

*Historic Falls of the James Scenic River Advisory Committee*  
**June 17, 2021 at 12:00 pm**

**Meeting Attendees:** Greg Velzy (Chair), Alex Dahm, Justin Doyle, Leighton Powell, Anne Wright, Max Hepp-Buchanan, Grace LeRose

**Call to Order:** Greg Velzy called the morning to order at 12:12 pm.

**Minutes** – Alex Dahm motioned to approved the minutes from the meeting on May 20, 2021. Anne Wright seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**Current Issues:**

- **Downriver/East Riverfront Update:** Justin Doyle reported the Virginia Capital Trail bridge over Gillies Creek is being repaired and the trail has been diverted to go around the construction activity. Repair work is being done by the Department of Public Works.
- **Combined sewer system/Senate Bill 1064 presentation by Grace LeRose, Programs and Operations Manager with the City of Richmond's Department of Public Utilities (DPU):** Richmond is not the only city in Virginia with a combined sewer system. Alexandria and Lynchburg also have combined sewer systems. Combined sewer systems came into existence in the 1870s. Combined sewer systems combine stormwater and wastewater into one system. [Senate Bill 1064](#) was adopted by the Virginia General Assembly in 2020 and puts Richmond on a fifteen-year timeline to improve its combined sewer system with the intention of reducing the frequency of sewer overflows. DPU launched a real-time decision support system in 2017 to get an accurate picture of system capacity. It allows DPU to know where flow is coming from and capacity. DPU plans to direct flow to areas in the system where capacity exists. 10 projects are identified in DPU's interim plan, which is due to the Virginia Department of Environmental this year. The 10 projects will reduce annual overflow volume by 182.3 million gallons (roughly 10% of total annual discharge) and cost \$33M. Projects will be complete in five years. Richmond has been working on improvements to its system for over 50 years. \$350M have been invested in improvements to date. State and federal funding will help Richmond eliminate sewer overflows. Justin asked Grace if the new green alleys are in the combined sewer area and Grace said they are not.
- Greg inquired about parking at 14<sup>th</sup> Street Takeout along the floodwall. Grace said the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers requires an easement to be maintained along the floodwall. Boulders were recently installed to prevent cars from parking along the floodwall. DPU met with JROC to inform the paddling community. Greg inquired about alternative overflow parking areas in proximity to the takeout.
- **Dock Street Property Updates:** Justin Doyle reported Capital Region Land Conservancy assigned its purchase agreement to The Conservation Fund and closing is scheduled for August 2.
- **Virginia Scenic Rivers Program:** Greg did not have any updates to share with the committee.
- **James River Park System Update, Park Management, and Master Plan update (Greg Velzy):**
  - 14<sup>th</sup> Street Parking: See above.
  - Huguenot Flatwater: Construction can begin in September.
  - Superintendent application is open
- **CSX derailment along North Bank Trail and JR&K Canal:** Alex Dahm reported train cars fell into the canal upriver of Tredegar. The Belle Island parking lot was damaged during recovery. Greg inquired about the lower parking lot.

**New Business:**

- Greg mentioned prospective committee members including James Vonesh and Nathan Burrell.

**Reports:**

- JRA: Justin Doyle reported James River Watch water quality monitoring is underway and will continue until Labor Day weekend. New plants installed on Chapel Island at Great Shiplock Park need water during the summer months.
- JRAC: Justin Doyle reported the annual James River Regional Cleanup is scheduled for September 11, 2021.
- JROC: Greg Velzy reported the Huguenot Flatwater project received an exemption from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Projects are scheduled every Thursday evening. Cleanup and slave trail project on June 19 (Juneteenth) at Ancarrow's Landing.
- FoJRP: Greg Velzy reported Friends of the James River Park is moving toward hiring an executive director.

**Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned at 1:13 pm.

**Next Public Meeting: July 15, 2021**

Meetings usually begin at 12:00 noon in the Conference Room on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of Richmond City Hall, but by Zoom if necessary. Meetings are scheduled for the THIRD Thursday of each month. All meetings are open to the public. If you are not now receiving e-mail meeting notices and wish to receive them, please provide your name and e-mail address to [velzyg@verizon.net](mailto:velzyg@verizon.net). If you would like to be removed from the list, so indicate at the above e-mail address.