that it's a key thing that brings us and links all of us together because it's not schools, it's not many of the other things that are distinctive for us. Parks are for everybody, if you will. So I wanted to thank you all very much for the board and your work, particularly Linwood, for his long service and the difference that he's made in not only getting his hands dirty and getting Pirate's Cove really revitalized a decade or more ago, but also the Mount Vernon Rec Center, all the work that went into that.

[01:06:44] And I wanted to make a couple more points, which is if we build our rec centers and we do our things right, in other words, we have the right standards that we're bringing, and those standards include, you know, recycling and energy saving and building things for the future, not just for today.

[01:07:01] We will save a lot more money in the future. Mount Vernon Rec Center was built on the cheap. We all talked about that. We all know that. And as a result, we had to put a lot more into it to get some of the basic infrastructure, if you will, built.

[01:07:17] So I'm all in on that. It cost more than any of us ever expected, and that had a lot to do with COVID and all those costs and some of the delays that we encountered. But we also have something that we know is here for the long term, and we know we want to do it right in each of the other ones we do.

[01:07:34] So I'm all in on that and all in on making sure that's a part of what we do. I also wanted to ask about something in here about the golfing program and how the system can push out, you know, when there's tee times and stuff available.

[01:07:50] I know one of the things that we all hear constantly about, sometimes positive, sometimes negative, depending upon whether it's a noise issue or an exercise and fun issue, which is how we do our pickleball courts and how, frankly, the difficulty of getting enough pickleball court time.

[01:08:10] So do we have the ability to put a camera up at a pickleball court and people can kind of go in there and take a look and see who's playing or not? I mean, are there some basic things that we can do with some of the more active parts of our park system that would allow people to go in and look at a particular camera and then choose that, oh, okay, it's too busy right now, or I don't see if there's anybody there now.

[01:08:33] If I hurry up, I can get in there, and I could get around a pickleball with my friends or neighbors. Any part of that that you've looked at for maybe more than pickleball, but that's the one that particularly I hear about often? So right now the only camera systems we have are at Patriot Park North where people can log in and watch a game there.

[01:08:50] So currently we do not have technology at all of our other courts where people could look and see if the court is being used at this time, but something that we have heard from the community recently and something that we could probably explore in the future. You need electricity, and that's maybe a little bit of cost because obviously the camera itself isn't going to be on, but the intent of it is just to see if there's people there and how it's being used.

[01:09:11] So if there's some way that we could talk to the groups that are out there and say, look, if you all want to do XYZ, donate or whatever, is that something that you see as possible? Or I don't want to say that and then have something that would create friction. I want to see that as a way that maybe they can help solve a problem if they can put some money up and otherwise help to make that happen. Our priority right now is getting security cameras at our facilities. So right now we don't have functioning security systems at many of our facilities. And so I would say that's our first priority. We have them at rec centers. We don't have them everywhere

[01:09:49] else. So I would say we would start there. And once we've finished that project, I think we could look at adding additional cameras to other facilities. And the two go together. Can you have a security system that folks could go into and just pull up not historical data, but current activity data, which I know is a difference in terms of the costs that are. It's something that we could look at. Typically, our security systems are within our facilities with some around the perimeter, but something that, you know, we haven't explored yet. Maybe a camera or two that could be purposed for that. Okay. Thank you. Sure. Supervisor Pouchek. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all,

[01:10:28] thank you on through your whole team and a huge thank you to Torsha. I know she's sitting in the back. But when it comes to, I have the most urban communities, you know, Merrifield, Tysons, and so So we only, not away is our large park. Jefferson District, Gulf is kind of large.

[01:10:46] But you've done a lot to focus on the complete parks. And I have to say, whether it's Ruckstall, which was created by the park authority, I think took a decade, or Strawberry Park, which is proffered, took all three years to approve, but is proffered and will be maintained privately.

[01:11:06] I really appreciate, Because anyone who's been to those facilities, right, whether you have a Burke Lake or you have Ruckstall, right, it really is that feeling of it is for everyone, it is for every ability. You can go with your parents and your children, right?

[01:11:23] You can go in a wheelchair, you can walk there, you can bike there. And so to me, as we think about the bag, right, I very much appreciate, and even though Providence Rec Center is an amazing district, I live closest to it. um and the the thought that was put into the outdoor spaces as well right the trails the connectivity the land that we don't do own you know as we start to think about the urban parks framework and i was going to ask how that's going and hopefully it's moving along um if you want to give any updates on that is as we become a more urban county how do we look at ensuring right

[01:12:01] that the spaces that we do have whether it's through a proffers or through our planning that we are creating those that aren't you know crazy parks but those complete parks those places that make you feel i would argue that in every community we generally have a school or a park right and that's the soul of the community uh the parks are under the school board right and so i mean the schools are on the school board so for the parks um are there other ways that we besides the urban framework can continue to look at ways i know you've been to so many different areas and

[01:12:36] and how they do it. That focus on community and that space, that sort of complete park where we do have the ability to do that at a, maybe not immense cost. I think that we have to be so agile and creative. There's so many ways that this can be done. There's so many, if you think of it as sort of a soup, there's so many ingredients that you can put. That's very site-specific.

[01:13:05] So a Strawberry Hill type park with one developer and one entity would be a different sort of kettle of fish than you're talking about maybe a park that's surrounded by multiple owners. And so there are multiple ways that you can do that. We're talking about one in Hunter's Mill. There's a lot of ways.

[01:13:21] Like what ultimately do you want as the ownership of the ground? I think of it in terms of protests. When you talk about POPs, if you just think of it in terms of protests, the benefit of having parks, especially in urban spaces, be publicly owned is the ability for anybody to go their First Amendment rights.

[01:13:38] They can go and they can protest. They can say whatever they want, and no owner can't come in and kick them out. So that's the underlying. Now, after the ownership, who maintains it, who renovates it, that's something that we could all be really creative and figure out. Urban parks cost more money, and they should cost more money.

[01:13:54] They have a higher caring capacity. They're dealing with their economic drivers. There's a reason, and I call it like plant boxes. We wouldn't put a plant box at Baron Cameron Park, but we would put a plant box in Reston North sort of urban park. And so really thinking about ways that we can be creative and expand our urban footprint for parks while also being economically reasonable.

[01:14:19] We have to think of that because every time we build it, that adds to operating costs, that adds high numbers to operating costs. And so I really think that urban framework is figuring out both how to get, and that's where the proffer language sort of goes in, is being able to maintain and do things in replacement. Because when I say maintain a park and a proffer, that could be replacing an entire playground. So to a community, that's a whole new amenity that we should be able to use proffer dollars for, especially in the urban area. So I'm kind of answering questions, so many pieces put together. But when we sit down at the table with a blank sheet of paper and just figuring out how do we provide this amenity for the community, how do we provide the means by

[01:14:56] which we can maintain this amenity to the standards that the community is expecting for the future, and how are ways that we can highest and best use of grouping together as many alternate funding sources to build it as we possibly can, to reduce the pressure on the bag of rocks.

[01:15:11] Do we have a time frame for how we're doing that? So we're finishing up. We don't have a specific. We're finishing up our, we have the CIP and the strategic plan, and then after that, that's next. Then after that, that would be next. Thank you. But that doesn't mean we're not doing all of the things that we're talking about.

[01:15:28] Mike. Thank you, sir. One of the things that struck me about this conversation that I just want to point out is something that I think our board gets caught up in, and certainly I've gotten caught up in since I joined the board a while ago. We were talking about all the parks, all the rec centers.

[01:15:44] Those are the natural things that people think about, the trails, those kind of things. The Park Authority Board also is in charge of all the historic preservation, and it's worth noting that that doesn't get the public attention that often comes to some of these other things. And so when you're looking at certain rocks getting bigger and, you know, having \$180 million, however you're going to split everything else, one of the things that often gets pushed aside rapidly is the historic preservation work. And it's just worth noting that that is something that once it's gone, never comes back. And so I just, I know it's, again, not a major focus,

[01:16:21] But it's one of the things, I mean, when I joined the board, I was like, I mean, as the chairman knows, with the youth sports stuff, youth sports was my focus. I want to go get fields. I want to do this stuff. And I knew, oh, I want to try and help on the history stuff. But all the other issues crowded all out so often that it was worth bringing up and reminding everybody here that the historic preservation work that the Park Authority does is critically important.

[01:16:43] And again, if a piece of property comes up that has something historic about it, if it goes away, we're never going to be able to preserve it. That's true with the stuff we've – that we have these huge collections of stuff that there's only a limited ability to do anything with, things like that.

[01:16:59] It's just worth reminding us all that, yeah, we're often talking about how can I take care of the millions of people that show up winning pickleball courts? How can I make sure that the 50,000 kids that are going to play soccer every spring and every fall have field space? How can I make sure the growing lacrosse community is doing its thing?

[01:17:17] We can keep adding the other rec center to this. We rarely ever remember, wait, what about historic preservation? So I just wanted to throw that out there just so we don't forget it and fly by it. And I

appreciate that, Mike. And one of the things I always appreciate about these presentations we get is that the Park Authority never forgets to remind us about that part because you're right.

[01:17:39] A lot of people in our community forget about that absolute critical mission element of the Park Authority. And we always see it in the presentations, but don't, as a community, always appreciate. Not only is it gone, you know, will it be gone and we'll never get another chance, but just the amount of time, work, effort, and money it takes to preserve these properties and do creative things like resident curator and establish these inventories.

[01:18:05] And this stuff is not easy, and it is oftentimes overlooked. So excellent, excellent point. Tim? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. While we would certainly appreciate a larger bag for the Park Authority rocks, in addition to that, Jay was commenting upon the cost to implement some of these projects, and particularly the rec centers.

[01:18:27] We found out with respect to Mount Vernon that it really was not feasible to phase it or to shut down parts of it and to do it over time, but in fact to close it down for two years and do what had to be done. And the same thing is true, I think, with respect to the other rec centers, potentially.

[01:18:46] And that's a cost-saving technique. If we could do it literally, if we can do it all at one time rather than phasing it in, that potentially can save us significant funds. The difficulty with that is that comes at a cost in terms of cash flow for the county, cash flow for us.

[01:19:06] and so we have to manage that in a way that we can expend those funds in the time frame in which they need to be expended so that we can actually save that money on the back end. Yeah, that's another good point. Recalling when the libraries came to visit me to renovate Martha Washington Library, they came in with a plan, not Martha Washington Library, that's in Supervisor Stork's district, John Marshall Library, they came in with a plan to set up a temporary library and I said, why would we spend money on that?

[01:19:37] Let's send them to all the other libraries that are in the vicinity of that. It's short-term pain, but as a result of it, we got a long-term benefit 'cause the libraries were able to put money into expanding their community room space, which is what the community really needed. And so we were able to not have that interim cost and a little bit of inconvenience, certainly in Mount Vernon, folks were patient, for the most part, as that was shut down.

[01:20:03] But the final product, showed what a first-class job it was and in some cases it wasn't the case in Mount Vernon but sometimes that full closure allows you to get the improvements done quicker more efficiently as well and so there's multiple benefits. I do think we should always be looking at that and it's not always the easy political decision shut something down for a couple of years but if it's in the interest of the park authority revenues and efficiencies we always need to be to be looking at that. Let me ask if anybody else has any questions or comments. I do want to, while I have a moment, because there's a few minutes left, it's only partially related to the park authority,

[01:20:43] but Supervisor Smith and I have been investing a lot of time with schools and neighborhood community services on school field use and cancellations. And I knew Mike would laugh about this but there unfortunately are far too many youth group cancellations on school grounds that are also putting a strain on parks facilities and we're well aware of that we've been having really good conversations with ncs

and with school staff about minimizing the disruption of cancellations of field use for community use and we know that there are instances that are

[01:21:21] beyond folks control. I mean, there's always going to be cancellations, but the effect that has on our families and on our youth groups that use these facilities cannot be underestimated. And so I want the park authority to know, because many of you know this challenge has existed for a while, that we're spending considerable time improving the accountability, the training, the verification of use. I mean, Supervisor Stork was talking about cameras, but also the verification of use so that youth groups aren't monopolizing facilities and then not using them.

[01:21:56] And this is an important piece for the Park Authority to know because every time one of those happens, there is an effect on other fields that the Park Authority is trying desperately to maintain and to make sure, you know, are being properly used. And so I just wanted to make you aware of those conversations.

[01:22:12] I think we meet every three or four months to get updates on this in advance of different seasons to try to improve on that. Because at the end of the day, everyone in this room is trying to provide the resources, the facilities, the recreational amenities for everyone in the community.

[01:22:29] And people don't always necessarily care if the field is a park field, a school field, a county field. They just want to use it and they want to make sure people are held accountable for using it. And our schools are a vital part of our community and the community that we serve.

[01:22:44] And so I just wanted to make sure folks knew, if you have any comments on that, feedback, we're working closely with the Athletic Council on this as well. We, Supervisor Smith and I, would welcome that. So with that, oh, Jay, I'm going to give the last word to our Parks Director, Jay Culp.

[01:23:03] I would be remiss as the coach of my son's basketball team to add courts and gyms to the field. Those are part of the school facilities we're talking about. Yes, and I would also – I also want to point out, and I know there is a direct tie to our maintenance as well because when we're maintaining fields that aren't being used or we have fields that have cameras and the only time they go off is when our staff are there mowing them, we could be spreading that maintenance out.

[01:23:31] Absolutely. A point well taken and absolutely a part of our ongoing conversation. So, again, thank you all for joining us for this joint meeting. Happy holidays to everyone, and look forward to another year of progress and opportunity next year.

[01:23:47] Thank you. Thanks, Rob.

