

Tara-Leeway Heights Civic Association (TLHCA)  
Board Meeting Minutes of January 11, 2023  
By  
John P. Richardson, Secretary

1. The TLHCA Board of Directors met by Zoom Wednesday, January 11, 2023. Directors present and constituting a quorum were John Ford (President), Laura Stout (Vice-President), John P. Richardson (Secretary), Irene Szopo (Treasurer), Bill Braswell, Sima Nasr, Matt Fleming, Michelle Winters, and Alyssa Cowden. Eric Massant and Dave McGowan were unable to attend. There was no response from Pete Erickson, Mary Ann Frias, and Jon Judah. Besides the board, there were some 12 others present on Zoom.
2. Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer's Report by Irene Szopo was accepted as distributed.
3. Minutes of Board meeting of November 9, 2022: The Minutes of the Board meeting of November 9, 2022 were approved as distributed.
4. Main Business: Mr. Ford welcomed Scott McCaffrey, Managing Editor at Sun Gazette Newspapers, who was invited to give his views on issues of concern to Arlingtonians. Mr. McCaffrey said that he would prefer to answer questions from the outset. The following are some of Mr. McCaffrey's principal comments:
  - a. Overall: The Democratic Party of Arlington is at the center of much of Arlington's political life, and the Democratic primaries in June will determine many political issues ahead of the elections in the fall.
  - b. Republican Party: The Republican Party of Arlington, like the Greens, is a marginal player in county politics. The only way to influence voters is to spend money and put literature into the hands of voters, which they don't do.
  - c. Commonwealth's Attorney: There is opposition to Parisa Deghani-Tafti, Commonwealth's Attorney for Arlington County and the City of Falls Church, but public debates are needed to identify issues, and "most Democrats are not paying attention." Democrats must get engaged before it is too late to make an impact.
  - d. Missing Middle Housing (MMH): The County Manager, Mark Schwartz, and the county staff are driving this issue, with little serious engagement by the County Board, two of whose principal MMH advocates, Chair Christian Dorsey and Katie Cristol, are stepping down after this session.
  - e. Leadership: The last real County Board leader was Chris Zimmerman. The current crop mostly "nibble at the edges" of issues, leaving the initiative to the county manager and staff.
  - f. Civic Federation: There is major erosion of community spirit in Arlington, and the Civic Federation reflects that, with service clubs and others taking up the slack. The County Board sees the public as acquiescent and

complacent, although MMH has generated articulate opposition and has “sucked the air out of discussion of other issues.”

- g. Aging in Place: The Arlington community is aging, and there is a growing need for senior services.
5. Current TLHCA Business: “Cardinal Fest” fall 2023. Mr. Ford summarized planning to date for a TLHCA-driven celebration in fall 2023 for completion of Cardinal School and the storm water retention vaults -- “99% completed” --under the adjoining fields. Cardinal School principal Colin Brown supports opening the school to Cardinal Fest attendees. Mr. Ford said that local bands, e.g., Champagne Velvet, have been approached and would be happy to participate. (Champagne Velvet’s hourly rate is \$100.00.) A variety of games and food choices are under discussion. Other civic groups, including Highland Park-Overlee Knolls and Westover Village, are participating; there will be a planning meeting at 10:00 AM February 6, in the Longfellow Room at Central Library. Matt Fleming raised possible intruding factors such as construction/utilities completion dates, playing surface issues if seeding vice sod is used. He also recommended that an inclusive name like “Westover Day” be used. There is no support for speeches, although county and other local figures will be invited (and given name tags). Saturday is preferred over Sunday, and 2-5 PM is the favored time for the event. It is unlikely that alcohol sales would be approved. It was suggested to keep the Westover merchants in the loop, since Ayers is touchy about parkers not intending to shop locally. It might be a good idea to invite local Arlington Fire Department participation, always a favorite with kids.
6. Next Meeting: The next TLHCA meeting will be held March 15, at 7:00, most likely on Zoom.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
John P. Richardson, Secretary