

**2015 – 2016 BUDGET ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**Monthly Meeting – October 21, 2015**  
**Arlington Education Center Room 101 A/B**

- 1) Introduction of new and returning members
- 2) Review and approve September meeting minutes
- 3) Public Comments
- 4) School Enrollment Lionel White, APS
- 5) Community Facilities Study Moirra Forbes, BAC
- 6) Staff report & Community Engagement Efforts Deirdra McLaughlin, APS
- 7) Proposals for BAC Work Plan & Questions for APS
- 8) Action Items

**Background**

The Community Facilities Study (<http://commissions.arlingtonva.us/community-facilities-study/>) Committee is charged with developing a consensus framework around Arlington County's future funding and facilities needs. It was jointly appointed by the County Board and the School Board.

Community engagement efforts by APS on budget: Last year, APS expanded its efforts to engage the community on the budget. As we head towards another budget cycle, it is a good time to reflect on worked well last time around.

**Upcoming events**

School board meeting Thursday, October 22 @ 7:30 pm Board Room, Ed Center

South Arlington Working Group Community Forum #3, Thursday, October 29 @ 7 PM at Wakefield HS

BAC November meeting Wednesday, November 18 @ 7:30 pm Room 101 A/B, Ed Center

The additional BAC monthly meeting dates are:

December 9, 2015**	March 9, 2016	May 11, 2016
January 13, 2016	March 16, 2016	June 8, 2016
February 10, 2016	April 13, 2016	

\*\* All BAC regular meetings are on Wednesdays. All meet at the Education Center with the exception of the December 9<sup>th</sup> meeting at Wakefield High School.

**Arlington Public Schools  
Budget Advisory Council  
Minutes—October 21, 2015 Meeting**

**Present:** BAC Chair Michael Shea, Heather Jones, Bob Ramsey, Moira Forbes, Daniel Rosman, Dan Murray, Kathryn Richard and Tina Kuklenski-Miller, Robert Crider; APS Staff - Deirdra McLaughlin, Leslie Peterson, Lionel White; AEA – Josh Folb, Gerry Collins

**Public Comments:** Josh Folb and Gerry Collins spoke briefly about AEA priorities for the upcoming year. These include:

1. Compiling an updated compensation chart
2. Administering a survey for APS teachers
3. Hoping for a step increase for next year – would like to return to using excess lapse and turnover funds as a reserve for step increase funding
4. Not expecting much of a COLA increase with CPI around 0.5%
5. Not everyone receives the benefit of a step increase so it is helpful to have one time bonuses for those who are not step eligible

**Community Facilities Study:** Moira Forbes took us through a Community Facilities Study presentation. Arlington's growing population means increased demands for public services, facilities, and open space. The purpose of this year-long study is to take a big picture look at community resources. There are 23 committee members and about 250 members of the residents forum. There are five main challenges that were highlighted:

1. Sustaining Arlington economic model – would like to retain the current 50/50 split between residential and commercial tax base which is significantly different than other localities which have closer to a 75% residential tax base. Arlington's high commercial vacancy rate of 21% is especially concerning as each percentage of vacancy equates to \$3.4 million in lost annual tax revenue.
2. Land – County and schools only own 2.2 square miles out of the 26 total land area of the county. Developing a new siting process is seen as crucial given limited space to build.
3. Planning for Change – Population is slated to grow from our current 216,700 to 283,000 in 2040. The committee is recommending the creation of a joint County/APS facilities committee.
4. Diversity – The distribution of income has changed significantly over the last 20 years. There is a much higher percentage of residents in the top income brackets.
5. Community Dialogue – Arlington Way needs to be modified so there is more transparency and buy-in from the community.

The final joint work session with the County Board is slated for November 10<sup>th</sup>.

**School Enrollment:** Lionel White gave us an update on school enrollment based on the September 30<sup>th</sup> numbers reported to the state. There are 25,238 students enrolled which is a level last seen in 1969. There were 440 fewer students enrolled than predicted (based

on the spring forecast). The vast majority of this variance was from the elementary school population. There were seven schools that had over a 5% variance (Abingdon, Barcroft, Barrett, Drew, Hoffman-Boston, Nottingham, and Randolph). Lionel is still digging into these variances but there was a 6% decline in the cohort transition rate into Kindergarten (from 75% to 69%) as well as lower cohort transitions rates in the other grades in many of the South Arlington elementary schools. The difference from projection was much lower at the middle (-62 ) and high school (+7) levels.

**Staff Report:** Deirdra McLaughlin gave us a high level overview of where things stand for next year. She expects that the new revenue sharing principles will be renewed resulting in 46.5% of total tax revenue going to APS which means an additional \$6.6 to \$13 million in revenue based on the country projection of a 1-3% residential tax base increase and the commercial tax base staying flat. With no additional programs or salary increases, this would result in a slight (less than \$5 million) deficit for next year.

**Community Engagement:** Deirdra McLaughlin led a discussion on how we can reach out to the community better during the budget cycle. Last year, meetings were held with key stakeholders, chairs and vice-chairs of all of the advisor groups, as well as the CCPTA. In addition, ad hoc meetings were held with members of the community including one with a subset of BAC representatives. She requested any feedback on which meetings worked best and how she can improve them for the current year. One suggestion was to work to disseminate information through individual PTA newsletters. Overall, the sentiment was that the meetings were well received and worthwhile and should continue this year.

**Human Resources and Compensation Subcommittee:** Tina Kuklenski-Miller gave an update on some initial exploration into human resources at APS. Some questions that the subcommittee is looking to explore include:

1. What are the expectations of APS as an employer?
2. What are the goals of the senior leadership of APS as an employer?
3. What are the expectations of our teachers and other staff members?
4. In terms of compensation, is our goal to pay our teacher and staff more than surrounding jurisdictions to hire and retain the best talent? Is there more benefit to paying our teachers more across each scale level or to hire more experienced teachers at a higher salary level? Or are we better off spending our dollars on areas besides compensation like technology and infrastructure?
5. Which school systems should we consider our direct competitors in terms of benchmarking compensation and performance?
6. What drives employee turnover? What should be the benchmark for turnover so we can measure how we are doing over time?

The BAC adjourned at 9:44 PM.