

ARLINGTON COUNTY FISCAL AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMISSION  
REPORT TO THE COUNTY BOARD

FY 2016 PROPOSED BUDGET

BUDGET AREA:	Department of Parks & Recreation (DPR)
FAAC REVIEWERS:	Steve Baker, William Gillen, Susan Robinson, Tenley Peterson
DATE OF FAAC ACTION:	March 9, 2015

**FAAC Opinion**

DPR’s FY 2016 budget for programming is more or less flat — the increase in the department’s budget is due to personnel costs. The current budget allows the department to maintain the status quo.

The department has worked to find efficiencies. This year, they propose transferring two DPR after-school programs to Arlington Public Schools’ responsibility, therein saving money. They are also reining in use of “p-cards” and looking for ways to standardize business practices with other departments.

The budget forecasts program registrations to grow by 2,000 per year between FY 2014 actual and FY 2015 and 2016 (estimates). However, the growth from 2013 to 2014 was almost 6,000. Since the FY 2016 budget maintains the status quo, it will be difficult for the department to handle growth that exceeds these modest estimates.

The population growth that is straining the budget of Arlington County Schools will no doubt cause stress on DPR. Department leaders mentioned that field use is an area that may cause problems in the near future. At present use numbers, current funding is adequate but if usage increases, additional monies may be needed.

<b>FAAC Recommendation #1</b>			
The FAAC recommends that the County Board approve the County Manager's budget for the Department of Parks & Recreation.			
Vote:	Yes: 11	No: 0	Abstain: 0
Comment:	This includes the cost-recovery recommendations approved by the citizen’s advisory commission.		

<b>FAAC Recommendation #2</b>			
The FAAC recommends that the County Board advise the County Manager to have DPR publish metrics related to field usage so the department can demonstrate need if extra funds are requested in the near future.			
Vote:	Yes: 10	No: 0	Abstain: 1
Comment:			

### **Future Considerations**

The FAAC notes that the forecast for program participation in the coming years does not reflect expected demand but rather expected capacity. This will likely result in public dissatisfaction if DPR cannot meet the community's program needs.

We recommend that DPR leaders continue to look for efficiencies (such as the "p-card," this year) as demands for services will likely outpace the increase in any future funding. Moreover, the FAAC recommends that DPR continue to share data with APS to find efficiencies, for example combining programs that are redundant.