



# SEMINARY RIDGE CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

## MINUTES

### SRCA BOARD MEETING

June 1, 2023 – 7:00-8:00 PM by Zoom Conference Call

#### In attendance:

Richie Weiblinger, President; Jeanne Jacob, Immediate Past President; Krista Poretz, First Vice President; Katie Dominick, Second Vice President; Karen Meade, Secretary; David Pritzker, Parliamentarian; Mike Brookbank, Historian; Sergeant Tony Moore, Alexandria City Police Department (ACPD); Lieutenant Lemuel Houston, Alexandria Sheriff's Office Liaison; Beth Chase, SSSAS Liaison; Resident: Patricia Evans

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

##### 1.1. Welcome to SRCA Board Members and SR Residents Joining Meeting: Weiblinger

wasn't able to join the meeting until a few minutes past the hour, so Meade called the meeting to order at 7:03pm and welcomed those in attendance via Zoom.

**1.1.1. Questions/Concerns from SR Residents – "Open Mic":** No questions or concerns were raised.

##### 1.2. Priority Areas for Tonight's Meeting:

**1.2.1. Recap of SRCA Spring Yard Sale – Saturday, May 20:** The Community yard sale went well and approximately 15 homes participated. Dominick recommended that we order new signs for next year since she didn't think we had enough signage up this year.

**1.2.2. Recap of SRCA Spring Community Party – Sunday, May 21:** About 80 people RSVP'd and a little less than that attended but we still had a great turnout. A lot of positive feedback was received regarding the timing of the event: COVID was not as big of a concern since we were able to hold the event outdoors, and Spring is not as busy as the winter holiday season. Dominick noted the Wainsteins are open to hosting again in the future during a time when the party can be held outdoors.

##### 1.3. Reports from SRCA's ACPD Liaison/Alexandria's Sheriff's Liaison:

Officer Moore: Everyone is concerned about uptick in violent crimes in the area, such as car jackings and shootings. The Chief of Police created a new task force to help go after these criminals – they will start in two weeks. These types of crimes haven't hit our association, but surrounding areas have been hit.

One Board member noted the large number of Kias and Hyundais being stolen. Officer Moore said there has been a high increase of these incidents in the City and explained that it started on TikTok where young offenders displayed how to make these cars easier to steal, and it went viral worldwide. These types of cars are easy to break into and steal, so the manufacturers have issued a recall to address the matter but that will take some time to resolve. In the meantime, they're advising citizens to increase the safety of their vehicle to the extent they're able, by purchasing things such as Ring cameras, steering wheel locks, etc.

The same Board member asked whether the officers hired for this special task force are adequately trained to address these crimes. Officer Moore noted that they will have high levels of supervision. Officer Moore also sent a survey to Weiblinger asking what we'd like to see this Community Action Support Team do in particular.

The Board member then asked if any Alexandria Police Officers have access to mental health professionals. Officer Moore explained that they have a core unit that offers mental health services to the community, and this unit is expanding in order to be able to provide 24/7 support - they are stationed within the police dept and at the new Del Pepper City Hall on the West End.

Lt. Houston: No significant updates to share tonight from the Sheriff's office. They are increasing community engagement programs into the Spring and Summer months. Additionally, lots of significant security upgrades are coming to the courthouse in Old Town and the Detention Center Bureau.

## **2. Secretary's Report – Karen Meade**

**2.1. Approve meeting minutes from the May 4, 2023 Board Meeting:** Brookbank moved to approve the May 4, 2023 meetings minutes as drafted, Weiblinger seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**2.2. SRCA Community Directory Updates:** Meade is in the process of reaching out to printers to obtain quotes for printing and binding of our directories.

**2.2.1. Resident's Privacy Concern:** Our Squarespace representative, Michael Woodward, responded via email on May 11, 2023 indicating that Google had rejected his request. He believes it's because the URL for the document in question references Squarespace's web address (since that's how they do file management for sites on their platform). He included Google's response as a screenshot. Squarespace said they had done everything they could do when he last

contacted them, so at this point he doesn't think there is much else we can do. The file itself has been fully removed and Google's indexing it outside of our control.

**3. Treasurer's Report – Scott Sutherland:** Sutherland was unable to attend the meeting.

**3.1. Status of Dues**

**3.2. Updates on any Outstanding Reimbursements:** Dominick and Meade have outstanding reimbursement requests that have been submitted to Sutherland.

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

**4.1. Seminary Hill Civic Association (SHA) Report:** Poretz attended the May 11 SHA meeting which was held via zoom. Of note is that our very own Susan Clark-Sestak was voted in as an "at-large" member of the SHA Board.

SHA Board is comprised of: 9 areas (SRCA is "area 9"), up to 4 "at-large" board members, VTS and Episcopal are board members, and school representatives are board members.

Bill Rossello presented the Zoning for Housing briefing he gave at the April 2023 SRCA meeting.

Small Area Plan – Strawberry Hill will be upcoming but date is TBD.

Regarding consolidation of SHA areas, reduction of area reps:

- Some "areas" have grown in population due to development
- Potentially combine Area 2 and 3
- Potentially combine Area 5 and 8
- Area 9 is not fully encompassing SRCA boundaries – Krista noted that if SHA is redrawing the boundaries, Area 9 (SRCA) should be redrawn to include all of SRCA (to include the SRCA section of Ft. Williams and Templeton)

Going forward SHA will meet 5 monthly meetings in person at Immanuel on the Hill and 5 via Zoom.

Treasurer's Report: \$22K balance; No donations and no expenses in April 2023

**Area Reports**

- Area 2 – Fence going up, lots of noise
- Area 3 – DMES in "sprint mode" to open schools in August. City just approved Overtime for construction companies.
- Area 8 – Coyote sightings recently, protect your small animals
- VTS – graduation took place
- SSASS – June 3 graduation; June 13 construction starts on grounds

**4.2. West End Coalition (WEC) Report:** The next Quarterly WEC meeting takes place virtually on June 3, 2023. Meeting link: [meet.google.com/jcg-iwwd-tch](https://meet.google.com/jcg-iwwd-tch) or join by phone 1-319-449-2100 PIN 928824802. A special guest at the meeting will be Karl Moritz, Director of Planning and Zoning.

The WEC recently shared information regarding the City's Committee, staff, and process associated with street renaming and that information can be found here: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/equity/confederate-street-renaming> The Naming Committee will meet to discuss and prioritize street renaming for 2023 in September 2023, exact date TBD. A series of public engagement sessions will follow. See details on the website provided. Hardee Place, named for William Joseph Hardee, General CSA, is a street in the SRCA community that is on the Inventory of Confederate Street Names in Alexandria. There are 41 streets total on the list. Interestingly, Griffith Place is also listed as a "Possible Confederate Street Name" citing that the street may have been named for Richard Griffith, Brigadier General, CSA.

**4.3. Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations (AFCA) Report:** AFCA met virtually on May 31, 2023. Jim Parajon, Alexandria City Manager, opened the program. AFCA drafted a letter requesting a delay on the Zoning for Housing proposal. AFCA is planning a Housing Forum in the September/October timeframe.

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

### **5.1. Recap of May 20 SRCA Spring Yard Sale**

### **5.2. Recap of May 21 SRCA Spring Community Party at the Wainsteins**

**5.3. Upcoming Events: Screen on the Green, and Annual Picnic and Meeting:** Dominick will inquire with Kate Hennigan about what's needed for this event. If anyone has any preferences regarding dates or movie selections, please let her know. Jacob noted that last year the event was held on June 17 with a rain date of June 24. Jacob will share the flyer that was used last year for reference. Beth Chase confirmed the outdoor speakers have been updated and construction will be on the baseball outfield, so as long as the event remains on the football field there should be no issues.

**5.3.1. Picnic food, games, registration table, and Annual Meeting lead, voting materials (proxy, letters, etc.):** Materials that need to be printed include the SRCA Directories, proxy, and a letter from the President with named officers up for election. Jacob will share the documents that were used last year. Voting can be done both in person and electronically. It was noted that the biggest issue will be finding candidates, and that the sooner this process is started the easier it will be.

Beth Chase offered to get back to us with some possible dates for the Annual Meeting and Picnic that is held on SSSAS grounds.

## **6. Communications Report – Stephanie Karner:** Karner was unable to attend the meeting.

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

**7.1. Duke Street-in-Motion Updates – Krista Poretz:** The Duke Street Advisory Group met for the last time on May 25 and put forth recommendations to the City for a preferred concept for the corridor. Council will hold a public hearing and consider the recommendation on June 27, 2023.

Lack of reliable data from the City has been a concern for the Advisory Group and residents throughout the process. Here is an excerpt of the recommendations that were sent to City Council by the Advisory Group:

"The Advisory Group rejects the recommendation from the 2012 Transit Corridors Feasibility Plan for the corridor in favor of the following plan: The long-term plan for the corridor should include center running bus lanes for the entirety of Duke Street with separate spaces for pedestrians and cyclists. This long-term plan would be partially dependent on redevelopment and available funding and should be assessed further during the Duke Street Small Area Plan process. In the near-term, the City should work toward this long-term plan as much as possible, when finalizing a design that can be constructed with available funding. To that end, the following busway treatments should be advanced on the Duke Street corridor, along with signal technology improvements, while maintaining two general purpose travel lanes in each direction along the entirety of the corridor..."

You can read the two-page document that lists the recommendations on the following website: [https://www.alexandriava.gov/sites/default/files/2023-05/Attachment%202%20-%20AG%20Recommendation\\_5-25-23.pdf](https://www.alexandriava.gov/sites/default/files/2023-05/Attachment%202%20-%20AG%20Recommendation_5-25-23.pdf)

Jacob suggested that if residents are concerned about this they are encouraged to send letters to City Council and local newspapers.

**7.2. Inova Hospital Project Updates – Krista Poretz:** No updates. **Seminary Road Rezoning Questions?** email [seminaryroad@inova.org](mailto:seminaryroad@inova.org)

**7.3. Strawberry Run Updates – Jeanne Jacob:** Nothing has happened except that the final report on the City of Alexandria Stream Improvement Project Processes and Outcomes for Taylor Run and Strawberry Run has come out from the Institute of Engagement & Negotiation (IEN) at the University of Virginia.

## **8. Parliamentary Report – David Pritzker**

**8.1. SRCA Constitution and Bylaws Update:** This has been proofread and completed.

**8.2. Nominating Committee for 2023-2024 Officers:** There is a provision in the Bylaws that states prior to the Annual Meeting, the President may appoint a nominating committee

for each of the elected officers. The list of names should be provided to the membership at least 10 days prior to the meeting.

Poretz informed the Board that after her term ends in September, she is not planning to run for re-election. She thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve as First Vice President and looks forward to continuing in her role through the September meeting and also supporting SRCA community events in the future. Jacob suggested her role could be managed by a committee moving forward instead of just one person since it requires a significant time commitment.

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

### **9.1. SSSAS Updates**

SSSAS will be having their graduation at 9:30am on Saturday, June 3 at the Upper School Campus. Please note that cars will be allowed to park on both sides of St. Stephen's Road for this event between 9am-1:30pm.

SSSAS construction will begin on June 14, 2023, with contractors starting on June 15. They will start by preparing the interior for demo first, with exterior demo to follow in July. The science wing, maintenance shop, and dining hall are coming down on the back side of the school – they're taking the grade down and rebuilding these areas. SSSAS will be redirecting pick-up from the Upper School to the Middle School during construction, but there will still be an impact to traffic during the day due to the construction. SSSAS is limiting the construction and delivery trucks from entering during certain times, and the City will be giving them the route they are supposed to take. Chase will share the route with us once she receives it. Please notify her if you notice any violations so she can report them. No excavation will be taking place outside of the campus.

**10. Beth El Hebrew Congregation (BEHC) Update – Jeremy Flachs:** Flachs was unable to attend the meeting but indicated the notes he shared with us via email after the May meeting are still current. These notes are included in the May 4 Meeting Minutes.

**11. Home Sales in Seminary Ridge – Kate Hennigan:** Hennigan was unable to attend the meeting but shared the following updates shortly after the meeting via email:

#### **Seminary Ridge Sales:**

- 3801 Griffith Place is still on the market, with a price drop this week to \$1.5M
- 817 St. Stephens sold in just 5 days with a list price of \$1.495, will settle on 6/14
- Market conditions continue to be strong, with sellers still having an edge over buyers. Interest rates have stabilized (and even dropped a bit) and buyers are still ready and willing to move. We expect things to slow slightly as the Summer gears up, but all signs point to another strong Fall market.

**Other notes** - I am hosting my annual End of School Year Ice Cream Truck event on 6/14 from 4pm - 5pm. Everyone in the neighborhood is welcome to come by for a sweet treat courtesy of Kate Bertles Hennigan with McEnearney Associates.

**12. Welcome Committee for New Residents – Kate Hennigan:** Hennigan was unable to attend the meeting but shared the following updates shortly after the meeting via email:

Welcome packets have been dropped to 826 St. Stephens and 3948 Ft. Worth.

4012 N. Garland will be dropped off when they move in (under construction currently)

**13. SRCA Historian – Mike Brookbank:** From a historian standpoint, Brookbank noted that our first houses are over 50 years old. A resident he spoke with at the Spring party, who is a former real estate agent, shared some recommendations with Brookbank to share with the Board for consideration regarding improving the exterior appearance of homes and helping to give SR homes a more uniform look. A couple of the recommendations included pressure washing driveways and screening trash and recycling cans.

Brookbank also offered that we may want to poll other neighbors for potential interest in home improvements like driveway replacement, roof repair, drywall repair, etc. If we get a significant number of residents who are interested, it could drive down the price significantly. We could explore this more and potentially poll residents via SRCA emails.

Weiblinger made another suggestion to perhaps share with the listserv any contractors we are really happy with/would recommend.

**14. Old Business – Richie Weiblinger**

**15. New Business – Richie Weiblinger**

**15.1.** Next SRCA Board Meeting – **July 6, 2023 at 7:00 pm:** We may need to reconsider this date due to it falling within the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday week.

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

Weiblinger noted that on St. Stephens and Ft. Worth Ave. there are large off-white boxes that are being installed above ground on the easements that look like transformers. He thought they were related to Verizon Cable but is unsure because the boxes are unmarked. No one on the call knew anything about them or whether resident’s were notified ahead of time. Weiblinger offered to send an inquiry to the City.

One Board member shared that Commonwealth One Federal Credit Union holds a semi-annual collection for paper shredding on Eisenhower Ave. The next one will be held sometime in the Fall. Additionally, there is a Shred Day on June 10, 2023 from 10:00-11:00 am at Good Shepard Lutheran Church: 100 West Luray Avenue.

Pritzker is part of the National Concert Band of America and they are holding their first concert of the summer this Sunday, June 4, 2023 at 7:00pm at Ft. Hunt Park. All are welcome to attend.

**17. Adjournment of SRCA Board Meeting – Richie Weiblinger:** Weiblinger moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:09 pm; it was seconded by Brookbank and unanimously approved.

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

#### **To Join Zoom Meeting:**

**Time: June 1, 2023 - 7:00-8:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)**

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

**Meeting ID: 835 1539 2098**

**Passcode: 477746**

#### **One tap mobile**

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+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

Meeting ID: 835 1539 2098

Passcode: 477746

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83515392098?pwd=bnh2R0g5L0FSVWIDTXVxQzFRUmhEQT09>