

NOVA Parks
Meadowlark Botanical Gardens- The Atrium
9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court
Vienna, VA 22182

Board Meeting, November 21, 2024
7:30 p.m.

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE:

Members Present:

Sean Kumar, Chair
Paul Baldino, Vice Chairman
James Bonfils
Mark Chandler
Dave Gustafson
Patricia Harrison
Douglas Stewart
Paul Ferguson

Members Absent:

Michael Nardolilli
Cate Magennis Wyatt
Scott Price
Stella Koch

Staff Present:

Paul Gilbert, Executive Director
John Bell, Senior Planner
Mike DePue, Planning Administrator
Kim McCleskey, Budget Administrator
Patrick Wells, Budget Analyst
Brian Nolan, Director of Planning & Development
Chris Pauley, Director of Operations
Blythe Russian, Park Operations Superintendent
Lauren Weaver, Director of Finance
Mark Whaley, Park Operations Superintendent
Kelly Gilfillen, Director of Marketing and Communications

Guests Present:

Michael Lupton, Robinson Farmer Cox
Renee Yancy, CEO Community Foundation of Northern Virginia

OPEN SESSION:

CALL TO ORDER:

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m.

The Chairman recognized Park Operations Superintendent, Mr. Mark Whaley, on his years of service and upcoming retirement.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Mr. Bonfils, seconded by Mr. Stewart, to approve the September 19, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes. APPROVED with one abstention by Mr. Ferguson who was not in attendance of the meeting.

TREASURER’S REPORT/STATUS OF FUNDS:

Mr. Bonfils presented the Treasurer’s Report. No action was taken.

REPORT FROM AUDITOR:

Mr. Bonfils reported that NOVA Parks received a clean, unmodified audit. Several suggestions were made by Robinson Farmer Cox which will be included in the final report expected in January 2025. No action was taken.

REPORT ON FUNDS WITH THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA:

Ms. Yancy and Mr. Gilbert provided the Board an overview of the function and history of NOVA Parks’ relationship with the Community Foundation, including their mission and vision. Ms. Yancy and Mr. Gilbert reviewed the current funds and endowments that are managed by the Community Foundation. Ms. Yancy was excited to announce the first recipient of a grant for Title 1 schools was awarded to Sugarland Run Elementary in Loudoun County for field trips at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens this Spring. The grant will cover transportation costs and allow over 200 students to visit the Gardens. Additional discussion about potential participation in ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) equities was had.

Mr. Baldino commented positively about the program and the opportunity to offer our assets to a new group and requested that the Board receive an annual update on the progress.

Motion by Mr. Ferguson, seconded by Mr. Bonfils, to move that we encourage CFNOVA & its advisors to include some exposure to ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) equities for the NOVA Parks Endowments. UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

LONG-TERM FINANCIAL FORECASTING AND SCENARIOS:

Mr. Gilbert recognized Budget Administrator, Ms. Kim McCleskey, on her years of service, elevation of NOVA Parks’ budget process and documents, and upcoming retirement and the promotion of Mr. Patrick Wells from Budget Analyst to Budget Administrator.

Ms. McCleskey and Mr. Wells presented forecasting data based on a variety of scenarios that could effective net revenue. Ten year projects were presented on a range of potential scenarios including significant weather events, and changes in appropriations. The presentation demonstrated the sensitivity of how small changes can have large impacts. Mr. Gilbert discussed how NOVA Parks resilience allows us to bounce back. Mr. Kumar noted that our attempts to predict the future helps us influence the things we have in our control. Mr. Gustafson discussed the value of seeing the impacts and determining ways to address these impacts.

Mr. Kumar expressed his appreciation on behalf of the Board to Ms. McCleskey.

FEES & CHARGES:

Mr. Pauley presented the 2025-2026 Proposed Fees & Charges. He reviewed the process and the criteria for change. Staff focus on in demand resources, compared fees to local competition, and considered what the market will bear. Blanket increases are not applied, but a line-by-line approach. Mr. Gilbert explained that fees & charges are set in advance of the FY26 budget meetings in order to take these changes into account.

Motion by Mr. Baldino, seconded by Mr. Bonfils to approve the 2025-26 Fees and Charges as presented.
UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

REAL ESTATE UPDATES:

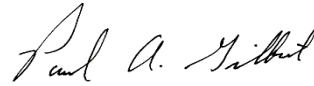
Mr. Gilbert updated the Board on projects at Hemlock Overlook Regional Park and the W&OD Trail in the Vienna/Dunn Loring area impacted by Dominion Energy tree cutting. Both projects have will significant impacts on mature trees and understory. Requests have been made to Dominion Energy to address restoration requirements for Hemlock Regional Park if clearing is permitted and to present Dominion Energy with a plan to partner in replanting efforts for areas along the W&OD where clearing is expected to occur along the W&OD Trail. No action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Bonfils, to adjourn the meeting. UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

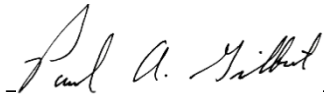
The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Paul A. Gilbert, Secretary

Approved by the NOVA Parks Board
on January 16, 2025:



Paul A. Gilbert, Secretary



Sean Kumar, Chairman