



# SEMINARY RIDGE CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

## MINUTES

### SRCA BOARD MEETING

December 8, 2022 – 7:30-8:30 PM by Zoom Conference Call

#### In attendance:

Richie Weiblinger, President; Karen Meade, Secretary; Scott Sutherland, Treasurer; Katie Dominick, Second Vice President; David Pritzker, Parliamentarian; Sergeant Tony Moore, Alexandria City Police Department (ACPD); Lieutenant Lemuel Houston, Alexandria Sheriff's Office Liaison; Beth Chase, SSSAS Liaison; SRCA Residents: Harriett (last name unknown); Zoom user (name unknown)

#### 1. Welcome and President's Report – Richie Weiblinger

**1.1. Welcome to SRCA Board Members and SR Residents Joining Meeting:** Weiblinger called the meeting to order at 7:33 pm and welcomed those in attendance via Zoom.

**1.2. Questions/Concerns from SR Residents – "Open Mic":** No issues were raised.

#### **1.3. Priority Areas for Tonight's Meeting:**

- **Upcoming January 6<sup>th</sup> Holiday Party Planning/Areas of Support – Katie Dominick:** The Wainsteins have confirmed they will host this year's holiday party at their residence on 4007 Moss Place and Harris Place for Friday, January 6<sup>th</sup> from 7-9 p.m. Dominick will confirm which address they'd like us to use when we send word out about the event. She'll also find out if they have an outdoor space for folks to mingle, and if so, we may want to rent space heaters. A suggestion was made to purchase name tags for the holiday party. Per Pritzker, all expenditures in excess of \$100 must be signed off on by the Treasurer and co-signed by the President. Pritzker moved that we authorize payment of up to \$3,500 for the holiday party scheduled for January 6, 2023; motion was seconded by Sutherland and unanimously approved.

Dominick has reached out to Bittersweet Catering and received an estimate of

\$1,900 for a similar menu to last year.

What Dominick desperately needs help with is finding an Event Chair because she'll be out on maternity leave in early January. She has reached out to Reed (regarding providing the wine) and Lourdes (who has helped with setup in prior years) but has not heard back from either yet.

Meade offered to send out a "Save the Date" email in the next week so folks can plan ahead. Email should include RSVP instructions and deadline, and possibly another dues reminder. Meade and Weiblinger will confer with Susan Clark-Sestak to find out what was sent out last year and will coordinate with Karner on getting something printed out to the neighborhood.

- **Duke Street-in-Motion Updates – Scott Sutherland:**

The next meeting will be held on **December 15, 2022, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., at the DASH Facility at 3000 Business Center Drive.**

The meeting can be accessed via Zoom by registering at the following link:

[https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_mXAnVFaxSxO1qzc8G0cJWw](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_mXAnVFaxSxO1qzc8G0cJWw)

In the last meeting the group provided a recap of what they learned in October from both community outreach events and the online poll. Apparently they were astounded by how few people responded despite their large efforts to get the word out. Feedback received demonstrated that there are a lot of people who don't use the bus as much as one might think. A vote was taken by the group. This project focuses on three segments, and the committee voted to recommend that the City's traffic staff concentrate on looking at center bus lanes for segments 1 & 3; they did not act on segment 2 yet, which is where we live and is the most problematic since it's the narrowest. Segment 2 will be discussed at the next meeting on December 15.

- **Planning Meeting with Alexandria Parks & Recreation on Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup>:**

Concerns have been raised about the median on Ft. Worth which tends to get neglected. Weiblinger has raised this with the Alexandria Department of Parks & Recreation and will be stopping by their office tomorrow (December 9) to find out what we can do to partner with them to get the medians cleaned up.

- **Planning Meeting and Site Visit with Maureen Sturgill and Oscar Mendoza of Alexandria Parks & Recreation – Addressing conditions of Ft. Williams Parkway and Ft. Worth Avenue Medians:**

Weiblinger indicated that the Alexandria Department of Parks & Recreation will also perform a site visit where they'll come back to our neighborhood so Weiblinger can point out some of the specific areas that require clean-up.

**1.4. Consideration of Guest Speaker for Future SRCA Board Meeting – Jim Parajon, City Manager:** At least one other Board member was in favor of this.

**1.5. Reports from SRCA's ACPD Liaison/Alexandria's Sheriff's Liaison:**

- Sergeant Tony Moore reported that traffic is higher than usual in Seminary Ridge right now because of the closed off areas on Ellsworth St. and West Taylor Run Pkwy. This increase in cut-through traffic is primarily affecting Fort Williams Pkwy.

Sgt. Moore indicated the Chief was sorry to miss our annual event but would like to attend a future meeting where he can brief the Board or perform a “walk and talk” with the neighborhood. Weiblinger agreed to let Sgt. Moore know which is our preference.

Sgt. Moore also noted there will be an increase in larceny of packages during this time of year when people are typically at work and asked that we keep an eye out for our neighbors. Should we see anything or anyone suspicious, please alert them so they can patrol the area. Footage from security cameras is always helpful as well.

Results from a crime study for the neighborhood will be forwarded in January.

Weiblinger asked about T&ES survey and whether we should provide input if folks notice any significant increase in traffic. Sgt. Moore indicated they're working with T&ES and sharing data. He sent email to the traffic division, so they've increased their presence. They don't want the noise and smoke congestion affecting our community. Weiblinger mentioned the islands on Seminary Rd. continue to be an issue – they've been hit several times, but he has noticed that some reflectors have been added to some particularly problematic areas, which he appreciates.

- Lieutenant Lemuel Houston indicated they're already starting to see an increase in property crimes, which is not uncommon at this time of year as folks shop for the holidays. The NOVA regional center is also reporting an uptick in crimes against persons – these are not specific to Seminary Ridge, however that doesn't mean things can't happen to you outside of your neighborhood, especially at this time of year.

The Sheriff's Office is trying to flex resources to help out the community. Lt. Houston is part of an initiative right now that is specifically related to calls for mental health services, and there's been a big uptick in these calls lately. The Sheriff's office, by order of VA state code, plays a role in assisting with calls for treatment and helping people get needed services, and because of some inadequacies with state programs, the police department is trying to share the load. Lt. Houston stated he's never seen this many calls for service re: orders for treatment issued by the court before, so if you know of anyone who is having a mental health crisis, don't hesitate

to call the police department. They're working overtime right now to assist with these calls. People don't understand the gravity or depth of the mental health crisis – it's becoming almost unmanageable. There are a lot of people who have been needing services for a long time that just haven't gotten them, and this becomes especially critical around the holidays. The Alexandria Sheriff's Office and APD are the right places for these folks to go. Weiblinger thanked Houston for this reminder and for what they're doing to assist.

**2. Second Vice President's Report – SRCA Events – Katie Dominick**

**2.1. Upcoming Events/Activities - January Holiday Party Updates/Planning Needs/Budget:**

See notes in section 1.3 above.

**3. Secretary's Report – Karen Meade**

**3.1. Approve meeting minutes from the November 3, 2022, Board Meeting:**

Meade distributed the draft minutes for the November 3 SRCA meeting to the Board via email and no changes were received. Sutherland moved to approve the minutes; Weiblinger seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**4. Treasurer's Report – Scott Sutherland:** Sutherland had no notable changes to report this month.

**5. First Vice President's Report – Key Updates from Partner Associations/Coalitions – Krista Poretz**

**5.1. Seminary Hill Civic Association (SHA) Report:**

Poretz attended SHA's 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary / Annual Meeting in person on **Thursday, November 10, 2022**, at 7pm at Parish Hall of Immanuel Church on the Hill. Ms. Carter Flemming addressed the association with remarks announcing her departure as president of SHA and welcoming Bill Rossello as SHA's next president. Ms. Flemming will stay on the SHA board as a past president. She is moving on to be the president of the Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations (AFCA). Ms. Flemming gave a passionate speech regarding the issues that the SHA board has addressed during her tenure and continues to address on behalf of the community. Issues that will continue to be prioritized for SHA included Duke Street, school construction, new residential construction, and zoning code potentially impacting single family homes. The meeting was more of a celebration than a substantive meeting on the issues as are the normal monthly meetings.

November minutes are not yet available from the SHA. October minutes were published on December 8, 2022, by Bill Rossello and will be approved at the **December 8, 2022, SHA meeting which Poretz is attending in person**. October SHA minutes are included in Krista's report.

## 5.2. West End Coalition (WEC) Report:

On **Tuesday, November 15 at 7 p.m.**, community members, businesses and organizations attended a **virtual kick-off meeting launching the City's 18-month Alexandria West planning process**. A recording of the meeting is posted on the [project website](#). A list of pop-ups open to the community is available on the [project website](#) and will be updated with new events, as well as any changes due to weather or other circumstances. This planning process will engage the community to create a vision for the area's long-term future and explore topics such as housing affordability, equity, culture, land use, mobility, pedestrian and cyclist safety and accessibility, and connecting existing and future open spaces.

**Please see the following Community Poll due by December 31, 2022.**

**The planning process for Alexandria West depends on input from you!** We want to hear your thoughts and ideas on what can make your community even better with regard to topics like equity, culture, housing, getting around, land use, parks, safety, etc. Your feedback will help to shape a new Alexandria West Plan to guide the future.

Alexandria West is the area of the City of Alexandria generally located west of I-395. The map above shows the boundaries of the Alexandria West Plan Area, as well as major roads and landmarks within the plan area.

This poll consists of 9 questions and should take about ten minutes to complete. **Complete by December 31, 2022.**

**All questions are optional, and your individual responses will remain confidential.**  
**Community Poll #1**

Share your thoughts and ideas by December 31 on what can make your community even better. Your anonymous feedback will help to shape a new Alexandria West plan to guide the future.

- [English](#)
- [Amharic](#)
- [Arabic](#)
- [Spanish](#)

For more information, visit [alexandriava.gov/AlexandriaWest](http://alexandriava.gov/AlexandriaWest) or contact Jose Carlos Ayala, Principal Planner, Department of Planning and Zoning, 703.746.3820, or connect through WhatsApp text messenger 571.358.7569. For reasonable disability accommodation, contact Lisa Chase, 703.746.3831, Virginia Relay 711.

Poretz will attend the Google Meet WEC Meeting With City Councilman McPike on Saturday morning **December 10, 2022**, starting at 10am. Dial-in information and agenda for the meeting provided in Krista's report.

### **5.3. Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations (AFCA) Report:**

Poretz attended the virtual AFCA meeting on **November 30, 2022**, featuring guest Jim Parajon, Alexandria City Manager. Mr. Parajon provided opening remarks which included the following highlights:

- Alexandria has received an AAA bond rating again. A Triple-A (AAA) bond rating is the highest rating that bond agencies award to an investment that is considered to have a low risk of default, thereby making it the most creditworthy.
- Alexandria Police Department employee negotiations are complete.
- Still working on Alexandria Fire Department negotiations.
- 311 is still problematic.
- City is working on improving communications to residents.

Following Mr. Parajon's remarks, residents asked questions and voiced concerns. Mr. Parajon listed and acknowledged the remarks of residents. Here are some highlights:

1. When asked what specific efficiencies the City would realize in the upcoming review of services, Mr. Parajon did not give specifics but said an example would be stopping extra programs that had been in place with COVID as an option.
2. He acknowledged the City's response to tree canopy maintenance has not been satisfactory.
3. Mr. Parajon said the City is "looking at balance and choice" in regard to density and we need affordable housing and mechanisms for wealth creation. He elaborated that Metro Station areas can support more density.
4. Mr. Parajon acknowledged a resident's comment that affordable housing should be going to those most in need – at the lowest income levels – and that this is not always the case regarding what is actually happening with available affordable housing today.
5. Mr. Parajon said no decisions have been made regarding Duke Street and that perhaps the City should pause any planned decision making at this time.
6. Mr. Parajon said he would support civic associations' continued participation in zoning matters.

Finally, residents expressed concern that there would be a nude model present at the Old Town Holiday festival event taking place within the Torpedo Factory. The model is part of a body painting exhibit. Mr. Parajon acknowledged the concern and emphasized that the event is a private, ticketed event within the Torpedo Factory. Residents pointed out that the Torpedo Factory is managed by the City of Alexandria's Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities through the

Office of the Arts.

### **Urban Forestry Concern**

The Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations (AFCA) is very concerned about the status of staffing in the Urban Forestry Division and the Parks Operation Division within the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities (RPCA). These Divisions provide services to every neighborhood across Alexandria. Given their critical role in residents' quality of life and achieving the city's climate goals, AFCA respectfully requests that the current staffing shortage, and the conditions that precipitated it, be remedied immediately. **Status of letter from AFCA to the City Manager concerning this matter is unknown.**

## **6. Communications – Stephanie Clements Karner**

**6.1. SRCA Website Training Update:** Karner was unable to attend the meeting.

## **7. City of Alexandria Projects – Poretz/Sutherland/Jacob**

**7.1. Duke Street-in-Motion Update – Sutherland:** See notes in section 1.3 above.

**7.2. Inova Hospital Project Update – Poretz:**

No updates on the Inova Hospital Project since the last SRCA meeting. Regarding development of the new hospital at Landmark, there is a related Eisenhower West/Landmark Van Dorn Implementation Advisory Group Meeting on Thursday, January 26, 2022 from 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM at Patrick Henry Recreation Center.

[Landmark/Van Dorn Area Planning | City of Alexandria, VA \(alexandriava.gov\)](https://www.aalexandriava.gov/landmark-van-dorn-area-planning)

**8. Parliamentary Report – David Pritzker:** Pritzker has put a lot of time into updating the content of the covenants and by-laws, but the formatting went haywire when he made the updates. He requested help from someone more familiar with Microsoft Word formatting to assist with this. Weiblinger advised that Pritzker can email it to both he and Meade for help.

## **9. SSSAS (St. Stephens & St. Agnes School) Liaison – Beth Chase**

**9.1. SSSAS Updates:**

- Holiday music concerts will be taking place on December 8 and 9 at 7:00 pm in the Chapel Performing Arts Center.
- On December 11 there will be an afternoon concert open to the community. St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School invites you to join us for our community's Lessons and Carols Jazz Vespers Concert on Sunday, Dec. 11 at 4 p.m., in the Upper School Chapel and Performing Arts Center (CPAC). Join as the Rev. Chris Miller shares the story of Christmas and the SSSAS Octet swings your favorite holiday songs with the rhythms and soul of jazz and the spirit of season. Of course, no Christmas Celebration would be complete without Santa and his Elves stopping by to say hello and to share his big red bag of candy canes!! This concert is free to the community and open to all ages. We also invite you to support our local families in need through

our gift card drive. If you feel led to do so, we are asking for gift card donations to help support the Mother of Light Center. It is encouraged to make gift card amounts between \$25 and \$50. If you would like to give more, we ask to do that through multiple gift cards which would increase our reach to supported families. Walmart and Target gift cards are highly recommended.

- SSSAS's winter break is from December 16 through January 3.
- SSSAS's Spring performance of Mama Mia will be held on January 3 and January 10 at 7:00 pm and on January 4 at 2:00 pm.

**10. BEHC Update – Jeremy Flachs:** Flachs was unable to attend the meeting.

**11. Home Sales in Seminary Ridge – Kate Hennigan:** Hennigan was unable to attend the meeting.

**12. Welcome Committee for New Residents – Kate Hennigan:** Hennigan was unable to attend the meeting.

**13. SRCA Historian – Mike Brookbank:** Brookbank was unable to attend the meeting.

**14. Any Additional Old Business – Weiblinger:** There was no old business to report.

**15. New Business – Weiblinger**

- 15.1. Introduce motion to waive next SRCA Board Meeting scheduled for Thursday, January 5, 2023 and reconvene on Thursday, February 2, 2023 at 7:30 pm instead:**  
Sutherland moved to waive the SRCA Board Meeting scheduled for January 5 (since it falls the day before the holiday party) and reconvene on the appropriate day in February; it was seconded by Meade and unanimously approved.

**16. Continued “Open Mic” for SRCA Community – Weiblinger**

**17. Adjournment of SRCA Board Meeting – Weiblinger:** Weiblinger moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 pm; it was seconded by Sutherland and unanimously approved.

**SRCA Association is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.**

**To Join Zoom Meeting:**

**Time: December 8, 2022 - 7:30-8:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83515392098?pwd=bnh2R0g5L0FSVWIDTXVxQzFRUmhEQT09>

Meeting ID: 835 1539 2098

Passcode: 477746



