

Falls of the James Scenic River Advisory Committee

Draft Minutes for May 13, 2004

Attendees:

Committee Members:

Ralph Hambrick, Sue Cecil, Catherine Harold, Greg Velzy and Jonathan Young.

Others:

Louise Burke (Emeritus Committee Member), Lyn Crump (Dept. of Conservation and Recreation), Steve Ellison (JROC), Buzz Kraft (Richmond Raft), Monica Rumsey (Friends of Forest Hill Park), Bob Steidel (City of Richmond), Dinesh Tiwari (City Parks and Recreation) and John Zeugner (Friends of Bryan Park).

The meeting convened with a presentation from Dinesh Tiwari, Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation, regarding the City's implementation of a plan to transfer responsibilities from Parks to the Department of Public Works. Tiwari informed the Committee that 80 Parks employees would be transferred to Public Works though no James River Parks employees would be involved. Public Works will assume principal responsibility for grounds maintenance and gardening, urban forestry, grass cutting and other beautification functions. Tiwari advised the Committee that the reasoning associated with the transfer concerns consolidation of functions and anticipated cost savings.

Members of the Committee and guests present asked a series of questions of Tiwari pertaining to the transfer. Tiwari addressed among other things scheduling and park staffing.

Bob Steidel delivered a presentation regarding the Combined Sewer Overflow Project (CSO). Steidel informed the Committee that approximately \$225 million has been spent on the CSO project and an additional \$200-300 million is anticipated being spent over the lifetime of the construction. Future construction will include an enlargement of the Chappell Island retention basin facility. Steidel informed the Committee that the expansion would be camouflaged and should be unnoticeable. Steidel further informed the Committee subsequent questioning that the existing basin could regrettably not be camouflaged because of insufficient weight support. When all completed, the CSO should catch approximately 95% of all floatable pollutants.

The Committee engaged in a discussion regarding the proposed riparian owner draft letter and agreed to table any vote until a subsequent meeting.

The minutes from the April meeting were approved after having been amended.

The Committee agreed to send Tiwari a letter communicating appreciation for his willingness to brief the Committee.

The Committee adjourned.