

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School Board Meeting
December 17, 2020

Item C-1-c

The Arlington School Board convened on Thursday, December 17, 2020 at 7:01 PM. This meeting was held by electronic communications means due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, using Microsoft Teams.¹

Present were:

Monique O’Grady, Chair
Barbara Kanninen, Vice Chair
Reid Goldstein, Member
Tannia Talento, Member
Nancy Van Doren, Member
Melanie Elliott, Clerk

Also present were:

Dr. Francisco Durán, Superintendent
Raj Adusumilli, Assistant Superintendent, Information Services
Jeannette Allen, Interim Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services
Catherine Ashby, Assistant Superintendent, School and Community Relations
John Chadwick, Assistant Superintendent, Facilities and Operations
Bridget Loft, Assistant Superintendent, Teaching and Learning
Leslie Peterson, Assistant Superintendent, Finance and Management
Dan Redding, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources
Lisa Stengle, Executive Director, Planning and Evaluation
Arron Gregory, Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer
Brian Stockton, Chief of Staff

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. REGULAR MEETING OPENING:

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. **Citizen Comment on Agenda and Non-Agenda Items:**

The following speakers addressed the Board, expressing concerns about the dangers of going back to school and the increase of COVID cases in Arlington, and encouraging APS to keep instruction virtual. One speaker was concerned that breastfeeding is no longer on the list of accommodations for telework:

¹ Video clips of regular School Board meetings can be viewed on the APS Web site at the following link: <https://www.apsva.us/school-board-meetings/view-school-board-meetings/>
DVDs of all regular School Board meetings are also available for viewing in the School Board office.

Molly Haines, staff member
Christine Bolon, teacher
Daniel Graver, spouse of teacher

The following speakers addressed the Board, asking APS to bring children back to school, expressing concerns about the negative impact of virtual learning on learning and social/emotional well-being:

Ashley Nguyen, parent
Andrew Sorkin, parent and his daughter
Amanda Cuthbertson, parent
Anna Chenoweth, parent
Ashley Callen, parent
Marianne Gray, parent
Erin Wasiak, parent
Sheila Leonard, parent
Jamie Brys, parent
Aaron Asimakopoulos, parent
Deanna Caputo, parent

The following speakers also addressed the Board:

Gina Quirk, parent: providing suggestions to improve virtual learning.

Ingrid Gant, President, Arlington Education Association: asking the administration to share more detailed information about COVID occurrence in the schools with parents, staff and the community.

Jeremy Siegel, Jefferson Activities Director: celebrating and thanking Nancy Van Doren for her service and contributions to the schools and to the community.

Christina Headrick, parent: asking for HEPA air cleaners in every classroom and good ventilation to ensure that students and staff are safe when they return.

4. Recognitions

The Washington-Liberty High School Chorus led by Theresa Severin, and the Yorktown High School Chorus, led by Jocelyn Mullins, provided virtual performances of winter holiday songs.

The Board recognized outgoing Board Members Tannia Talento and Nancy Van Doren, thanking them for their dedication and commitment to Arlington Public Schools over the years of their service on the Board.

5. Announcements

- *December 21, 2020 Virtual Swearing in for new School Board Members Cristina Diaz-Torres and David Priddy, 5 PM*

- *December 21, 2020 – January 1, 2021 Winter Break for Students*
- *January 4, 2021 Virtual Closed Meeting, 5:15 PM*

Mr. Goldstein shared events and activities at his liaison schools. Ms. O’Grady described the new process for managing speakers that will be introduced at the January 7, 2021 Board meeting to provide more equitable opportunities to the community. She then shared an update on communications received by the Board.

5. Superintendent’s Announcements and Updates

Dr. Durán announced the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Virtual Literary and Visual Arts Contest. He provided an update on meal services, highlighted activities in the schools, and encouraged all to have a safe, peaceful holiday. Dr. Durán then provided an update on programs and initiatives in the 2020-21 School Board Action Plan, including the Elementary boundary process, school renaming processes, the School Resource Officer Work Group, and review of school board policies.

Board members appreciated the update and wished all a happy and restful winter break. In response to a question, Dr. Durán confirmed that staff will work closely with the Key Immersion community in preparing for their move to a new building.

C. CONSENT AGENDA: (9:05 PM)

Dr. Kanninen moved to adopt the consent agenda, seconded by Ms. Van Doren. The motion was adopted in a vote of 5 – 0. The voting record is as follows: Mr. Goldstein – Aye; Dr. Kanninen – Aye; Ms. O’Grady – Aye; Ms. Talento – Aye; and Ms. Van Doren – Aye. The following items or actions were approved as a part of consent:

1. Minutes:

- June 23, 2020 Joint School Board/County Board CIP Work Session
- September 3, 2020 Arlington Public Schools-School Resource Officer Work Session
- November 23, 2020 Closed Meeting
- December 1, 2020 Public Hearing on Elementary Boundaries
- December 1, 2020 Work Session on Special Education
- December 7, 2020 Legislative Meeting

2. Personnel Actions:

P/E SCALE

1 Change In Position/Salary

T-SCALE PERSONNEL

- 1 Appointment
- 1 Change In Position/Salary
- 3 Resignations
- 5 Retirements

5 Reorganization and Reclassification Requests
Classification Specification – Director of Safety, Security, Risk and
Emergency Management
Classification Specification – Lead Accident Investigator
Classification Specification – Safety Specialist II
Classification Specification – Division Counsel
Classification Specification – Senior Paralegal

A-SCALE PERSONNEL

4 Appointments
1 Change In Position/Salary
1 Resignation

SUPPORT SERVICES PERSONNEL

3 Appointments
4 Changes In Position/Salary
1 Resignation
2 Retirements

3. New Elementary School at Reed Project Change due to Phase 1 Stormwater Improvements
4. Extension of Temporary Waiver to Residency Distance in Policy J-5.3.30 Admissions
5. Appointments to Joint Facilities Advisory Commission

Ms. O’Grady confirmed that under consent the Board approved the extension of the temporary waiver to residency distance in Policy J-5.3.30 Admissions and made appointments to the Joint Facilities Advisory Commission.

D. MONITORING ITEMS: (9:07 PM)

1. School Year 2020-2021 Update

Dr. Durán presented the update, sharing a graphic illustrating the decision-making process for the return to in-person learning. He stressed the need to recognize different perspectives and the need to work together to address issues. He confirmed efforts to increase transparency around COVID cases in APS and shared key takeaways for moving forward. He also shared results of the Level 3 parent survey on hybrid or distance learning. An update on secondary grades and data on middle school reading was also presented. Dr. Durán described solutions and next steps being implemented to support student learning and provide interventions to address areas of concern. A brief update on operational work to address air quality was also shared, and in closing Dr. Durán presented an update on financial projections.

Board members appreciated the information provided, particularly the instructional data on secondary grades and reading. Staff responded to questions about aspects

of hybrid learning, the data presented, and plans to return. The group discussed attendance issues, strengthening communications with families struggling with virtual learning, literacy interventions, and air quality. Other topics discussed were accommodations for breastfeeding mothers and the secondary workspace program.

E. ACTION ITEMS: (10:31 PM)

1. In-House General Counsel:

Ms. Peterson confirmed that this proposal will result in long-term savings.

Ms. Van Doren moved that the Board approve the Superintendent's recommendation to create and budget for an APS Division Counsel and a Paralegal position during FY21. The motion was seconded by Dr. Kanninen. Ms. O'Grady called for a vote and the motion was adopted in a vote of 5-0. The voting record is as follows: Mr. Goldstein – Aye; Dr. Kanninen – Aye; Ms. O'Grady – Aye; Ms. Talento – Aye; and Ms. Van Doren – Aye.

2. The Heights Schematic Design Studies Funding: (10:31 PM)

Staff confirmed that this capital project item was separate from the contract for the first phase of The Heights facility, which has been completed.

Ms. Talento moved that the Board approve the proposed design study for The Heights, to be performed by Stantec Architecture for a fee of \$115,109; Approve the Heights Building Phase 2 as a capital Project; and approve transfer of \$115,109 from the Capital Reserve into the project. The motion was seconded by Ms. Van Doren.

Mr. Goldstein expressed concerns about previous issues APS has had with Stantec Architecture and stated he will not support another contract with this firm. Board members spoke briefly to the concerns expressed by Mr. Goldstein.

Ms. O'Grady called for a vote and the motion was adopted in a vote of 4-1. The voting record is as follows: Mr. Goldstein – Nay; Dr. Kanninen – Aye; Ms. O'Grady – Aye; Ms. Talento – Aye; and Ms. Van Doren – Aye.

F. INFORMATION ITEMS: (10:50 PM)

1. FY2020 Final Fiscal Closeout and Status Report and CIP Quarterly Report

Ms. Peterson presented the FY 2020 Final Fiscal closeout, outlining the closeout process and confirming overall net available funds of \$27 million. She reviewed the net available balance for the seven funds in the budget and described reconciliation of county funding that APS receives. The recommendation from staff is for the Board to set aside \$15 million from this closeout for future years budgets.

Responding to questions, staff spoke to the status of lapse and carryover funds, how reserves are managed, and how staff plans to close the funding gap for FY 2021.

Ms. Peterson then presented the CIP quarterly report, sharing a financial update on major construction projects and a summary of the status of the minor construction/major maintenance projects through June of 2020. In closing, she summarized the reserves as of the 4th quarter.

2. Proposed Amendment of School Board Policy I-7.2.5.30 Prevention, Intervention and Remediation: (11:16 PM)

Ms. Loft summarized the proposed amendment to this policy to bring the policy in line with state code in terms of parental notification.

3 Dominion Right of Way Agreement and Plat for Langston Property: (11:18 PM)

Ms. Cathy Lin, Director, Facilities and Operations, presented this item, confirming that the right of way agreement will allow installation of electrical equipment needed to support renovation of Fire Station Eight.

Ms. Lin responded to briefly to questions about the project and agreed to follow up with Dominion on the clause in the agreement related to possible property damage.

G. INFORMATION/ACTION: (11:29 PM)

1. First Amendment to Lease Agreement with Highland Holdings LLC

Ms. Lin presented this this amendment, noting it had been shared with the Board in October but had been renegotiated. She described changes that were made to the proposed amendment and provided additional information about its status.

Mr. Goldstein moved that the Board approve the 1st Amendment to the Lease Agreement with Highland Holdings, LLC, seconded by Ms. Van Doren. The motion was adopted in a vote of 5 – 0. The voting record is as follows: Mr. Goldstein – Aye; Dr. Kanninen – Aye; Ms. O’Grady – Aye; Ms. Talento – Aye; and Ms. Van Doren – Aye.

H. NEW BUSINESS: NONE

I. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 PM.

ATTEST:

Melanie Elliott, Clerk
Arlington School Board

Monique O’Grady, Chair
Arlington School Board