

NOVA Parks
Lloyd House
220 N. Washington Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Board Meeting, July 18, 2024
4:30 p.m.

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE:

Members Present:

Sean Kumar, Chairman
James Bonfils
Michael Nardolilli
Paul Baldino
Mark Chandler
Patricia Harrison
Douglas Stewart
Paul Ferguson
Stella Koch
Dave Gustafson
Scott Price

Members Absent:

Cate Magennis-Wyatt

Staff Present:

Paul Gilbert, Executive Director
John Bell, Senior Planner
Mike DePue, Planning Administrator
Danielle Endler, HR Administrator
Kelly Gilfillen, Director of Marketing and Communications
Kim McCleskey, Budget Administrator
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
Kiley Christian, Admin Assistant

CALL TO ORDER:

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 4:33 p.m.

REPORT ON FIRST CLOSE FOR FY'24 MS. LAUREN WEAVER, DIRECTOR OF FINANCE:

Ms. Weaver, Director of Finance, presented a slide show with figures and spoke briefly to the Board regarding the FY'2024 report on the first close for the year. The First Close Projection of Adjusted End of Year Net Revenue is: \$5,172,102 The amount is comparable to last year - \$5,136,900 There are additional accruals/adjustments that will increase/decrease this amount in the 2nd and 3rd close.

PROPOSAL FOR THE END OF THE YEAR FUNDING ALLOCATION, PAUL GILBERT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Mr. Gilbert, Executive Director, discussed the End of Funding Allocation, Capital fund and how it is critical to the growth and development of the agency. It is from this fund, where new features are built, lands are acquired, and major maintenance it performed. Mr. Gilbert also highlighted the contribution to the retirement plan helping bolstering the plan funding and smooth market fluctuations in annual budgets. Based on current estimates this may be approximately \$500k of additional contribution to the plan. Mr. Gilbert also discussed that the performance incentive plan, which is set by Board policy, is to commit 20% currently to this bonus pool. Similar to the overall surplus for the year, the amount of the allocated performance incentive is approximately the same as the prior year.

A motion was made by Mr. Bonfils, seconded by Ms. Koch to allocate the net revenue from FY'2024 in the following way: 70% to the Capital Fund, 20% to the performance bonus pool, and 10% to the retirement plan.

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

PRESENTATION OF 30 YEAR RECONONITON OF SERVICE, PAUL GILBERT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Mr. Gilbert, Executive Director presented a 30-year service plaque signed by the Board, to Mr. Chris Pauley, Director of Operations in recognition of 30 years of service with NOVA Parks and thanked Mr. Pauley and spoke briefly on his many accomplishments within the organization.

UPDATE ON NATURAL RESOURSE BANKING MIKE DePUE, PLANNING ADMINISTRATOR AND PAUL GILBERT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Mr. DePue, Planning Administrator, and Mr. Gilbert, Executive Director presented an update on Natural Resource Banking. Mr. DePue provided an explanation on Natural Resource Banking and what it entails.

Natural resource banking is a system of creating credits through an administrative/regulatory process that an environmental good has been achieved for the long-term. These verified credits can then be purchased by a company that has an impact this needs to be offset.

Nutrient Credits – This is a program within the Chesapeake Bay watershed that is focused on reducing the impacts of storm water runoff. This is regulated through the states. Trees, tall grasses, and other vegetation slows and filters stormwater.

Stream Credits – This primarily involves preserving or rebuilding impaired streams. A small percentage of the project can be conservation. The Fountainhead easement is the small percentage that completes a larger stream restoration project in Reston.

Wetland Credits – These are projects that create or preserve wetlands, which we will do in an area of Algonkian.

Carbon Credits – This is the one type of credit that is not government regulated by a voluntary system. Tree plantings sequester carbon that creates credits that are certified by several non-profits.

Mr. Gilbert reported that all credits within Gilbert’s Corner have been sold, 42 Acres have been preserved in perpetuity with invasive plant management. The goal is to quickly transition land, from fallow field to forest by maintaining stem count and preventing invasives.

Mr. Gilbert reported that all credits within Piscataway Crossing have been sold, the nutrient credits have been used to offset storm water management impacts, and 103 acres on the bank of the upper Potomac River have been conserved and have been converted to existing agricultural use. The row crops have been converted to hay, and the hay fields have reduced stormwater runoff and lessen erosion due to better land cover.

Mr. Gilbert also reported that all credits with Fountainhead Regional Park have been sold, and two hundred acres consist of stream channel and buffer two hundred feet on each side of channel. Stream preservation credits must be matched with restoration credits from off site location, the credits used to offset stream impacts by new developments or roads. A conservation easement over an area of mature forest near streams, in Fountainhead Regional Park, WSSI will soon turn over to the long-term steward, which will monitor for invasives and other negative impacts in perpetuity.

Mr. Gilbert also discussed the future of Algonkian Regional Park and wetland preservation credits in the upcoming winter of 24/25. Conservation easement for preservation and enhancements depending on invasive species present, with 28 acres preserved with invasive species management, and the opportunity for additional substantial phases. The future phases require restoration sites for preservation match.

Mr. Gilbert also reported that Pohick Bay Stream restorations are still in early discussions. The site was initially assessed for preservation, but the stream channel was too heavily eroded. NOVA Parks’ first opportunity for stream restoration could potentially include in-channel construction and structures to restore natural channel design, to prevent erosion and restore biodiversity. Creating restoration credits would allow additional preservation credits at Fountainhead Regional Park.

In conclusion, Mr. Gilbert reported in 22/23 we worked to identify over two hundred acres collectively among half a dozen parks that could be reforested. This project would result in the 50,000 new trees called for in our Strategic Plan. This would have been our first Carbon Credit Project.

Carbon Credits are not regulated. There are several accrediting non-profits that certify that projects meet the standards for credits. WSSI was working with one of these organizations, and there was a falling out over changing rules. The fundamentals of our Carbon Credit plan still work, we just need to find new partners.

Environmental – Habitat creation/restoration/protection with long-term resources for tree replacements, invasive removals, and other efforts to assure the long-term ecological performance of the area.

Financial – We take one-time projects and invest the funds into the Capital Endowment. The Endowment will create ongoing Capital funds forever.

Ideally, the banking projects could create funds for future land acquisitions that would provide lands for future banking projects helping to grow NOVA Parks into the future. *“The Perpetual Motion Machine”*

APPROVAL OF ADMIN ITEMS:

- A. Treasurers Report/Status of Funds
- B. Annual Insurance Renewal
- C. Minutes from May 16, 2024 Board Meeting
- D. Minutes from June 10, 2024 Executive Committee Meeting

A Motion was made by Mr. Nardolilli, seconded by Mr. Bonfils to approve the July 18, 2024 Admin Items.

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

VOTE TO DISSOLVE NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL PARK FOUNDATION:

Motion readdressed from May 16th Board meeting when a quorum was unable to be reached.

A Motion was made by Mr. Chandler, seconded that by Ms. Koch, that the Northern Virginia Regional Park Foundation be dissolved as a 501(c)(3) organization. And that Paul Gilbert be authorized to execute whatever documents are necessary to bring this organization to an end.

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

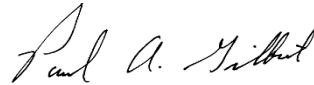
ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Ms. Koch, seconded by Mr. Bonfils, to adjourn the meeting.

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

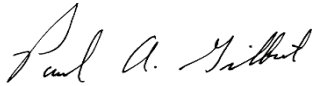
The meeting was adjourned at 5:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Paul A. Gilbert, Secretary

Approved by the NOVA Parks Authority Board
on September 19, 2024:



Paul A. Gilbert, Secretary



Sean Kumar, Chairman