

**MINUTES**

**SRCA BOARD MEETING**

**September 2, 2021 – 7:30 PM by Zoom Conference Call**

**In attendance:**

Jeanne Jacob, President; Nick Giannotti, First Vice President; Kate Hennigan, Second Vice President; Mike Souza, Parliamentarian; Don Frahler, Immediate Past President; Mike Brookbank, SRCA Historian; Paul Judge, SHA Representative; Beth Chase, St. Stephen’s and St. Agnes School (SSSAS) Liaison; Susan Clark-Sestak, Chair Communications Committee; Joe Sestak, City of Alexandria Liaison; Laura Plati, Chair SRCA Welcome Committee; Dave Chaney, Member of City of Alexandria Liaison Committee; Officer Tony Moore, ACPD Liaison; Officer Lemuel Houston, Sherriff’s Office; and SR residents Fred and Vada Martin, David Pritzker, Robert Schwartz, Kellie Souza, and Richard Weiblinger**.**

1. **Welcome and President’s Report – Jacob**

Jacob welcomed the board and committee members attending the meeting and explained the “Open Mic” questions/concerns portion of the meeting to the SR residents attending.

She then asked for reports from SRCA’s ACPD Liaison Sgt. Tony Moore and Alexandria’s Sherriff’s Liaison Sgt. Lemuel Houston.

Moore reported that there will be a **Law Enforcement & Security In-Person Hiring Event** on September 14, 2021 from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM in front of City Hall at 301 King Street. Moore also indicated that he and the office who patrols the SRCA area will plan to attend the SRCA annual meeting.

Houston reported that the current Sherriff is retiring and a new one will be elected in the fall. The Sherriff department’s “Home Away” program continues for now but may close down as people return to work in the fall. Several planned community engagements have had to be postponed due to recent COVID trends in the City.

SRCA Board member Judge asked if either department would be taking a stand on the Duke Street Corridor proposed changes. Both Moore and Houston noted that they would take this question back to their respective leaderships. Houston further noted that their Public Information officer would be the one to make any comments, if they were to be made.

**Update on Karig Estates**

Jacob reported that she had received a call from Alan Rowsome, Executive Director of the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust regarding Karig Estates. He provided her with an update on the possible purchase of a portion of the property by the Trust, if money could be raised. He indicated that the developer was willing to preserve the fourth lot, furthest in the back, if the Trust were interested in purchasing it, which it is. The question is how much money would be required for that portion. Since then, Jacob was informed by Carter Flemming, President of the Seminary Hill Civic Association, that Gant Redmon, lawyer for the developer, had called to tell her that the project was moving forward and a meeting would be held at Temple Beth El on Monday, September 13 at 7:00 PM for those interested in hearing about the development and that ground would be broken on Wednesday, September 15. The plan is to build the access road, put in the sewer system, and place the concrete pads for the four houses. Then, the houses will be built as each is sold. How much of the “green” space will be removed remains to be seen.

**Meet and Greet for City Council Candidate**

Jacob was asked by former SRCA Secretary Eileen Giglio to announce a “meet and greet” on Friday, September 3 from 4:00 to 7:00 PM at the home of Susan Shepard, 4020 Moss Place, for City Council Independent candidate Florence King. SRCA does not endorse any candidates for public office.

1. **Secretary’s Report – Jacob/Clark-Sestak**

Jacob noted that she and Clark-Sestak are continuing to take minutes until a new Secretary is elected. Then, she asked for approval of August 5, 2021 Minutes.

**Giannotti moved that the minutes be approved. The motion was seconded by Brookbank. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.**

1. **Treasurer’s Report – Browne**

Browne was unable to attend the meeting but sent the following written report.

“A full report will be given at the annual meeting, which will include actual 2020 performance against the budget and 2021 actual performance to date against the budget. For the September meeting:

1. Current balance as of 8/31/21:  **$15,112.20**. Note that two checks yet to be cashed include: Feb. check 429 to K. Hennigan for $132.46 and July check 438 to SSSAS for $250. Accounting for these, actual balance is **$14,212.46**.

**Request**: Please submit invoices for events with 15 days. Please deposit reimbursements within 30 days.

1. Dues for 2021 to date: $400. This does not include two payments made via website electronically but not yet deposited. Dues typically collected in Sept. thru Dec.

**Note**: I provided the PayPal requested information– still not yet able to transfer to Burke and Herbert but should be resolved by early next week. Only two payments showing for balance of $96 due to transaction fees.

1. Screen on the Green overage: budgeted $370; spent $910. Ice Cream Truck was $517.28.
2. Upcoming picnic budget is $2,600. Room in budget to go up to $3,000.”
3. **Annual Meeting and Picnic – Jacob**

**Overview – Jacob**

Jacob reported that the SRCA Annual Meeting would be held on Sunday, September 19 at 5:00 PM at SSSAS under the tent at the end of the bleachers on the football field. Several decisions had to be made as SSSAS would allow SRCA to hold the meeting outside, but not inside due to Covid restrictions. Last month, the board decided to hold the meeting both in person and by Zoom. Unfortunately, there is no electricity under the tent, so no lights. Thus, the meeting will have to start early in order to be finished by sunset, which is 7:10 on September 19. SSSAS will provide a limited number of chairs and tables for the meeting, but residents are encouraged to bring their own to the meeting.

**Annual Meeting by Zoom – Souza**

Without electricity under the tent, the question was raised whether SRCA would be able to hold the annual by Zoom. Souza noted that his laptop would hold a charge long enough for the annual meeting to be held outside and he offered to coordinate the Zoom meeting during the in-person meeting.

An addition uncertainty is what to do if it rains. Jacob asked the board for their input and concerns. The final decision was to hold both events, but if it rains, the picnic would be cancelled with no rain date and the annual meeting would be held only by Zoom.

**Picnic Plans – Hennigan**

Hennigan updated the board on the picnic food choices, deadlines for ordering, and costs. There would be three choices of sandwiches (chicken, beef, veggie) and each food “bag” would include a fruit salad, chips, and cookie. Games would include “corn hole”, water balloons, sack races, jumbo Connect 4, and the board voted to include a moon bounce. Those participating the Moon Bounce would have to wear masks and the number participating at one time would be limited by volunteers. Volunteers, especially for helping in the games and moon bounce are still needed!!

Having a rain date was discussed, but since the food order would have to be cancelled by September 14, rain cancellation would be impossible. A vote was taken and it was decided that if it were to rain, the picnic would be cancelled, but people ordering food would pick it up at Hennigan’s home.

**Based on what had been spent in previous years, Souza made a motion to approve a budget of $3,000 for the picnic; it was seconded by Giannotti. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.**

**Dues Collection Plan – Browne**

Clark-Sestak reported for Browne. Collection of dues will be part of the packet distributed for the annual meeting and election. Dues can be paid either by check or electronically via SRCA’s website. Due remain at $50 per household.

**Communications Plan – Clark-Sestak**

Clark-Sestak explained that all materials would be distributed by the Block Captains this year instead of mailing the dues materials. In the packet would be a letter from the SRCA President, a ballot for voting on new SRCA officers, a flyer with the benefits of becoming a member of SRCA, the dues form, a form to order picnic food, and a Proxy, if recipients were not planning to attend the annual meeting either in person or by Zoom. In addition, Directory updates would be collected. All forms can be returned in one pre-addressed envelope to Don Frahler, immediate past president, who will sort the forms and provide to appropriate Board members. Packets would go to both covenant and non-covenant households, but the non-covenant households would not have election materials. The envelopes would be delivered to all Block Captains by September 5, with the requirement that they be distributed to all residents by September 9 to meet SRCA By Law requirements. All Block Captains have confirmed their ability to meet this timeline.

**Slate of Officers – Frahler**

Frahler presented the slate of officers that the Nominating Committee (Frahler and Marianne Coates) had prepared. The 2021-2022 SRCA slate of officers to be voted upon consisted of the following SR residents:

Jeanne Jacob – President

Richard Weiblinger – First Vice President

Kate Hennigan – Second Vice President

Susan Clark-Sestak – Secretary

Maria Browne – Treasurer

David Pritzker – Parliamentarian

When asked why some current members were not asked to continue to serve on the board, Frahler responded that the Nominating Committee kept some experienced members of the board to provide continuity and brought on new members to build a field of experience that could be called upon in the future.

1. **SRCA Committee Chair Reports – Committee Chairs**

**Events/Activities – Hennigan**

**Halloween Activities – Hennigan**

It was decided to postpone a decision on Halloween activities until the October SRCA Board meeting. There was general consensus that house or pumpkin decorating similar to what was done last year would be a great idea. Whether there can be a gathering before kids trick-or-treat, as has been done prior to 2020, depends on COVID trends.

**Forums for Elections in Early November - Souza**

Weiblinger and Sestak indicated they would be willing to work together again to bring about two forums in October prior to the November 2 elections. There was general consensus on the success of the May forums and the Board supported hosting another round in October. There would be one event for the two mayoral candidates and one for all the City Council candidates. Efforts should be made to reach out to press as well as other neighborhood associations so that their residents might also watch the forums. This will require purchasing a webinar capability on Zoom for the month of October, which Clark-Sestak will do.

**Brookbank made a motion, Clark-Sestak seconded it, to move forward with organizing the two forums. The Board approved the motion**.

**Update on Home Sales in Seminary Ridge – Hennigan**

Henniganreported the following neighborhood real estate market update: 124 Sylvan Court is under contract after 30 days at a list price of $924,900 and 3601 Tupelo Place sold after only 6 days on market with a sales price of $2,100,000. There has been a slow down at the end of Summer in sales, likely as a result of buyer fatigue. Hennigan expects a pickup with inventory (slight) and buyer interest again after the Labor Day holiday, as in past Fall markets.

**Seminary Hill Civic Association Liaison – Judge**

Judge said that he did not have much to report as SHA did not meet in July or August. In-person meeting may resume as Immanuel on the Hill has agreed to allow SHA to meet there since they have met there for years. They must follow COVID restrictions of mask use and social distancing. The following are SHA’s agenda items for its September 9 meeting.

**Old Business**

AHDC Affordable Housing Proposal on Seminary Road

Karig Estates

Inova Hospital Site Rezoning

Taylor Run Stream Restoration

MacArthur School Rebuild

The High School Project

**New Business**

Virtual or In-Person SHA Meetings

Nominating Committee

Annual Meeting

City Manager Selection Process

SHA Resolution on Ad Hoc Committee for Ft. Ward

Street Renaming Pilot Project

Early Street Traffic Issues

Plastic Bag Tax

BisNow Event on August 31st

**SSSAS (St. Stephen’s St. Agnes School) Liaison – Chase**

Chase reported that SSSAS would welcome students on campus for classes on Tuesday 9/7. In preparation, covid testing was provided on campus for faculty, staff members and students on 9/1 & 9/2. The first home football game is scheduled for 9/3 at 3:45 against Bishop O'Connell.

On September 11, SSSAS is hosting an event with a remembrance to 9/11 and a welcome event for our families and employees. The event will be held between 4-7pm and they are expecting close to 1,000 participants. They have asked families to carpool to minimize parking overflow into the neighborhood.

SSSAS will continue with movie nights for middle school students to be held on the football field. The first two scheduled movie nights are 9/17 and 10/1 from 6:30-8:00 pm.

The school hopes to finalize the purchase of the property from St. Andrew's United Methodist Church later this month.

**BEHC Update – Flachs**

Jeremy Flachs was unable to attend, so there was no BEHC update.

**City of Alexandria Liaison – Sestak**

**“Duke Street in Motion” Update**

Sestak reported that the Duke Street in Motion survey had received 1,800 responses. The City plans to use these inputs to help shape its vision for the future of Duke Street, which will be issued in late fall/early winter.

Sestak also noted that, as a result of the survey responses and other public input, Hillary Orr had contacted SHA to confirm “we have heard you and will try to do something” about concerns of back-ups on Duke Street when accessing the Telegraph Road off-ramp. A pilot proposal is to block access to the Telegraph Road ramp from West Taylor Run. Instead, traffic from West Taylor would turn left, proceed to a right on Dove Street, which then allows access to the ramp. A mid-term solution being considered is to create a new left turn lane before Dove Street to access the ramp. It is important that any solutions also take into consideration the plans for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on Duke Street.

**Update on Strawberry Run**

Sestak reported that the City began measurements of Strawberry Run’s soil content in July; the analysis should be completed in October, as part of the City-approved Review if Natural Channel Design is the proper method of restoring the stream and to prevent pollution of Chesapeake Bay. In June SRCA provided its proposed alternative stream restoration plan to the Environmental Policy Committee (EPC), which has the lead for working with the City on alternative solutions. The City was scheduled to start its examination of alternatives the second week of August, and the EPC is finalizing the submission of the proposed alternative by SRCA this week.

**Welcome Committee for New Residents – Plati**

Plati reported that three new homeowners (2 on Griffith Place and 1 on Colonel Ellis) had moved in since the last board meeting. She provided them with a Directory and a gift card to Great Harvest bakery.

**Communications – Clark-Sestak**

Clark-Sestak reported that the materials being distributed to all residents includes a form to confirm or correct the accuracy of residents’ information in the SRCA Directory. She also noted that some people have not been receiving the newsletters sent via MailChimp to everyone for whom SRCA has an email address. If anyone is having this problem, please send an email to: [news4srca@gmail.com](mailto:news4srca@gmail.com).

**SRCA Historian – Brookbank**

Brookbank reminded people that as they clean out old files, if they have any SRCA materials to please bring those files to him.

1. **Old Business – Jacob**
2. **New Business – Jacob**

Jacob noted upcoming dates for SRCA meetings: the Annual Business Meeting to be held on **Sunday September 19, 2021** and the next SRCA Board Meeting on **Thursday, October 7, 2021.**

1. **Continued “Open Mic” for SRCA Community – Jacob**

Jacob opened the meeting for the second “open mic” session where the SR community had additional time for questions or to bring forth issues of concern. Nothing was brought forward. She thanked those attending the meeting and encouraged them to attend again.

1. **Adjournment of SRCA Board Meeting – Jacob**

Jacob asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**Giannotti moved that the meeting be adjourned. Sestak seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous consent.**

Jacob adjourned the September 2, 2021 SRCA board meeting at 8:58 PM.