

**Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board meeting
November 8, 2021
Minutes**

Attendees:

1. SSCAB members:
 - a. Lysette House, Chair of Board
 - b. Sofia Bushen, Vice Chair
 - c. Katherine Lucas McKay, Secretary
 - d. Melanie Fonder Kaye, Parliamentarian
 - e. Patricia Germann
 - f. Ken Lemberg
 - g. Ed Levy
 - h. Daniel Mojueh
 - i. Vanessa Pinto
 - j. John Seelke
 - k. Don Slater
 - l. Lene Tsegaye
 - m. Debra Wiley
 - n. *Not present: Jay Elvove, Michelle Foster,*
2. RSC staff:
 - a. Jacob Newman, Silver Spring Regional Service Center
 - b. Shawn Morris, Silver Spring Regional Service Center
3. Speakers:
 - a. Anita Vassallo (Director, MC Public Libraries)
 - b. Zadia Gadsden, Principal, Takoma Park ELEMENTARY School
 - c. Erin Martin, Acting Principal, Takoma Park MIDDLE School
4. Additional attendees:
 - a. Jonathan Bernstein
 - b. Sean Emerson (Office of CM Glass)
 - c. Carson Henry
 - d. Joseph House
 - e. Siporah Jackson
 - f. Shirley Reed
 - g. Burney Simpson

Agenda:

1. Introductions
 - a. Lysette opened meeting
 - b. Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) members introduced selves and the evening's speakers
 - c. Attendees introduced selves in the comments

2. This meeting is recorded (the chat is saved)
3. Minutes from previous meeting
 - a. Minutes from SSCAB meeting in **OCTOBER** were accepted
4. Public Safety Report (no one from MCPD attended)
 - a.
5. Topic 1: Public Libraries' COVID response
 - a. Anita Vassallo, Director, Montgomery County Public Libraries
 - i. Electronic/digital resources
 1. Several new services and subscriptions
 2. Many people using library e-services now
 - ii. Programming
 1. Home delivery program for people who could otherwise not get books during pandemic
 2. Many popular in person programs moved online (yoga and tai chi)
 3. Summer read and learn program ran late this year - through end of October
 - iii. Physical materials
 1. Holds to go introduced (you put a hold on book, when it's ready you get curbside pickup)
 - iv. Looking toward the future
 1. Library visit levels are still below pre-pandemic levels
 2. Usage expected to keep growing through
 3. Anticipated return to offering in-person services at libraries (workforce etc)
 4. They're hiring! Many positions open!
6. Topic 1: Discussion and questions from SSCAB members
 - a. How does the e-book system work?
 - i. We buy a license for x people to read it. After x people check it out, we have to buy a new license. That makes it very expensive to offer e-books. But MD passed a law to stop that practice; unclear what will happen next. Also MacMillan put an 8 week embargo on newly published things going to library platforms. These challenges are major equity issues for which there are no easy answers, but we are dealing with them as best as possible
 - b. When will indoor programming come back?
 - i. Some things are open now. Other services will come back. The libraries now have permission to schedule indoor programming, since kids 5+ can get vaccinated now
 - c. Related: can people schedule community meetings in libraries again?

- i. Yes but that is managed by community facilities. There's a link on the website to their form. Cost is low

7. Topic 2: Schools in Takoma Park

- a. Zadia Gadsden, Takoma Park Elementary School
 - i. 5-11 year olds can't get vaxxed so it's been a rough rough time.
 - ii. We need to encourage families to get their kids vaccinated now that it's time. Getting kids safe will make school a lot better.
 - iii. The pace of quarantines has slowed down
- b. Erin Martin, Takoma Park Middle School
 - i. It's been challenging, yeah. Working with every student and family to meet ALL their needs is a huge challenge.
 - ii. Wraparound support through school is way bigger now. Student food pantry project, other services, laptops, etc.
 - iii. They reopened with 1100 students and that's been wild in this environment
 - iv. We would also be happy to host a clinic at the school but it's not our choice
 - v. They also have had fewer quarantine needs but there was one this week

8. Topic 2: Discussion and questions from SSCAB members

- a. Will you host a vax clinic at the school?
 - i. We would be happy to host a clinic at the school but it's not our choice
- b. How has the test to stay policy been going?
 - i. Better. It was very rough at first. Far fewer exposures and quarantines now, especially now that things are relaxed
- c. Are you having staffing problems?
 - i. Martin: mostly ok. One admin just took a leave. Hiring 2 paraeducators and a few other non-classroom positions.
 - ii. Gadsden: we are having huge problems. Down classroom positions and counselor. Short on building services. They had to have lunch in the gym and there was no one to clean it before classes start again. No substitutes.
 - iii. What's causing the substitute shortage? It's COVID. If you haven't logged into the system you no longer get alerts, so people who might be ready to come back have fallen out of the roster.
- d. What about busing?
 - i. Kids have to wait 40m sometimes to get a bus to go home, and it's a driver who already did a load for the school
 - ii. In the morning, it was really hard to provide predictable bus pick ups at first. That's sort of getting better.
- e. Lene's offer to do a coffee for the schools' staffs
- f. What do you most need that we can advocate for with the County Exec?

- i. It's not for the Exec and Council, it's really about funding from the School Board. Money for improving compensation and money for mental health services. Make MCPS a place that people really want to work again. We've lost a ton of ground on that.

9. Committee meeting updates:

- a. Last month committee meetings
- b. Next committee meetings will be Monday night 11/22
 - i. Neighborhoods:
 - 1. Long Branch focus next time. Community center is one agenda topic
 - ii. TREE:
 - 1. Thrive 2050 with Casey Anderson (invited)
 - iii. CED:
 - 1. Government contracting with a county employee Daniel ParraSSUDAC:
 - 2. Discussion of crime issues - recent shootings, car thefts/car jackings, and issues after the clubs close. Commander McBain and Chief Jones spoke. Challenges around homelessness and people in mental health crisis in DTSS - there are increasing resources devoted to this in response to the need. They are hiring for the maintenance team and public service aide positions (red shirts)
 - iv. SS COVID-19 Community Committee:
 - 1. Last meeting discussed vaccination strategy for 5-11s. County only received S of the amount they hoped for. School-based distribution is based on schools in highest-need communities (Title I and FARMS rate based). Elementaries during the week, middle schools on weekends is the plan. Next meeting date tbd?

10. Councilmembers' reports

- a. Glass (Sean Emerson)
 - i. Rent stabilization extended through next May
 - ii. Free fares for Ride On committee voted on extension through 6/30/2022; full council to vote soon. They will plan for next year's operating budget to address permanent fare strategy

11. Chair's report

- a. Thanksgiving Parade 11/20 and Lysette expects us to be there bc we told her we wanted to. Must wear masks. Cannot throw candy this year.
- b. Full out the survey about end of year activity that's in your email.

12. Regional Area Director's report:

- a. They need job applicants for the UDAC
- b. Pay attention to the Silver Spring and Adjacent Communities Master Plan

13. New Business

- a. n/a