



County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods, and diverse communities of Fairfax County

FAIRFAX COUNTY ATHLETIC COUNCIL MINUTES

April 20, 2022

MEETING HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

LINK TO VIDEO OF THE MEETING:

[Fairfax County Athletic Council Meeting](#)

[Recording - April 20, 2022 - YouTube](#)

2022 Council Members

Magisterial Representatives:

Marcia M. Pape Daniels

Braddock District

Gregory Beckwith

Dranesville District

Jeremy Lee

Hunter Mill District

Lisa MicKey

Secretary

Lee District

Barbara R. Lowrey

Mason District

Lester Munson

Mount Vernon District

Stephen McLaughlin,

Providence District

Michael Thompson, Jr.

Springfield District

Gary Flather

Vice Chairman

Sully District

Katherine Quinn

Member-At-Large

Marc Fernandes

Diversity-At-Large

Town Representatives:

Jeffrey E. Stein

Town of Clifton

Roland Taylor

Town of Herndon

Tom Hanton

Town of Vienna

Sports-Specific Representatives:

Rob Hahne

Baseball Council

Suzy Willemsen

Fast Pitch Softball Council

Vacant

Adult Softball Council

Steve Bergstrom

Basketball Council

Mark Meana

Football Council

Mary Ann Wagner

Lacrosse Council

Lula Bauer

Chairman

Soccer Council

Rob Baily

Volleyball Council

Jenni Cantwell

Women's Sports

Non-Voting Members:

Michael Thompson

Park Authority

Kurt Louis

Park Authority

Megan McLaughlin

School Board

William Curran

Fairfax County Public Schools

Executive Agency:

Lloyd Tucker

Director

Neighborhood and Community Services

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Marcia Pape Daniels, Braddock District
Mark O'Meara, Braddock District, Alternate
Gregory Beckwith, Dranesville District
Jeremy Lee, Hunter Mill District
Harold Leff, Hunter Mill District, Alternate
Lisa Mickey, Lee District
Barbara Lowrey, Mason District
Bob Kirk, Mount Vernon District, Alternate
Stephen McLaughlin, Providence District
Kelly Ego-Osula, Providence District, Alternate
Gary Flather, Sully District
Mark Abbott, Sully District, Alternate
Eric Sohn, Diversity-At-Large, Alternate
Katherine Quinn, Member-At-Large
Annmarie Swope, Member-At-Large, Alternate
Roland Taylor, Town of Herndon
Tom Hanton, Town of Vienna
Suzy Willemsen, Fast Pitch Softball Council
Mark Meana, Football Council
Ted Hollingsworth, Football Council, Alternate
Mary Ann Wagner, Lacrosse Council
Lula Bauer, Soccer Council
Trish Moxie, Soccer Council, Alternate
Hillary Richardson, Women's Sports Programs, Alternate

COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT:

Keisha Dotson, Division Director, Neighborhood and Community Services
Karen Avvisato, Athletic Services Manager, Neighborhood and Community Services
Mark Martino Branch Manager, Neighborhood and Community Services
Jason Shelton, Analyst, Neighborhood and Community Services
Kurt Louis, Director of Park Operations Division, Fairfax County Park Authority
Bill Curran, Director of Student Activities, Fairfax County Public Schools
Paul Hatcher, Director of Administrative Services, Fairfax County Public Schools
Vicki Garner, Coordinator of Community Use, Fairfax County Public Schools

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Brian Luwis, Dranesville District, Alternate
Bill Bright, Lee District, Alternate
Lester Munson, Mount Vernon District
Michael Thompson Jr., Springfield District
Mark Heilbrun, Springfield District, Alternate
Marc Fernandes, Diversity-At-Large
Jeff Stein, Town of Clifton
Rob Hahne, Baseball Council
Steve Bergstrom, Basketball Council
Stew Clark, Basketball Council, Alternate
Ryan Buchanan, Fast Pitch Softball Council, Alternate
Dave Paddock, Lacrosse Council, Alternate
Christine Idip, Slow Pitch Softball, Alternate
Rob Baily, Volleyball Council
Jenni Cantwell, Women's Sports Programs

MEETING OPENING

Ms. Bauer called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Roll was called, and a quorum was present.

CITIZENS TO ADDRESS COUNCIL

None

PRESENTATIONS TO COUNCIL

Ms. Quinn gave a presentation on the Children's Bill of Rights in Sports developed by the Aspen Institute. The presentation can be found here [children's rights and sports.pdf \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](#).

Ms. Quinn presented a motion that the Fairfax County Athletic Council endorse the Children's Bill of Rights in Sports. Mr. Flather seconded the motion and it passed without objection.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

The meeting minutes from the virtual meeting on March 16 were approved

CHAIRMAN REPORT

Ms. Bauer reported a group met about the issue of non-high school organizations not allowing players to participate in high school athletics. Ms. Bauer explained that the issue is not isolated to soccer, but all sports. NCS plans to create a survey to send to all the high school Director of Student Activities (DSAs) and high school coaches. The goal is to collect more data to see how big this issue is. Mr. Curran explained that FCPS has a process that needs to be followed to distribute the survey. NCS will work with Mr. Curran on how the survey should be administered.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Communications with Fairfax County Partners - FCPS, FCPA, NCS and Community Users

Mr. Flather shared a letter with the Council regarding the creation of the Communications with Fairfax County Partners - FCPS, FCPA, NCS and Community Users committee and what steps have been taken to alleviate the issues with late cancelations that user groups are experiencing.

FCAC Sub Committee on Communications with Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), Fairfax County Public Schools Community Use, Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS), Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) and All Fairfax County Community Users

Report - 04/18/2022

A subcommittee was formed in October of 2021 with the full support and vote of the FCAC. The purpose of the committee was to address concerns of FCAC members for the increased numbers of cancelations, last minute cancelations, school programs running into Community Use time, and lack of communications on FCPS construction projects and to find ways to improve communications amongst all the factions within Fairfax County.

The subcommittee has had multiple meetings over the last 5 months, discussing these



issues and making recommendations to improving communications between all factions involved with Community Use. We have all agreed that this is not a new issue and that Community Users have always had an advocate from NCS that worked hard to find resolutions to some of these problems. The understanding of the committee members was that prior to COVID, we felt things were improving, but recently these type problems have escalated.

On March 16 at the FCAC meeting, we were advised by Vicki Garner that the FCPS Community Use office had put in place a new process that mandated all correspondence between Community Users go through NCS and NCS was required to go to FCPS Community Use office for resolution. At this meeting we asked for a copy of the program/process but have yet to receive a copy. Vicki indicated that all was going very well with the new process and that it had been well received. The FCAC meeting feedback was that there were concerns with this new process and that there was pushback from community users as well as DSA's for its implementation. Vicki expressed that she would like to hear about these issues from the community users and would follow up with the DSA's. Some messaging has gone without response.

A follow-up meeting of the Sub Committee was held on April 12. At that meeting Paul Hatcher, identified that his office was following established FCPS policies, noting specifically Regulation 8420, and that schools had the right to cancel up to and including day of use by community users. He also stated that if we wanted the Community Use office to handle issues differently that we would need to have the policy changed by going to the FCPS School Board. We also discussed fees and he agreed that there should be some form of compensation made but that would have to be done by someone else.

The Sub Committee members have concerns that we believe FCAC members will agree with, that the advocacy for community users is not where it needs to be. There have been close to 300 cancellations by schools since March 1 date of the new process and many of these cancellations are for events that were known at beginning of the school year. Clearly schools are not following their own policy (Regulation 8420) to identify these in advance. NCS has noticed that cancellations are far worse this year than ever before. They also recognized that communications between NCS and the Community Use office are improving however, late cancellations are still a significant problem that are impacting community user groups throughout the County.

On behalf of the subcommittee, I would formally request a meeting to include several members of the FCAC and key leaders of FCPS, FCPS School Board, FCPA, NCS, and the FCPS Community Use office to discuss changes to the policy itself as well as introduce several actions that we feel will support improvements to the overall communication effort (which is the original reason for forming the subcommittee).

Gary Flather, Chairperson FCAC Sub Committee on Communications

Mr. Abbott expressed his frustration with the number of late cancelations and lack of communication of why events weren't entered before permits are issued to user groups. User groups have deadlines to adhere to and it doesn't seem fair that after a group is already permitted a school can cancel at the last minute. It is a tough position to explain to volunteers why games and practices can be canceled at such short notice.

Ms. Garner and Mr. Hatcher understand the frustration with the late cancelations, however the current FCPS regulations allow for schools to cancel for any school related event. FCPS staff always questions schools regarding late cancelations. They inquire if the school needs the entire time for an event or if an alternate location can be used to minimize the impact to user groups.



Ms. Avvisato stated that all the user groups understand that school events take priority, however it is the events that are known about well ahead of time that aren't being entered which is causing last minutes cancellations.

Mr. Flather stated that community use time is established, and more time is getting squeezed. The community adjusted when FCPS adjusted bell schedules, but now it seems the community groups are losing more and more time. Mr. Flather explained he has received 15 requests from individuals asking for refunds with the main reason being the number of cancelations.

Mr. Leff inquired how we would approach the School Board to change the current policy? Unless the policy changes and there is no hardship on the school representative to enter events on time, we're going to continue to see late cancelations. Mr. Leff explained that the community users are the same kids that attend the schools, and they should have equal right to use school facilities.

Ms. Bauer reported that this spring has been the toughest she has experienced. The cancelations impact coaches, parents, referees, volunteers, etc. It is difficult to explain why all the cancelations occur after schedules have already been set. One example is a school canceling their field use because of limited parking. Ms. Bauer explained that creative solutions can be made in these instances such as having players carpool to avoid canceling the events for the entire day.

REPORTS BY SPORTS REPRESENTATIVES

Fast Pitch Softball

Ms. Willemssen is pleased to report good participation and good weather this season

Football

Mr. Meana reported that football is planning for the fall and adjusting to the impact of COVID-19.

Mr. Hollingsworth explained that Fairfax County Youth Football League (FCYFL) representatives attended a presentation that detailed the extent of supply chain disruptions. There are tremendous equipment shortages, as well as shipping issues. Mr. Hollingsworth wanted to make sure other sports are aware of the supply chain issues as well.

Lacrosse

Mr. Diehl reported that lacrosse is about halfway through spring regular season. Mr. Diehl was happy to report no incidents or cancelations due to COVID-19. Mr. Diehl stated that an issue with an ice cream truck at Ossian Hall Park had been reported to him. The ice cream truck plays the music very loud, and it is disruptive to the young players. NCS will check with FCPA to see if there are any permit requirements or noise ordinance that the ice cream truck must follow.

Soccer

Ms. Bauer reported soccer is still seeing referee shortages. There was a situation that happened recently at a soccer game between Fairfax High School and West Springfield High School that is being used as an example of why there is a referee shortage.

Mr. Curran explained that there was an incident at the end of the game where an assistant coach ran onto the field to approach the referee after a goal was scored. Parents were also very vocal, and one parent took it too far. The school has addressed incident with the coach, parents, and community. Unfortunately, we are seeing similar issues at the state and national level. Mr. Curran stated that expectations for coaches, players and parents are being reinforced to all high schools.



Ms. Moxie reported that her organization is dealing with cancelations and trying to reschedule events. They are also holding referee classes to try to help with the shortage. Ms. Moxie is also warning parents to be on best behavior.

STATUS REPORT FROM COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES

FCPS

Mr. Curran reported that after speaking with the head of high school officials' association, they have seen an increase in referees. Unfortunately, it does not make up for all the referees that they lost, but they are seeing an uptick in training. Some sports lost as much as 50% of their referees.

Mr. Curran stated that high school sports are in the middle of the spring season.

Mr. Curran reported that FCPS continues to move forward with the initiative to put outdoor permanent bathroom facilities at all the high schools. The School Board and BOS continue to work together on this initiative.

Mr. Curran was pleased to announce Ms. Michelle Reid has been appointed as the new FCPS superintendent and will begin on July 1. Ms. Reid has a background as an Athletic Director as well.

FCPA

Mr. Louis shared the following project updates.

Year	Park	Field	Type of Work	Status
2021	Patriot Park North	All Fields	Re-development of the entire park: lighted synthetic fields ((4) 90's and (2) 50/70's), restrooms, shelter, playground, and parking areas	Approximately 45% Complete July 1, 2021 - Winter 2022
	Winterset Varsity	1	Renovation of Police Administration Building will close field; Irrigation will be installed before reopening of field	Fall 2021 - Summer 2024
	Cunningham	1	Replacing backstop and dugout fencing; adding bleacher pad and ADA access trail	Spring/Summer 2022
	Franconia	4	Installing fencing behind goal on synthetic field	Complete
	Franklin Farm	1	Replacing dome backstop	Complete
	Reston North	1&2	Replacing dome backstop	Complete
	Greenbriar	All grass fields	Irrigation is being replaced; infields will be renovated at the same time	Mostly complete except for irrigation pump
	Rolling Valley West	1	Replacing backstop and sideline fencing	Spring/Summer 2022



	Oakton Practice fields		Synthetic replacement	Summer 2022
	South Lakes HS Stadium & practice fields		Synthetic replacement	Summer 2022
	Langley High Stadium		Synthetic replacement	Summer 2022
	Lake Braddock Stadium & Practice fields		Synthetic replacement	Summer 2022
	Great Falls Nike	4	Synthetic replacement	Summer 2022
2023	Scotts Run(?)	1	New Lighted Synthetic - 180' x 220'	Winter 2023/2024

NCS

No report

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Willemssen gave background on the Girl's Fastpitch Softball Equity Action Plan Review Team (APRT) that looked at inequities between boys' baseball and girl softball fields. Needs for softball tournament complexes were identified and they were met with the addition of softball fields at Louise Archer ES, Falls Church HS, and South Lakes HS. In the past 5 month with school renovations, 1 field at Louise Archer ES and most of the fields at Falls Church HS will be eliminated. The softball field at South Lakes High School that was just upgraded is being used by South Lakes High School football which is tearing up the field. This is in addition to the synthetic turf field inequities between baseball and softball., Ms. Willemssen encouraged the Council to make a motion to have a letter sent to the BOS to have the APRT committee reestablished to see where things stand.

Mr. Flather made a motion to send letter to the BOS to reestablish the APRT committee. Mr. McLaughlin seconded the motion and it passed without objection.

OLD BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully,

Lisa MicKey, Secretary

