**FINAL Minutes: Bluemont Executive Committee**

Via Zoom and at Key School

March 22, 2023; 7:00 PM

1. The President established that a **quorum** was present.

2. The Board unanimously **approved the minutes** of the February Executive Board meeting.

3**. Reports from Officers and Committee Chairs**.

The **President** reported the responses he had received from County Board Chair Christian Dorsey to the BCA resolutions on the lot coverage study and property taxes. Regarding the timing of the **lot coverage study**, Mr. Dorsey said the Board understands and shares BCA’s perspective that the study is an important consideration in our approach to zoning and land use. The Board is engaged in ongoing conversations with staff as to the timing of the lot coverage study amid numerous zoning and planning studies that are already scheduled and funded. County Board Member Matt de Ferranti separately thanked BCA via email for its lot coverage resolution, and said the Board was discussing the timing of the study with County Staff.

Regarding **property taxes**, Mr. Dorsey said BCA’s correspondence was shared with each member of the Board, made part of the budget process public record, and would be considered. President noted that the County Manager’s budget proposal does not include changing the property tax rate, despite rising taxes due to increased assessments.

The President also said he had spoken at the County Board Meeting on Missing Middle as a private citizen but consistently with the BCA position.

The President said he had reached out to the Ballston/Virginia Square Civic Association about the **County suing that civic association and some local residents regarding the Board of Zoning Appeals**. He had not received a response from the Ballston/Virginia Square civic association, but did get a copy of the complaint. The issue seems to be about the jurisdiction of the Zoning Board. He noted that BCA would ask Board Chair Christian Dorsey about the suit at our April General Membership meeting.

The President reported on his contact with Key Escuela Elementary School and its PTA about the concerns neighbors had raised at the February General Membership meeting about traffic safety at the corner of N. Edison St and 8th Road, N. The school may work with us in some way on any traffic calming efforts. The President asked the BCA member who raised the concerns whether she wanted to develop a plan and offered to work with her and the PTA if she wanted.

The President said that during the General Membership meeting, he would propose the following BCA members to be on the **Nominating Committee** for BCA’s annual elections: Kate Mattos (chair), Dorothy Patton, and Shakti Shukla. First Vice President Mark Haynes volunteered to be a fourth member.

The **Treasurer** reported that the **current balance in the BCA bank account was $2065.88**, the balance had been $2768.28 in February, then BCA paid $157.40 for its own Zoom Pro account, and BCA received $45 in dues from three new members. The Post office said that the exorbitant bill it had sent for BCA’s P.O. Box was a mistake. They gave BCA the wrong bill, one for a larger box. The Treasurer expects that the annual fee will likely increase from $276, possibly by $20 to $30, so will probably be in the low $300’s. **First Vice President proposed a motion to approve the Treasurer paying the P.O. Box will when it arrives.** Secretary Laura Kirkconnell seconded the motion. The Board unanimously agreed.

The Treasurer asked whether BCA should consider raising its dues to $20 per year, given increased costs facing BCA due to inflation. The President directed the Secretary to look into the bylaw requirements for raising membership dues.

**Second Vice President** Matt Harrison reported on efforts to organize a **community event for Neighborhood Day on May 21**. The members working this were Matt Harrison (chair), Shakti Shukla and Laura Kirkconnell, but other Bluemont residents are encouraged to join the effort. Fire Station 2 is unable to host an event. Matt Harrison had contacted Safeway about possible use of its parking lot. Other possible locations being considered are a block party or an event in a local park’s picnic shelter. The President said he would ask the school about whether its fields could be used. Possible events include, street chalk drawing, corn hole, inviting a food truck, a scavenger hunt and volunteer musicians from Bluemont. The Fire Department asked to be invited, which we would do. Members agreed that BCA could ask whether Safeway was able to donate something to the event.

BCA **Civic Federation Delegates to the Arlington County Civic Federation** encouraged people to watch the February Civic Federation panel discussion on crime in Arlington by

* + Arlington Police Chief Andy Penn [[Presentation, 4,4 MiB]](about:blank)
  + Commonwealth’s Attorney Parisa Dehghani-Tafti, and
  + Deborah Warren, Deputy Director of the Arlington Department of Human Services [[Presentation, 2,6 MiB]](about:blank)

Audio and video of the 90-minute discussion are on the website of the Arlington County Civic Federation [https://www.civfed.org](about:blank).

The Civic Federation passed its Resolution to Restore the Public’s Confidence in Arlington County Government by a vote of 70.3% in favor. The alternative resolution failed, gaining only 29.7% of the vote. When asked about the resolution, Board Chair Dorsey seemed to view as the work of a few Civic Federation members, but in fact it was done by four previous presidents of the Civic Federation had done the resolution. County staff plan to meet with Civic Federation leaders to discuss how the County can increase transparency.

There we no developments reported regarding the BCA-Arlington Forest proposal regarding N. Carlin Springs Road, but the BCA list of questions sent to Chair Dorsey include this proposal.

**Park Liaison Hugh Robinson** discussed the possibility of the General Membership voting to advertise his draft resolution on asking the County to designate the plot at N. Harrison Street and 9th Street, N.

Board members discussed the land at the corner of N. Harrison Street and 9th Street N, including that the County is considering an application by the neighbor who started and wants to reestablish the garden at the corner of this land. Board members questioned whether BCA should get involved in having the area designated as a County park. The President suggested that rather than advertise the resolution, he contact County staff for information concerning the effects of designating the area as a County Park. Thus, the motion was not voted on.

The Parks Liaison said the student who proposed the landscaping project at the Bluemont neighborhood sign at N. Kensington Street near N. Carlin Springs Road had submitted his approval request to the Parks Department. The Parks Department has asked whether the BCA or Mr. Robinson would take on the task. Mr. Robinson responded, no, because BCA did not wish to assume the responsibility for maintaining the landscaping, and the student had arranged for other volunteers to assume that responsibility. Park Supervisor Lyndell Core was now working with the student on his Adopt-A-Park package, so that the student can proceed with his project. The student is now working with the Parks Department.

The meeting adjourned at 7:34 pm.

Minutes prepared by Secretary Laura Kirkconnell