**Seminary Hill Association, Inc.**

***Monthly Board of Director’s Meeting***

**Thursday, March 8, 2018 at 7:30 PM**

**Parish House, Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill**

**3606 Seminary Road, Alexandria, VA**

**Announcements:** President Jennings asked everyone to please sign in. She also said:

* The HHI water bottle left at a meeting is yet to be claimed.
* The City received a $4,000 grant toward conservation for studying the Alexandria 18th Century Ship after coming in second in a contest.
* The West End Coalition will sponsor a Candidate Forum in the fall.
* Parks & Recreation began the 2019 Community Matching Funds Application Process.
* A January meeting concerning a DoD study on helicopter noise with Representative Don Beyer was well attended.
* City Council approved an additional $773,000 last Tuesday to pay the National Park Service to use its land and help oversee the Metro construction.
* City Planning and Zoning is considering a residential front porch text amendment.

**Police Report**: There was no report.

**Sheriff’s Report:** Sheriff Captain Joe Pankey said the program on Heroin & Other Opioids in February was well attended and he appreciated our advice on allowing parking on W. Braddock Road. As part of the accreditation process, public comments are welcome by phone: 703-746-5005 on April 9 3-5 pm or in person: April 10 at 5 pm at the Alexandria Courthouse, Circuit Court Room 3, 520 King Street.

**Program:** **The Financial State of the City with guest speaker Vice Mayor Justin Wilson**.

Justin gave an overview of the City Budget status:

* The City Budget had a tax growth rate of about 6.5% for about six years but dropped to a 2% growth rate lately. Revenue growth is low about 1.9%.
* Alexandria is being asked for additional funding for WMATA/METRO to provide a steady funding stream
* The City Manager was told by City Council to develop a budget plan with no tax rate increase with only a $12M increase due to increased property assessments
* City Council wants a $10M Capital Improvement Program this year.
* He provided the schedule for the proposed budget hearings.
* The growth rate for student enrollment in Alexandria is the 4th fastest in Virginia. Alexandria has not built a new school in 18 years.

Following the overview, Justin answered many questions from the audience:

* The new West End elementary school building will be five floors with the school using the lower three floors. The use of the upper two floors is undecided.
* With respect to a new High School, there are lots of plans and ideas but much analysis still needs to be done.
* The City has a longstanding storm water management issue and is getting very little (if any) support from the State Government to help fix the problem.
* Jack Sullivan, Area 5 Representative, stated that the City (according to Justin) needed $500M for a Capital Improvement Program and asked who is going to pay for this effort? Justin said ‘we’ are working on this but the taxpayers will ultimately have to pay for it. He went on to explain that a significant amount of money has been devoted to ‘schools.’
* He said Seminary Road would be paved in Fiscal Year 2019
* He said the ‘bottom line’ is that the City and the School Board are finally on the same wave length with respect to Capital Improvement Projects.

Overall, the presentation by Vice Mayor Wilson was well received and appreciated by the audience, and it generated lots of discussions.

**Minutes:**  The minutes from the February meeting were approved with a minor change.

**Treasurer’s Report**: No change from last month – we still have $30,533.82 in the bank.

**Area Reports**: Carol Johnson, Area 1, reported via email that the TCW Principal had informed the neighborhood of upcoming weekend activities and residents were without power for 3-4 days; Bill Goff, Area 2, said his neighbors and Area 1 had met with a representative from the School Board and reviewed the latest stadium design but they still objected to the nearness to their properties and the lights; Dick Hobson, Area 3, said sidewalks had been improved on Quaker Lane and there have been recent improvements at MacArthur Elementary School; Jack Sullivan, Area 5, discussed residential damage related to last week’s storm; Tom Fulton, Area 6, opined that the City’s plan to hire a consultant to create new signs at Fort Ward Park was a bad idea and that the community had created the ones there now and needed to be consulted about any changes; Mary Ann Coates, substituting for Area 9, said that the VTS should be involved in any issues affecting Seminary Road; Joe Fischer, At Large, said the Goodman property lost several trees in the storm; and David Gortner, VTS, noted the many power outages on Seminary Hill and asked how to get our lines underground; Christina Holt, EHS, announced The High School practicing emergency response drills after the recent tragedy in Parkland, Florida. David Gortner said VTS is also practicing.

**Old Business:**

* *TC Williams Stadium* – About 30 residents had a community meeting on February 28th that was hosted by VTS with a School Board representative and a consultant, during which school board members were not allowed to talk. After a review of the most recent design for the stadium—lights, sound system, and refreshment stand—residents expressed frustration that their concerns are only being given lip service and have not been ameliorated. They announced that they are now represented by a DC law firm, pro bono, which is looking into how their civil rights are being violated.
* *Affordable Housing at Fairlington Presbyterian Church* – the neighbors have sent a letter to the Mayor asking for a neighborhood representative on the Advisory Panel of the Design Working Group that oversees the development’s issues.
* *Central Alexandria Traffic Study* – Tom Fulton gave an update on how the study was put together and recommended that SHA stay closely involved in the recommendation from the Traffic Study. A proposal to approve recommendations 1 through 5 affecting Seminary Hills was tabled until SHA’s April meeting to allow for more time to ‘get out the word’ to residents. There was considerable discussion on this issue.
* *Eisenhower West/Landmark Van Dorn Implement Action Plan*– good progress is being made by the City staff. Apparently, the owner of most of the Mall is trying to buy out the Sear’s portion of the property, which will help implement a new development.

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:40 PM.

**Richard J. Hayes, Recorder.**

**Attendees:** President Jennings, Carter Flemming, Joanne Lepanto, Dick Hayes, Carol Johnson, Bill Goff, Dick Hobson, Richard Hunt, Jack Sullivan, Tom Fulton, Jim Rowley, Joe Fischer, Jim Durham, Frances Terrell, David Gortner, and Christina Holt.

**Others in Attendance:** Vice Mayor Justin Wilson, Chief Pankey, John & Nancy Veldhois, Marianne Coates, Carolyn Griglione, Kathy & Steve Harkness, Beth Chase, Robert Tray, S. Ross Obrien, Nancy Hunt, Joe Sestak, Babette Smith, Mark Pedly (?), Jack & Betty McKay, William Wannisky, Bonnie O’Day, and Robert Hart (?).