



# FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY



## M E M O R A N D U M

**TO:** Chairman and Members  
Park Authority Board

**VIA:** Kirk W. Kincannon, Executive Director

**FROM:** Barbara Nugent, Director  
Park Services Division

Andrea Dorlester, Branch Manager  
Planning and Development Planning Branch

**DATE:** April 5, 2018

### *Agenda*

**Committee of the Whole**  
**Wednesday, April 11, 2018 – 6:30 p.m.**  
**Boardroom – Herrity Building**  
**Chairman: William G. Bouie**  
**Vice Chair: Ken Quincy**

1. Water Safety– Presentation\*
2. Park Authority Strategic Plan Update – Discussion\*

\*Enclosures



If accommodations and/or alternative formats are needed, please call (703) 324-8563. TTY (703) 803-3354

Committee Agenda Item  
April 11, 2018

## **PRESENTATION**

### Water Safety

Water safety is an important component of the Fairfax County Park Authority and we have a very large and diverse aquatic program that includes nine RECenters, the Water Mine, Our Special Harbor, Martin Luther King Jr. Pool and more than 3000 swim programs across the county. The aquatic programs accounts for nearly 39% of all program offerings and its lifeguarding program is monitored by our contractor; Ellis and Associates. Swim lessons are taught at all nine RECenters, as well as, kayaking, paddleboard yoga, aquatic exercise classes, scuba diving and much more. This brief presentation will speak to the water safety program and provide a broad picture of the aquatic classes and programs and scope of work needed to ensure the efficient operation at all the sites. These multiple types of programs for all ages, as well as, for health and fitness provide a foundation to ensure the community recognizes the value of a strong water safety program.

### ENCLOSED DOCUMENTS:

None

### STAFF:

Kirk W. Kincannon, Executive Director  
Sara Baldwin, Deputy Director/COO  
Aimee Vosper, Deputy Director/CBD  
Barbara Nugent, Director, Park Services Division  
Marc Barton, Aquatics Section Manager, Park Services Division

**WATER SAFETY PROGRAMS  
OF THE  
FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY**

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

**APRIL 11, 2018**



# NATIONAL LEADER IN AQUATIC OPERATIONS

- **National Association of Counties (NACo) Award** for the Virginia Swims program that allowed multiple jurisdictions nationwide to improve their learn to swim programs.
- **The Water Mine - Ellis & Associates Platinum Award 2017/2016** Performed in top 5 percent of all clients internationally.
- **NRPA National Inclusion Award 2015-** This award was based primarily on the adapted aquatics program, as well as, the leisure coaching program.
- **Fairfax County's Blue Ribbon Partnership Award** as well as other national awards for initiative at Providence RECenter bringing swim lessons underserved children who otherwise would not have exposure to swim lessons.
- **Best of Aquatics: Best Overall Commitment to Aquatics** award, from worldwide competition, Aquatics International, 2011.



## BEST OF AQUATICS | BEST OVERALL COMMITMENT TO AQUATICS

### Fairfax County Park Authority Fairfax, Va.

By Heather Larson | November/December 2011

The Fairfax County Park Authority offers award-winning aquatic recreation for everyone in the diverse community it serves, from the youngest beginning swimmer to the serious competitors and those with special needs.

With 12 aquatics facilities, including nine indoor RECenter natatoriums, one outdoor themed waterpark, a fully accessible outdoor spraypark and one outdoor community pool, this agency thinks big.

The Fairfax facilities offer traditional and nontraditional aquatic programs, such as swim lessons, competitive swimming and diving, synchronized swimming, water polo, kayak rolling, scuba and underwater hockey, as well as local police, fire and rescue training. A robust adapted aquatics program includes learn-to-swim, aquatic exercise, Paralympic swim development and Special Olympics training. Annual attendance at just the nine RECenters is more than one million.



**Judge's Comment:**  
*"Everything is just fabulous!"*

At least 100 different languages are spoken in Fairfax County, and getting people of different backgrounds involved in aquatics means building bridges across cultural barriers. One example of that is at the George Washington RECenter. The staff uses blackout curtains and female lifeguards so Muslim women can swim while still maintaining their cultural traditions.

When two children drowned in a local lake, Park Authority staff members held Spanish language forums with mothers to encourage them to sign their children up for swim lessons. Partners donated swimsuits and goggles to make the lessons possible for low-income families.

To ensure safety at all Fairfax County Park Authority facilities, the agency employs more than 300 lifeguards, trained through Ellis & Associates. And aquatic operations staffers share their knowledge of industry best practices and trends with community pool operators through a "Help for Community Pools" workshop that reaches more than 100 local community pools.

This level of public service is accomplished through revenue-based programs with minimal reliance on county tax dollars. Because of its efforts, the agency has been acknowledged nationally for its long-range planning, resource management, volunteerism, stewardship, program development and management.

The Fairfax County Park Authority has received a Gold Medal Award from the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration, in partnership with the National Recreation and Parks Association. In 2010, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation deemed the Authority the Healthiest Community in Virginia.

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- 12 aquatics facilities
- 9 indoor RECenter natatoriums
- 1 outdoor themed waterpark
- 1 fully accessible outdoor spraypark
- 1 outdoor community pool
- RECenter pools feature indoor spas and zero-depth beach areas



# AQUATICS OPERATION AND STAFFING

- 22 full-time merit employees
- + 600 seasonal staff
  - + 490 lifeguards
  - 150 instructors
- 12 Facilities-including Martin Luther King Jr. pool, Our Special Harbor and the Water Mine.

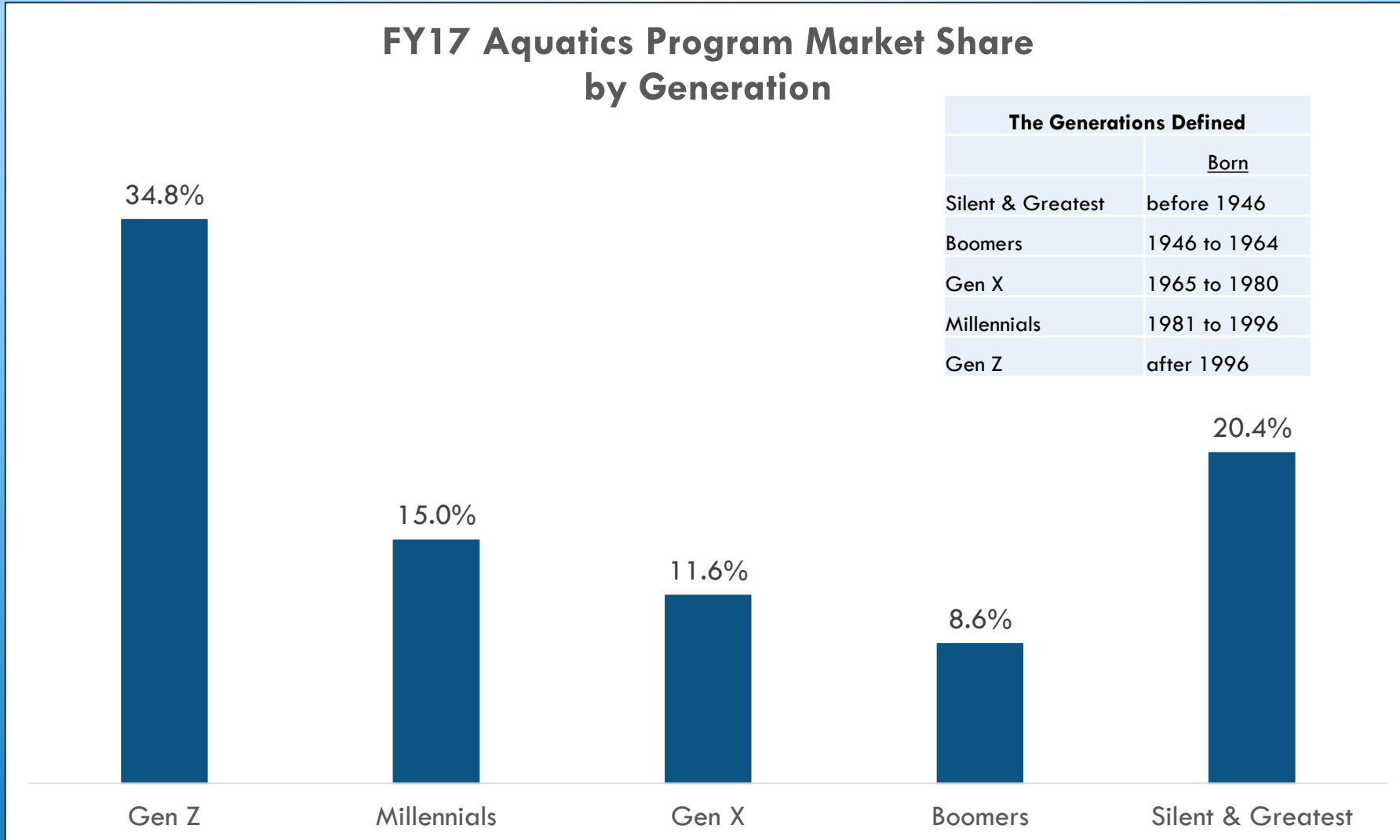
# WATER SAFETY PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE

- Hosted a total of 6,299 classes. Primarily “learn to swim” programs.
- Total class participants – 40,667 of those 6,426 are on scholarship.
- Children on scholarship were mostly Level 1 non-swimmers
- Aquatics accounts for 39% of all classes taken in the FCPA.



# AGE BREAKDOWN

FY17 Aquatics Program Market Share  
by Generation



The Generations Defined	
	Born
Silent & Greatest	before 1946
Boomers	1946 to 1964
Gen X	1965 to 1980
Millennials	1981 to 1996
Gen Z	after 1996

# SPECIALTY PROGRAMS WITH WATER SAFETY FOCUS



- In-House summer camp usage 19,804 total campers most of them using the pool and all are swim tested and banded
- Adapted programs included 1,146 total participants in 175 classes. Volunteers are the backbone of this highly successful program
- FCPA Lifeguarding classes (64 in FY17) provide future staff of more than 490 lifeguards

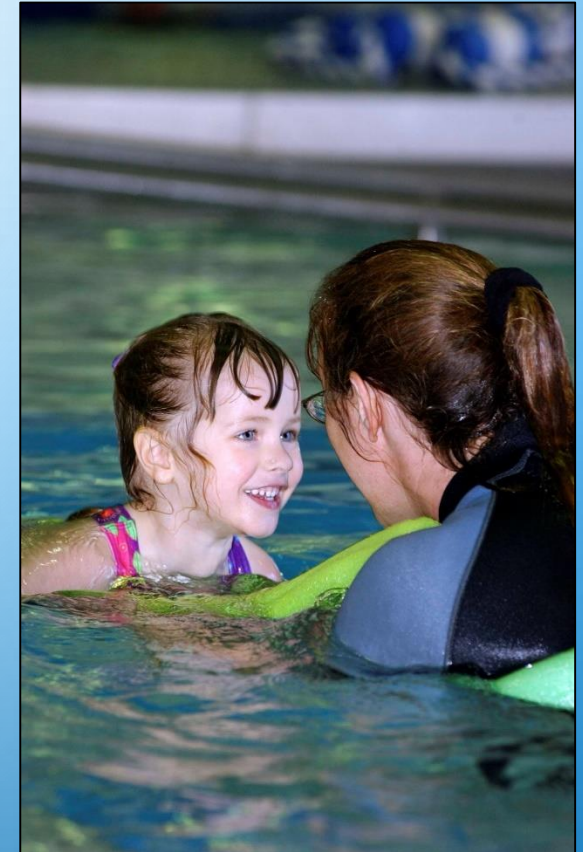


# VIRGINIA SWIMS-QUALITY CONTROL

- FCPA developed and implemented a new learn-to-swim program known as Virginia Swims. This was a collaborative multi-agency initiative which began in 2012.
- The group that formed Virginia Swims continues to meet and assess the program as part of a quality assurance role.
- Quality Assurance Strategies include:
  - conduct secret shopper visits
  - conduct unannounced audits
  - track and log swim skill sheets
  - provide continuing education for swim instructors

# COMMUNITY LIFE GUARDING AND SWIM INSTRUCTORS

- Taught 32 community lifeguard classes with 286 participants.
- Trained 59 water safety instructors (WSI).
- Developed and assisted in building community outreach, lifeguarding and swimming programs.



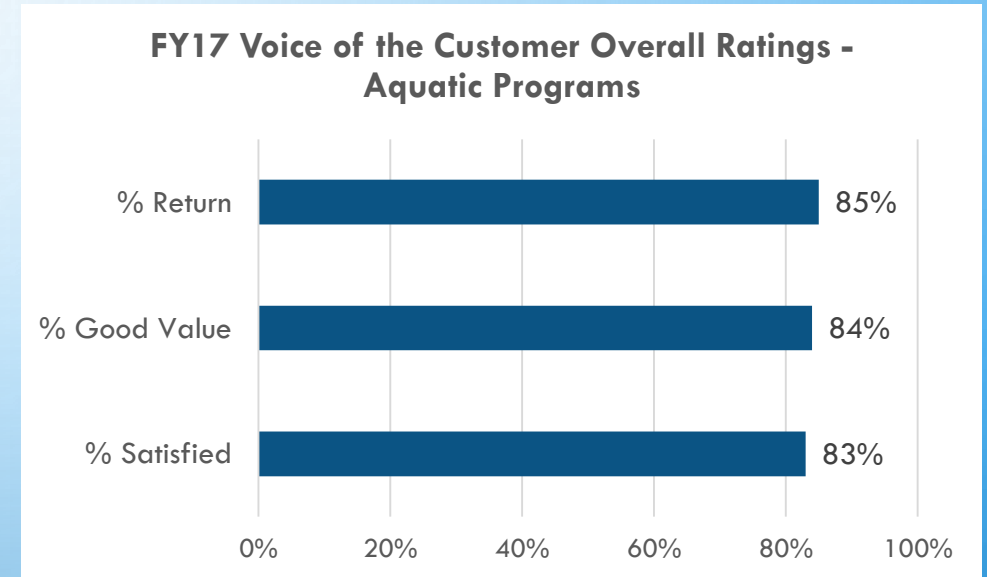
# LIFEGUARDING AND SAFETY

- Our lifeguarding curriculum is developed by our contractor; Ellis and Associates.
- Ellis is unique for their third party audits and visual awareness testing requirements, (12 per month per site).
- Every lifeguard is expected to complete four hours of in-service training per month
- Ellis conducted 51 audits last year.
- Train almost 490 lifeguards with our 40+ lifeguard instructors.
- Site staff performed 89 unannounced internal audits.
- Staff performed 376 in water rescues last year across 14 sites



# QUARTERLY CUSTOMER SURVEY

- More than 8 of 10 aquatic program participants report they are very satisfied, feel aquatics programs are a good value and would return to take another program based on their class experience.
- The aquatic net promoter score is 48, meaning there are 48 promoters for every detractor in the aquatic class participant base.



**48**

Aquatics Net Promoter Score

# CUSTOMER COMMENTS

- “Mr. Zach, the instructor, was just a fantastic teacher overall. He made the children feel safe, encouraged them to try even though they were scared and just made the class enjoyable for the kids.”
- “Our teacher Ricky is fantastic with the little babies! And with the parents, too. His instruction is why we signed up for a second session of the same class. Our little girl loves swim time.”
- “Zero impact exercise (I have had both knees replaced and have arthritis) but still gets me a great workout. It's fun and I like the interaction with the instructor and other participants.”
- “Instructor was knowledgeable, skilled, punctual and patient with our child. Our child made monumental progress with her swimming.”
- “My son went from being terrified of the water to swimming and being comfortable in the water.”

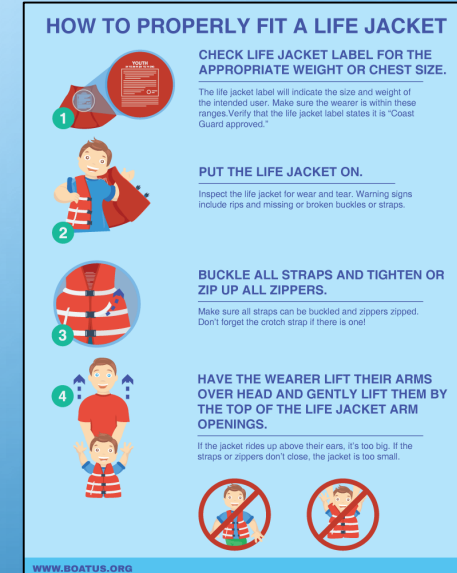
# COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMS

- Provided the community based Whales Tales water safety education program  
Staff went out and presented the program to Fairfax County school children totaling more than 1,500 hours
- Provided swimming lessons at Martin Luther King Jr. pool through Gum Springs Community Center
- Hosted drop-in adult swim lesson for the price of admission
- Provided scholarships for children for “learn to swim” and adults for aquatic exercise programs

# WATERFRONT SAFETY OPERATIONS UPDATE

**FCPA TEAM CONVENED TO REVIEW AND IMPROVE SAFETY AT 4 MANAGED WATERFRONT PARKS (Burke Lake, Lake Accotink, Lake Fairfax, Riverbend Park). Tasks include:**

- Benchmark with other national, state and local organizations with waterfront/marina operations
- Review and update waterfront standard operating procedures
- Review and update FCPA waterfront rules
- Review, update and develop improved safety training and protocols
- Identify equipment and funding needs to improve waterfront safety
- Identify new and consistent safety signage for marina areas
- Improve routine safety inspections by site staff and risk management



The background is a smooth blue gradient, transitioning from a lighter blue at the top to a darker blue at the bottom. Several realistic water droplets of various sizes are scattered in the corners, with highlights and shadows that give them a three-dimensional appearance.

**QUESTIONS?**



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## **DISCUSSION**

### Park Authority Strategic Plan Update

Several major agencywide planning efforts that will guide all Park Authority plans, programs and initiatives over the next five to ten years are underway or have been recently completed. Among these are the Parks and Recreation System Master Plan that was approved in December 2017 and the new FY19-23 Strategic Plan. As part of the master planning effort, guiding principles were established to provide broad guidance and focus agency efforts, to include themes such as stewardship, equity and inclusion, partnerships, and healthy lifestyles among others.

The new FY19-23 Strategic Plan will include implementation steps to accomplish the goals of the master plan. A check-in on the agency mission and vision is also underway as part of the planning process for the new FY19-23 Strategic Plan. In addition to providing a roadmap for the future, the mission and vision, master plan, and strategic plan are requirements for Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) accreditation renewal.

As part of the strategic planning process, staff and leadership developed strategic objectives, action steps, and measures to track progress. In addition, staff and leadership participated in a workshop and several discussions to provide input on the agency mission and vision. Staff sought input from the Committee of the Whole on January 10, 2018, and March 14, 2018. Subsequent to the March 14, 2018, committee discussion all staff in the agency had the opportunity to provide comments on the preliminary draft plan content, mission and vision. Public review of the Strategic Plan will occur in April 2018 and a final version will be presented to the Park Authority Board for approval in June 2018.

The purpose of this discussion is to provide an update on the strategic planning effort and implementation of the master plan.

### ENCLOSED DOCUMENTS:

None

### STAFF:

Kirk W. Kincannon, Executive Director  
Sara Baldwin, Deputy Director/COO  
Aimee L. Vosper, Deputy Director/CBD

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Cindy Walsh, Director, Resource Management Division  
Todd Brown, Director, Park Operations  
Barbara Nugent, Director, Park Services Division  
David Bowden, Director, Planning & Development Division  
Judy Pedersen, Public Information Officer  
Janet Burns, Fiscal Administrator  
Andrea Dorlester, Manager, Planning Branch  
Samantha Hudson, Park Planning Supervisor, Planning Branch



# Park Authority Strategic Plan (FY19 – FY23)

*Implementing the 2017 Great Parks, Great Communities  
Parks And Recreation System Master Plan*



# Agenda

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- Timeline
- PAB and staff survey
- Public review
- Next Steps

# Strategic Plan Timeline

- ✓ Preparation (Summer/Fall 2017)
- Action planning + Mission/Vision check-in (11/17 – 4/18)
  - ✓ Staff workshops - 3 focused sessions to gather input
  - ✓ Team lead review - +15 in-depth discussions to refine input
  - ✓ PAB & agency-wide review
    - **DO, LT, Leads – survey responses, develop implementation timeline**
  - **PAB approval to release draft to public (April 25)**
  - **Public review and comment (April/May)**
  - **PAB approval of Strategic Plan + Mission/Vision (JUNE 27)**

# PAB & Staff Survey

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- Review/response to input underway
- Key takeaways
  - All Strategic Objectives and Action Steps are important & contribute to Master Plan goals
  - Proposed Mission is good; proposed Vision is great
  - Phased implementation necessary
  - Measures/indicators require additional review

# Public Review & Comment

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- Focus on content review
  - All Strategic Objectives and Action Steps
  - Connections to the Master Plan goals and recommendations
  - Word document with basic formatting, tables, text
- Web-based engagement

# Next Steps

- Draft for PAB review – in 4/25 Board package
- CoW discussion & approval for public release on 4/25
- Public review and comment (April/May)
- Next update to PAB on 5/23
- Preliminary Final to PAB on 6/6

## PAB Check-Ins

- ✓ **CoW – 4/11**
- **CoW – 4/25**
- **CoW – 5/23**
- **CoW – 6/6**
- **PAB for Acceptance & Approval – JUNE 27TH**





# QUESTIONS





**THANK YOU!**

