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Brian Mancini named Director of Harrisonburg Parks & Recreation

HARRISONBURG, Va. – Brian Mancini, the longtime assistant director of Harrisonburg Parks & Recreation who has served as the acting director since May 2021, has officially been named director of the department.

Harrisonburg Interim City Manager Ande Banks announced the decision this morning, pointing to Mancini’s excellence in leading the department throughout much of the COVID-19 pandemic while continuing to move Parks & Rec forward with new, successful amenities and programs as a key accomplishment that set him apart from multiple qualified candidates considered for the position.

“Brian’s dedication to our community and passion about ensuring all in Harrisonburg have the opportunity to recreate and enjoy our outdoors gives me great confidence about the future of our parks facilities, athletics programs and everything else that makes Harrisonburg Parks & Rec so special,” Banks said. “He and the amazing team we have at Parks & Rec are incredible ambassadors of our local government and we are proud of all they do every day to make Harrisonburg a better place for all.”

As acting director, Mancini has overseen the addition of the Ralph Sampson Park Futsal Court and the ongoing reimagining of the Smithland Road Athletic Complex. He also oversaw completion of the Morrison Park Pickleball Courts and the renovation of the Westover Park Cecil F. Gilkerson Community Activities Center during his time in Harrisonburg, in addition to multiple other accomplishments.

Parks & Rec is one of Harrisonburg’s largest City departments, with approximately 120 employees, based on seasons, and a nearly \$6.5 million budget that frequently includes capital improvement projects such as the Purcell Park Master Plan. The department also works closely with many organizations in our community, such as Harrisonburg City Public Schools, James Madison University and Eastern Mennonite University. Additionally, Harrisonburg Parks & Rec was honored last year by serving as host of the annual conference of the Virginia Recreation and Park Society.

For Mancini, his selection as director is not only a testament to the quality work being done at Parks & Rec, but also an endorsement of the many unique endeavors currently taking place at the department focused on providing a better quality of life for Harrisonburg residents.



(Above) Harrisonburg Parks & Recreation Director Brian Mancini.

“The infrastructure and framework for quality recreational amenities and programs in the City of Harrisonburg have been established over the years by our dedicated staff,” Mancini said. “Our job now is to make we sure we stay up to date with the latest in recreational trends, while progressing forward, as we gain an understanding of what kinds of diverse recreational amenities are wanted by the residents of our city.”

Prior to arriving in Harrisonburg in July 2018, Mancini served in multiple positions in Dinwiddie County, including recreation superintendent, director and community development administrator. His life-long dedication to youth recreation and athletics also has included parks and recreation positions in Henrico County and Goochland County, as well as serving as a baseball and football coach and as a commentator for Gameday Magazine and the NFHS Network. This week, he got his first experience as soccer coach for a local youth team.

Now home in Harrisonburg and eager to continue his commitment to improving recreation opportunities for people of all ages in The Friendly City, Mancini is looking forward to many new Parks & Rec additions in the future.

“With quality resources, both in terms of personnel and financial flexibility, our department is excited to continue to improve, modernize and add to our current facilities and programs,” Mancini said. “When the residents and visitors of our city come to one of our parks, amenities or join a program, we hope that they’ll feel like they are in an environment that is one of the best in the state of Virginia.”

For more information on the department, follow Parks & Rec at www.facebook.com/harrisonburgparksandrecreation.

The City of Harrisonburg is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to 51,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov.



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