

EAST COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD (ECCAB)

Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center
3300 Briggs Chaney Road
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904
Tel # (240) 777-8414

Wednesday, January 8, 2020

MEETING SUMMARY

Members Present: Christopher Bolton, William Bentley, Samantha Blizzard, Sharon Brown, Donald Hague, Subramanyan Chebium, Roberta Goldberg, Wendy Johnson, Rachael Evans, Kimberly Price-Evans, Pamela Ruiz, Jerold Samet, Sebastian Smoot, Tamar Ruth, Kenneth Flemmer

Members Absent: Fisseha Adugna, Len Newman, Wendy Johnson

Guests Present: Ed Weiler, Dan Wilhelm, Devon Haywood, Camille McKenzie, Lt. Oneil Ormsby, Lt. Bruce Cole, Rob Richardson, Margie Goergen-Rood, Mensah Adjogah, Gene Wooden, Tom Smith, Howard bell, Andre Vainqueur, Eber Rosaro, Allen Graham, Steven Lutz, Allan Lutz

Staff Present: Jewru Bandeh, Linda Cooper

Welcome: the meeting was called to order at 7:05p.m.

Approval of December 4, 2019 Meeting Summary: Approved unanimously.

Presentation by Guest Speaker: Robin Riley, Director, Montgomery County Recreation Department (MCRD). Robin Riley, resident of East County and a 39-year veteran of the MCRD shared an overview of the Recreation Department's 2020 focus on Youth Development Programs, Community Resources, Partnerships, Opportunities and Challenges in Serving Growing and Diverse Populations in East County.

- Recreation Department Centers across the county do a lot that many residents are not aware of and will be using the County's new budgeting process (based on Data and Outcomes) to continue programs, apply for grants and request support (foundation donations) from residents
- We've had great success with the youth development fashion show boot camps hosted annually and we plan to add parent training element. Check out the link below. <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/rec/activitiesandprograms/youthdevelopment/signatureevents.html>
- About to launch Summer Camps (last year had great success with Strathmore and Galway Elementary School swim lessons)
- Date for summer camp registration is 1/20/2020

- Explained Rec. Assist Programs: which are “Rec Dollars” that provide financial support for families that may not be able to support camps, classes. Parents can access rec assist info on the website.
- Good Hope Neighborhood Recreation Center also has connection with Strathmore. They are working to change demographics of classes to include more diverse offerings and community residents can share ideas and give input (Poetry, African Dance/Step). New Wheaton Center is very busy with many programs for residents. Wheaton Center is open Friday & Saturday late nights until 11:00pm, but they need ideas because this time is not being highly used. Jerome Jackson is assigned to lead this evening project to create programs and can be contacted to share ideas with him or Robin Riley.
- MLK Center’s indoor pool is being renovated (outdoor pool will be open) and a new project with HOC will be opening in Silver Spring with a new facility (and a pool).
- Budget “refresh” projects will be the focus.
- East County is getting a burst of senior housing. Rec centers are working closely to create new programs for/with them. Typically, East County has been a “recreation desert” but they’re looking forward to addressing this challenge.
- Turning the Curb Agreement: Thinking shifts and looking at the data, such as: What is the number of cancelled programs? What is the amount of the Rec Assist Dollar amounts used? How can we increase the number of programs in our own buildings/facilities versus using the school buildings (which costs the department)?
- Summer Fun Centers Programs help address summer learning loss: She met MCPS, who are expanding the summer opportunities for students (BELL, ESOL, 2 Year round schools). The meeting was productive and she looks forward to further collaboration with the school systems. For example, having MCPS School in the mornings, recreation programs in the afternoons. She is working with the department to improve getting families in programs that were on the waitlist.
- It may be possible to offer Immigration support at the new Wheaton Center on Friday & Saturday nights. (Anyone with ideas should contact her -Robin Riley to share next steps).
- Summer Programs: Summer Fun Centers: 33 locations @\$395/child for entire summer.
- Yes, we can partner with Foundations and Nonprofits to support low income families to access county resources. (Writing grants is a need the county has to be able to access the State and private foundation grant dollars).
- Community Gardens falls under the Parks Department (not the Recreation Department).
- Friends of Rec Department recruiting Active Montgomery new financial product hopefully will allow different ways for residents to make donations for families in need
- Biggest Changes in her 39 years: 1. Millennials don’t like to talk to customers, 2. Residents are busy, 3. Competition has increased with all programs and access to customers. Next biggest challenge: 1. Meeting the needs for seniors, which is the largest growing population. Catching up with this growth in terms of robust programming that meets this expanding county need.

Updates from Chairs: ECCAB, Planning and Economic Development, Quality of Life/Services Committees

- **ECCAB:** President Chris Bolton attended the annual Montgomery Moving Forward breakfast meeting and was pleasantly surprised to find out that Dan Wilhelm, East County community member is a part of this great organization. *Thrive 50* plan was reviewed at the breakfast. Bolton shared a friendly reminder that behind the shopping centers there are a lot of “missteps” so we should call 311 and/or the private management companies for hygiene purposes (avoid rodent infestation).
- **Planning and Economic Development:** Sebastian Smoot shared an update regarding the Burtonsville Gateway Signage (Sign Design was selected). Next PED meeting will take place 1/13/2020 7:00pm at the East County Regional Services Center. The agenda topic (White Oak master plan discussion) is pending. He also suggested that since the MCPS School wide boundary study meetings was the 3rd most requested item on the priority list, perhaps the Board could consider inviting a speaker and/or Board members could attend the upcoming Boundary Meetings 1/11/2020 at Montgomery Blair High School and 1/14/2020 at Northwest High School.
<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/mainstory/story/658433/Community-Meetings/>
- **Quality of Life/Services:** Don Hague gave an update from the December 11, 2019 meeting in which presentations were given by Kathy Stevens, Executive Director, Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy (MCAEL) and by Gabe Martinez Cabrera, Executive Director, Literacy Council of Montgomery County (LCMC). Adult literacy information was shared and discussions ensued around ways to most efficiently and effectively meet the various residents’ needs of this part of the county. The meeting participants gave input for positively impacting the under-served adults in order to help them achieve their goals through education and training at times/places and ways that meet their unique needs.
- Next QLS meeting will take place 1/15/2020 7:00pm at East County Regional Services Center. Pending agenda topic includes presentation from Luis Cardona of the Street Outreach Network.

Updates from East County Regional Director; Montgomery County Police Department 3rd District and 4th District

East County Regional Office Director’s report included:

- Attendance by Board and Community members has increased at ECCAB meetings. It is understood that we are volunteers and our time is appreciated, although attendance is expected if one has agreed to be part of the Board. Term limits for a few Board members are expiring March 2020, and he will contact those to whom this applies.
- Please continue to review Director’s emails and weekly newsletter from the Regional office. There is a lot of important and time sensitive information. Several grant meetings will be held and community representatives have been invited for input. Transportation related issues will continue to be shared with Board that are very relevant to current developments in our part of the County. Volunteers were requested to continue to

represent East County residents to ensure their voice is heard around issues of transportation.

Update from Police 3D/4D:

- Holiday task force- 288 people arrested for DUI during this season
- New 3D Commander announced - Captain. Darren. Franke, who will visit with the Board next meeting.
- Previous Shooting Homicide still under investigation, getting little cooperation from community
- Recently a man was reported to be knocking on doors and then burglarizing homes during the morning/day hours (more info coming soon regarding demographics)
- Shooting in Silver Spring on Ellsworth occurred among a group of youth, who were all seen on camera to be walking together and then 2 individuals in the group broke out shooting at each other. Store property was damaged and crime is still under investigation. Community/witnesses are not being cooperative. More information forthcoming.
- An arrest has been made in the individual who was impersonating a police officer by having yellow/blue lights on his car and pulling people over requesting money. Some of the victims have recovered what was stolen.
- Welcome to MCPD Lt. Oneil Ormsby, our new representative to the ECCAB. He is a 23 year as police officer and is glad to be joining us. He shared that new Chief Marc Jones is planning to attend a future meeting and will share his major focus on community partnerships.
- Community Question: Commercial vehicles in community continues to be an issue. Send email to the 3rd District if you have concerns.

New Business:

- Sebastian Smoot who is the ECCAB rep on the Montgomery County Planning Department's Pedestrian Master Plan Advisory Group, shared that the next meeting will be held in late February. In the meantime, he encouraged those present to take a look at the Master Plan. There is a survey and helpful safety information issues across the county that can be accessed on the MC Atlas website within the Master Plan's site: <https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/transportation/pedestrian-planning/pedestrian-master-plan/> He also thanked the community for bringing the need to discuss pedestrian safety at Route 29 and Fairland Road and hopes to bring this area up at the next meeting.
- Pamela Ruiz shared information regarding the wonderful resources we have in East County for pedestrian/walking/hiking/biking, etc. Nature Trails in our part of the county. (See Upper Paint Branch Trails memo https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/upper.paint_branch.ns_trails-mcpb.memo-07.26.19.pdf)
- Sharon Brown shared a request from a volunteer community member who is interested in obtaining information from the Department of Transportation.
- William Bentley inquired into updates with Census 2020 committee's next steps. A meeting will be held soon (January 28, 2020) and the Census office is interested in

having input from ECCAB. Chris Bolton represented East County previously, Rachael Evans and Subraamanyan Chebium volunteered to participate.

- Several Board members present expressed interest in participating in another East County Tour. Jewru Bandeh briefly shared the logistical challenges this entailed and the minimal participation from previous programs. However, he also shared that another tour will be organized and that Board members will be invited.
- Next ECCAB Meeting - 7:00 p.m., February 5, 2020 at the East County Regional Services Center.

Old Business/Additional Community Comments/Input:

- The December 2019 letter of ECCAB FY20 priorities to the County Executive March Elrich letter was updated with Board input and sent. This final copy will be sent out. (under the four priority areas of focus of the ECCAB were presented in the letter: A Growing Economy, Easier Commutes, A More Affordable & Welcoming Community and Thriving Youth and Families).

Adjournment: A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 p.m. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.