

## 2019 – 2020 BUDGET ADVISORY COUNCIL

January 8, 2020

The meeting started at 7:03 PM.

1. Welcome and Introductions
  - a. Eleven members were present: Bob Ramsey (Chair), Melanie Bowen (Vice-Chair), Cecilia Ciepiela-Kaelin, Erik Sullivan, Wei Chen, Heather Jones, Katherine Christensen, Lisa Blackwell, Juan Gordon, Jr., Debra Curtman, and Jennifer Wagener (Lida Anestidou and Chuck Rush joined via phone)
  - b. APS staff member Leslie Peterson
  - c. School Board Liaison Monique O'Grady
2. Public Comment
  - a. None
3. Transportation Initiatives – Kristin Haldeman, APS Director, Multimodal Transportation Planning provided a briefing on the status of student transportation
  - a. 206 total buses covering 159 routes (400+ trips to schools) by 165 drivers
    - i. About 2,500 bus stops
  - b. All routes covered this year – it has been difficult to fill bus driver positions
  - c. 17,226 students eligible for bus transportation
    - i. About 60% actually riding; special challenges with specialized transportation – working on improved coordination with the Special Education Office
  - d. Transportation challenges
    - i. Growing enrollment
    - ii. Volume of stops and increasing road traffic
    - iii. Daily driver shortages/absences
    - iv. Bell schedules close together
    - v. Limited spaces for bus parking
  - e. Activities Transportation
    - i. Have had to charter buses for some sports-related events for Middle School and High School
    - ii. These are sometimes needed during the peak times of school dismissals
    - iii. Working group formed to address challenges
  - f. Transportation Staffing
    - i. With enrollment growth, only 2 staff people handling the routing for all of APS general transportation and 1 staff person handling routing for Specialized transportation
      1. Staff unable to keep up with calls and emails through September
      2. Lacking a good call center system
  - g. Transit Pilot
    - i. 3 programs – 113 enrolled students; most from H-B Woodlawn
    - ii. Funds loaded manually (by Kristin) via WMATA – working through some occasional backend issues
    - iii. 11% of enrolled pilot users using full amount and 53% using partial amount
    - iv. Pilot users providing travel log data – overall bus experience on-time
    - v. Will do focus groups later in the school year

- h. Hub Stops for Countywide Programs
    - i. Implemented for Montessori and H-B – 37 locations
    - ii. Results
      - 1. Reduced travel time
      - 2. On time arrivals
      - 3. General acceptance of program; some challenges for families with longer distances to bus stop
      - 4. Reduced 2 overall bus trips
- 4. APS Compensation – Leslie Peterson provided a briefing using March 2019 School Board working session materials
  - a. Salaries & Benefits are 78% of total budget
  - b. Teacher salary scale comparison for Bachelor, Masters and Doctorate lanes
    - i. Variances in APS rank across step levels and scale lane
    - ii. APS more competitive in the Masters and Doctorate scales
    - iii. Comparisons just updated for 2020 – greater variance between jurisdictions and APS slightly less competitive overall
  - c. Various options for increasing compensation
    - i. Step Increase – does not impact Longevity/Top of Scale
    - ii. Cost of Living Adjustment – for all not on a Step scale
    - iii. Other variations modelled and discussed
- 5. APS Compensation – Union Perspective and Path Forward – Josh Folb from Arlington Education Association
  - a. AEA believes fair pay involves STEP, COLA (inflation) and Market Rate Adjustments under the current compensation structure
  - b. Since 2010 there has only been two full adjustments to the pay scale
  - c. Hourly workers have no pay scale
  - d. Current stumbling blocks
    - i. COLA – tie it to something specific (like Social Security)
    - ii. Market – Require every scale to be reviewed every five years
    - iii. STEP – Require all lapse and turnover funds to be directed to STEP
  - e. Structural changes:
    - i. Budget should start each year with STEP and COLA
    - ii. Put every employee on a scale
    - iii. Eliminate longevity steps
  - f. AEA feels APS is not presenting a “needs based budget”, as required
- 6. Minutes from December Meeting approved by all members
- 7. Reports
  - a. School Board Update
    - i. Monique announced opportunities for citizens to give feedback on the needs for the new superintendent position

The meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.