

**Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board meeting
November 9, 2020
Minutes**

Attendees:

1. SSCAB members:
 - a. Lysette House, Chair of Board
 - b. Sofia Bushen, Vice Chair
 - c. Katherine Lucas McKay, Secretary
 - d. Melanie Fonder Kaye, Parliamentarian
 - e. Jay Elvove
 - f. Michelle Foster
 - g. Patricia Germann
 - h. Ed Levy
 - i. John Seelke
 - j. Don Slater
 - k. Debra Wiley
2. RSC staff:
 - a. Reemberto Rodriguez, Silver Spring Regional Service Center
 - b. Shawn Morris, Silver Spring Regional Service Center
3. Speakers:
 - a. Renay Johnson, Principal, Montgomery Blair High School
 - b. Alicia Deeny, Principal, Takoma Park Elementary
 - c. Karla Silvestre, Montgomery County Board of Education, At-Large
 - d. BB Otero, Special Assistant to the CE, Office of the County Executive
 - e. Sean Emerson, staff for Councilmember Evan Glass
4. Additional attendees:
 - a. Lene Tsegaye (Kefa Cafe)
 - b. Assegid Habtewold
 - c. Ryan Hardy
 - d. HQ (did not respond to my chat asking for a name)
 - e. Deborah Mack
 - f. Joseph House
 - g. Barbara Burnham

Agenda:

1. Introductions
 - a. Lysette opened meeting
 - b. CAB members introduced selves and the evening's speakers
2. Minutes from previous meeting
 - a. Minutes from SSCAB meetings in September and October were adopted without amendment

3. Childcare and education

- a. Renay Johnson, Principal Montgomery Blair High School, is happy that there is now a back-to-campus plan.
 - i. This year: The county provided a ton of technology and supplies (pottery wheels) to students. They have ~75 students who have never logged on. No new international students--major change.
- b. Alicia Deeny, Principal, Takoma Park Elementary
 - i. Start of the year, making sure everyone is connected, was very difficult. Not just delivering the tech, having to teach the tech. Teachers also had to learn. All students have connected but there is a group of students who don't log on often or seem to be disengaged. They have had a slight dip in enrollment but they are still moving forward with the addition so it's open when students return.
- c. Karla Silvestre, Montgomery County Board of Education, At-Large
 - i. Significant decreases in math scores across the board (now lower than FY 2018); slight decreases in aggregate on reading, but not as bad.
 - ii. Health Metrics Matrix being used to make decisions. Group 1: Prioritizing getting special education and technical/vocational students on campus. Also the youngest learners (k-2), 6th, 9th. After that they would phase in other learners depending on the infection rate and new case numbers
- d. BB Otero, Special Assistant to CE Elrich: update on early childhood initiatives
 - i. Covid has thrown a wrench into these plans--lots of time and money on PPE, things are closed, etc.
 - ii. 80% of the existing childcare programs have reopened (including private care); 18 centers have permanently closed--not as bad as we expected
 - iii. Expansion effort for universal pre-k kind of stalled because of the pandemic

4. Discussion and questions from SSCAB members

- a. Focus on lack of engagement among kids because they are caring for another sibling/household member.
 - i. Some have these responsibilities but principals are hearing more often that teens need to work to support their families now
- b. Kids After Hours program operating at limited capacity. Seems to be working. Why can't it be expanded?
 - i. Relates to building constraints
 - ii. Related: we're looking at best practices and what's working across the state and country to guide in-person activities
- c. Mental health challenges among students?
 - i. National trend of anxiety among kids is affecting kids at TKPK Middle. Some have benefitted from virtual learning (introverts, overly social kids) and doing better. But many are doing worse and enjoying school less.

- ii. Concern: normally they have majority of students do some kind of after school activity. They've adapted a lot but kids don't want to attend as much. They're exhausted after school, no more zoom.
 - d. How should we advise the CE?
 - i. Get this under control! Our case rates are rising--no one can go back. Many of those kids need to go back because virtual is not working.
 - ii. Teachers are essential workers--they should get priority access to the vaccine
 - iii. We need money for more staff! There's no way to bring kids back without more staff
 - iv. CIP recommendations for schools in our footprint: HVAC improvements asap, do not cut investments planned for Silver Spring International Middle School, Woodlin Elementary School, Lelek Elementary School
- 5. Committee updates:
 - a. SSCAB Commercial and Economic Development Committee
 - i. Past - October meeting (10/26) discussed resources and grants for local business owners
 - ii. Upcoming - November meeting (11/23) will be discussing small commercial hubs along the Purple Line.
 - b. SSCAB Neighborhoods Committee
 - i. Past - October meeting (10/26) discussed issues around internet connectivity and the cost of using as much bandwidth as kids need to learn at home. We're going to write a letter to the CE (John will lead)
 - ii. Upcoming - November meeting (11/23) will be talking with local nonprofits in the social services sector and the arts sector. The discussion will focus on how these local organizations have been impacted by the pandemic, how they have shifted their work during the pandemic, as well as discuss their specific needs and support.
 - c. SSCAB Transportation Energy and Environment:
 - i. Past - October meeting (10/26) Purple Line meeting. Quite civil for a PL meeting. The situation is grim.
 - ii. Upcoming - November meeting (11/23) will address shared streets program
 - d. CRAG just had a meeting on the MoCo ballot questions, residents' mental health, and the upcoming one will include CE Elrich
 - e. SSUDAC: Debra will be our rep on that board in the future. Thanks, Jay!
- 6. New member interviews: Lysette and the committee have made their recommendations to the CE and the Council needs to approve. That may take a minute.
- 7. Councilmembers' updates:
 - a. Sean Emerson, staff to Councilmember Glass

- i. Yay Question C passed: there will be 2 new district representatives in the next election cycle. This was sponsored by CM Glass
- ii. CM Glass introduced a zoning text amendment (ZTA) to expand composting in the Ag Reserve
- iii. Brainstorming around outdoor space: Dec. 10 briefing;

8. Chair's report

- a. Fill out the Reimagining Public Safety survey!

9. Regional Area Director's report:

- a. The Covid situation is getting worse. The only way to make it better is to hunker down again. Please be careful, realistic, and understanding about restrictions.
- b. Closing discussion of restaurant Covid violations in DTSS