

DRAFT

Meeting called to order by Julie Lee at 7:30 pm.

Julie Lee introduced Reid Goldstein, the Chairman of the Arlington School Board. Mr. Goldstein shared a power point presentation (updated for November 2022) entitled “School Board Leadership for the 2022-2023 Year.” It is an outline of the School Board’s policies and objectives for the 2022-2023 school year. In his presentation, Mr. Goldstein spoke on specific areas of the document.

Mr. Goldstein began by describing the School Board’s liaison role to promote communications up and down the chain of authority within APS and between APS and the County Board. He highlighted the number one 2022-2-23 priority “to ensure student well-being and academic progress with a focus on innovation, equity, and evidence-based practices.” Priority number two is to “recruit, hire, retain and invest in a high-quality and diverse workforce.” The 2024 Budget Direction aligns to these priorities, with its commitment to maintain a high-quality workforce by “sustainably funding market-competitive salary scales and benefits.” Among the planning factors is to study “how much or many of everything we’re going to pay for, from toilet paper to staff.” Looking at class size is another factor Mr. Goldstein mentioned in regard to the 2024 budget. The Superintendent’s priorities fall under the heading “Every Student Counts – Excellence for All,” and include knowing “every student’s name, strength and need.” Another priority is the use of clear, simple language in communicating with families. On School Board’s immediate agenda are the 2023-24 school year calendar, the 2022 school bond referendum, community conversations on equity, and the Arlington Career Center Project. A calendar survey is now open and closes tomorrow (11/8). A “Your Voice Matters Survey 2022” and other public input opportunities can be accessed at www.apsva.us/engage/. The Bond Referendum for \$165 million includes improving and upgrading facilities. For information on Community Conversations on equity in the school system, contact Dr. KaMyka Glenn at dei@apsva.us. A School Boundaries Update states that there will be no school boundary changes for 2022. Enrollment can be managed with transfer opportunities and relocatable classrooms.

The Arlington Career Center Project - Arlington Tech, the Academic Academy (struggling students), EL (English learners at the lower end), and PEP (a program for employment preparation for students with cognitive challenges, and CTE (students come from other high schools to take courses such as auto repair, EMT, construction tech, and cosmetology) – will, pending approval of the bond, have increased project funding to \$182.42 million. The new site plan includes renovation of the Fenwick building, which has been Arlington Community High School’s location. A new home will be provided by Amazon and built by Amazon on their site. The renovated Fenwick building will become the Montessori Public School of Arlington. The Patrick Henry School will probably be demolished for open space. A new building will be constructed for the Career Center. There will be a four-level parking garage. There is no new high school building in planning now, as projections show a very modest increase over the next 10 years.

Every five years APS goes through a policy review by the State. 2023-2024 will be the next review year.

Mr. Goldstein pointed out a number of other improvements and/or changes implemented for 2022-23, including virtual tutoring for all secondary (6-12 grade) students, \$5 million invested in enhanced building safety and security, and new covid protocols and weather status codes. In an academic bright spot, APS was ranked #1 best place to teach and #2 best school

division in a Best Schools Report by Niche. Mr. Goldstein noted that the lion's share of Arlington tax revenues (47%) goes to the schools.

There is an agreement between the School Board and the County Board to renegotiate the percentage periodically as seen fit. Mr. Goldstein reminded us that up to 10 citizens can speak at each School Board Meeting on a walk-in (sign up from 6:15 to 6:45) basis. He can be reached at reid.goldstein@apsva.us.

Q. There was one mention of sustainability and none of climate/energy/environment/nature in the presentation. I would like to see some awareness of the importance of more exposure to the natural environment in School Board policy.

A. The Superintendent has his own advisory committees, and one is sustainability. We have sustainability coordinators in every school. At our Thursday meeting, we will address operational efficiency, including a Sustainability Report. It is the first of the Upcoming Monitoring Items in the presentation.

Q. Are we competitive in hiring?

A. We have looked at differentiations in pay scales for different needs in our staffing (such as Speech and Language Pathologists) and offering contracts on the spot. Other school divisions have matched our pay. This is a challenging environment for finding teachers.

Q. What about diversity?

A. Diversifying the professional staff is a strategic plan goal. Fourteen percent of our teachers are African American. We have not been as good at attracting Hispanic teaching staff.

Q. What about getting substitute teachers?

A. We have raised the compensation to \$120 per day. (Tim Aiken mentioned that there were 22 teachers out sick at Carlin Springs Elementary today.)

Q. What about other ethnicities?

A. Our goal is to have teacher cadres that mirror the student body of the school. I don't know the answer to that. We have about 90 languages in the school system.

Q. There seems to be a lot of focus on the administrative staff, resulting in lots more workload for teachers without the support staff to help them implement changes.

A. The Superintendent makes hiring decisions. Ultimately, he is responsible.

Q. Do students and parents get to evaluate teachers, and do teachers get that feedback?

A. No.

President Julie Lee thanked Mr. Goldstein for his time and for a helpful presentation. He responded that this is one of his favorite parts of the job.

Old Business

There was a motion to approve the minutes of the October, 2022 GCA meeting, which was seconded. The minutes were approved without changes.

Treasurer's report by Tim Aiken. There are 153 dues-paying members, and a balance of \$23,963.

Civic Federation report by Tim Aiken. No report except a recognition of Julie Lee's input on the Missing Middle panel at the Sept. CivFed meeting.

Arlington Neighborhoods Program Advisory Committee report by Kathy Reeder. Street trees and replacement plants are still scheduled for fall installation on 4th Street S., and three invasives treatments remain for the Kenmore wooded area project. An engineer on the team recently left the county, and the impact on the project's schedule is yet to be determined.

Village View report by Brandon Hemel. The deadline for the next issue is November 10th.

Julie Lee reported that there has been lots of interest in neighborhood small interest groups, and there is information about them on the Glencarlyn website.

Julie Lee gave an update on the Virginia Hospital Center property. Additional time will be needed for pre-construction activities, such as fencing, etc. Demolition is not expected to begin until late December. All residents living near the site will receive letters of notification before the demolition begins. There will be snow removal training on the property on Tuesday, November 29th. Steve Young shared the information that all the fencing appears to be up now, and it appears that solar lighting has been installed as no wiring remains.

Update on the Missing Middle Study, by Julie Lee. The County Board has released an update on the wording of the proposal that will come to a vote in December. Although there was discussion of geographic caps on subdivision of lots, no such caps were put in place. Building on the 6,000 square foot lots that are typical in Glencarlyn and other neighborhoods in central Arlington will enable developers to maximize their profits

New Business

Luminaria report by Julie Lee. Courtney Holmes and Julie are coordinating volunteers. Steve LeSueur suggested that we have caroling on a separate date. Julie has scheduled a caroling party at St. John's Church, on Sunday, December 11th.

Upcoming GCA meetings. Corporal Amanda Brown of the Arlington Police Department will speak on neighborhood and home safety at our next meeting on December 5th. There will be no meeting in December. We are looking for a speaker for February 6th. Our speaker on March 6th will discuss "Recycling Right."

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.