

May 11, 2022

The May 11, 2022 annual meeting of the Tara-Leeway Heights Civic Association was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by president John Ford. The minutes from the March 9, 2022 meeting and the Treasurer's report, presented by Irene Szopo, were both unanimously approved.

Board members present were:

John Ford, President
Laura Stout, Vice-president
Irene Szopo, Treasurer
Sima Nasr, Communications chair

Alyssa Cowden
Bill Braswell
John Richardson
John Vihstadt
Michelle Winters

Regrets received from:

Pete Erickson (travelling in Seattle)
Matt Fleming (child's musical performance)
Jon Judah (child's musical performance)

The Nominating Committee report, also presented by Ms. Szopo, read as follows:

"The nominating committee reports that all board members except Fred Blott have indicated they will return to serve for another year. We would like to express our sincere appreciation for Fred's service to the community, and he is welcome back anytime!

"We nominate Eric Massant for that vacant position. He lives near Big Walnut Park and is enthusiastic about its value for our residents. Also, for the record, Meredith Judy has left our area and has resigned her board position. Please refer to Irene any interested candidates for Meredith's old position.

"Vice-President Laura Stout has indicated a willingness to serve as the fourth TLHCA delegate to the Arlington County Civic Federation. John Vihstadt, Bill Braswell and John Ford have expressed an interest to serve as delegates for another term. We also have four unfilled alternate delegate positions that are available for interested volunteers.

"There were no alternate nominations for the offices of President, Vice-President and Treasurer, so it is the recommendation of the Nominating Committee that the incumbents, John Ford, Laura Stout and Irene

Szopo, who are all willing to serve for another term, be reelected. It is our recommendation also that the question of term limits and our bylaws be explored at a board meeting this autumn.

"We would respectfully remind the board that the Secretary position remains unfilled. Would someone volunteer to serve?"

The Board unanimously approved the nominations of the incumbent officers, the incumbent ACCF delegates, Laura Stout for the vacant delegate positions, and Eric Massant for the vacant board position.

After the presentation of the Nominating Committee report, John Richardson volunteered to serve as Board secretary. His offer was gratefully and unanimously accepted. He will begin his duties at the September 14 meeting. J Richardson also said he would begin to make a record of attendance at TLHCA board meetings, to ensure that attendance by board members was as prescribed in the by-laws.

Also, Michelle Winters expressed a desire to serve as an alternate ACCF delegate for TLHCA; unanimously approved. One of the several community guests, Jim Tsugawa of 1313 N. Harrison St., said he or his partner might be interested in joining the board, filling the remaining vacancy. J Ford will follow up with Mr. Tsugawa.

Several community members attended the meeting, in addition to Mr. Tsugawa. They were:

Greg Perrett
David Markin (?)
Mary Cochran
Chris DeRosa

Also attending was the vice-president of the Cardinal Elementary School PTA, Kendra Robins-Ervin. She joined the board for an update and discussion of county measures to date and board preferences for the future at our problematic intersection of N 18th St and Patrick Henry Drive.

Laura has identified the ACPD official responsible for the county school crossing guard program, Capt. Albert Kim. Also, Laura has been in touch with Laura Hassell of APS. These officials informed Laura that while the county crossing guard program has been reinstated, there was a deficit of four guards, one of whom would have been assigned to N 18th St. and Patrick Henry Drive.

Kendra and Laura agreed to work together with Stacy Richardson of the Swanson Middle School PTA to reiterate our joint interest in having a crossing guard in place for the start of school in September. One message has already been exchanged with ACPD and APS; we will jointly be back in touch later in the summer.

The date for the next TLHCA board meeting was set for Wednesday, September 14 at 7:00 p.m., virtually.

Michelle Winters, aided by several slides shared with the board, briefed on the county's Missing Middle initiative, which has generated recent controversy with its stated intent to rezone for greater density virtually all of the county's single-home neighborhoods, including TLH. Zoning here would rise from R-8 to R-20. She thought most new cluster housing in our area would be tri- and quadriplexes.

Michelle explained that the county only anticipates construction of around 20 new housing cluster units each year under the new zoning. The county estimates that over ten years, around 1,500 new, hopefully diverse, new residents would be able to find residences in the county. J Vihstadt added commentary from the recent animated Civic Federation discussion of the new zoning and programmatic changes.

Alyssa updated the board on developments around the Cardinal School stormwater detention vault, where installation of the new vault is well underway. She summarized some of the traffic improvements that have been made, but noted that the disruption to the immediate neighbors is still significant.

Ms. DeRosa inquired about Lee Center as a voting center. J Ford offered to investigate and report back: For now, the county voting office says Lee Center is still our voting place, but that changes may be coming and the county will provide adequate forewarning. Meantime, the LCC is part of Plan Langston Blvd plans, with the center's open space to be maintained and several possibilities being considered for any future new building on the site. The existing building will eventually be razed; too many age-related problems to try to revive it.

J Ford briefed the board on increasingly acrimonious discussions between Virginia Hospital Center and the surrounding community, focused largely now on exterior lighting from the new facility and parking garage.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. Next meeting: September 14, 7:00 p.m., virtual.

