

## ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SCHOOL FACILITIES AND CAPITAL PROGRAMS (FAC)

### MEETING MINUTES

April 4, 2022 – 6:30 PM

Wakefield High School - Library

In Attendance: Heather Carkuff Joson, Jeff Chambers, Rosa Cheney (Chair), Michael DePalma, Mike Freda, John Giambalvo, David Goodman, Renee Harber, Cynthia Hilton, Sally Hoekstra, Rebecca Hunter (Vice Chair), Lois Koontz, Steven Leutner, Cathy Lin, Kelley Litzner, Greg Lloyd, Adam Rasmussen, Stacy Snyder and Lisa Stengle

1. Minutes: Approved for February & March 2022.
2. Public Comment: No public comment.
3. School Bell Times Study Project Update:
  - Data gathered on school bell studies to determine a variety of metrics.
  - Last bell study was in 1993, 20,000 students, 19 schools.
  - Now in 2022, there are 27,000 students and 40+ schools.
  - Challenge: working to gather data to standardize and reduce bell schedules to fewer times. Three was the goal, but likely won't meet it.
  - Working on 30 min. ride time for neighborhood schools and 60 min. for County-wide schools. Working to limit dependence on cabs and charter buses.
  - Arlington Middle Schools lowest time in class in VA (6 hours, 37 min.), with Elementary (6:41) and High School (6:43).
  - Technical Advisory Team met throughout the month of March. Conducted the Survey for last two weeks of March. Have begun compiling data and beginning to present to stakeholders.
  - No findings to share yet prior to sharing results with the Board.
  - Question on use of private transportation for choice schools: use of red top cabs and other private transportation. Request for the budget related to this private transportation and justification for why the County is footing the bill for choice student transportation.
  - Question on time in school. Answer was that time is calculated based on "seat" hours with lunch and travel deducted from full day.
  - Statement: don't assume that other school systems are accounting for their bell times in the same way – or with the same standard – being used by Arlington.
  - Did the study discuss adding hours to the day or days to the year? A: No.
  - Question: how much is bus route efficiency factored into this decision and how much will bus schedules be a factor? A: 161 bus runs, 152 drivers, so 9 require doubling-up on bus drivers. Next year, budgeted for 195 drivers, but that isn't needed...need 170 bus drivers, which should be a cost-savings in the current budget.

- What is the planning for bus routes? Can seem random at times. A: Yes, bus routes are clustered and systematized. Work continues on improving the system for layover times and additional efficiencies. IT is a stretch on efficiency to reach County-wide needs, some buses are pretty empty, but re-zoning is going to help alleviate some of the more extreme cases of distance pick-ups.
- April 28<sup>th</sup> is the official report of the Bell Study to the School Board. May 12<sup>th</sup>, the Board will take action. April 6<sup>th</sup>, the “TAC” Team meets – which are the community reps for Arlington – and that will act as part of the community portion of the vetting process.
- Question: why is HB Woodlawn start time so much later than every other program? A: survey administrators asked this question, and there was no definitive answer.
- One of the recommendations will be to not wait 20 years to do this again. It takes 4-5 years for changes to actually take effect and to see how those changes affect schools.
- Question: how are variables weighted? A: At present, there isn’t a weighting criteria, but once the data is presented, certain items will require consideration and prioritization over others.
- Statement: change is hard for parents and kids, so hoping that the Board and the committee will explain the results of the study and why decisions – whatever they may be – were made.

4. Liaison Reports:

ACTC: Just discussed with Bell Study.

BAC: No updates.

JFAC: Final draft on findings/report on missing middle housing will be published in the next month. Looked at six other counties nearby and what they did in terms of county-wide planning activities and ordinances. Hard to find data on outcomes given the newness of some of these jurisdictions’ policies/ordinances.

Aquatics: Good to see that Woodlawn Aquatic Center HVAC is working.

ASAC: Nothing facilities related. All academics.

SEPTA: No Updates.

CCPTA: Meeting on 4 April (tonight). One more meeting in a month. Not a lot of items this year.

ASTL: No updates.

Transportation Committee: No updates.

5. Career Center Update:

- Update: BLPC meeting occurred a week ago. At last meeting, BLPC were told to stay on focus with the task at hand, including bounds of Ed Specs, budget, etc. Had an overall pole for the site on several questions. In general, there was a lot of dissension against the project in terms of the site use and future site use. Dissension wasn't necessarily about Ed Specs (full auditorium vs. "black box"), but definitely people thinking they were promised something that isn't happening. Biggest contention is that the other two buildings aren't being discussed (presumably the old Career Center and MPSA), and they don't think they can give their best advice without knowing what happens to these buildings. Rosa – as the FAC rep. – noted that a wholistic view of the career center campus should be considered. Sticking with the charge/task at hand, and sticking with the bounds, the majority of folks on BLPC were in agreement with the design proposed for this site, given the charge.
- Statement of another FAC member: noted that there were technical difficulties with vote tallying, so were unable to tell that evening what the votes were like. Staff member: were able to synthesize data from meeting polls and online / day after polls. Total of 18 votes and will be able to show results. Generally speaking, there's agreement on the current site plan. FY23-32 CIP will cover the new Career Center. The FY25-34 CIP will cover the remainder of the campus.
- Biggest difference in the Board's vote might be with the number of final seats on the campus.
- Member statement: this is a \$200M project that doesn't account for the rest of the campus. Haven't spoken about the Library, MPSA, or the Career Center. Thinks the site needs to be improved, but he's not confident that the due diligence hasn't been done to improve the other building. When this project started, there was a lot of pressure to get hundreds of new seats in the Center based on the updated enrollment centers.
- Member statement: important for the FAC to say "something". Whatever that may be, it's important to say something and give the position of the FAC. Member thinks leaving the Career Center empty without a plan is not a great idea. Cost to renovate MPSA or the Career Center isn't even part of the decision process. Argument that there needs to be more CTE options, and this is the only opportunity that we have to grow and accommodate a global revolution and the need for CTE classes.
- FAC Chair statement: the last BLPC did account for a variety of costs and scenarios, which factored into the current BLPC.
- John Chambers: Also, two factors from this year are the current inflationary scenario and ability to not interrupt children's learning. The Option 4 plan delivers the finished school in the shortest amount of time without interrupting student learning. Overall, capacity was explored and an estimate was made around how many

- students could be accommodated. This plan creates “a lot” more CTE spaces, and the spaces themselves are designed to be flexible for CTE programs that can flex to other uses at need.
- Member statement: there are still unanswered questions and a lack of data. Arlington Tech was designed to offload spaces, which pressure doesn’t seem to be as relevant at this point.
  - JFAC Liaison rep. statement: believes our investments should be needs-driven. Absolutely need to have common facilities for the Career Center. Is there a need to leave the existing career center vacant. Also thinks you can’t leave it vacant without defining a need for leaving it vacant. Renovation cost needs to be included in the overall CIP cost for the project. Cost escalations require us to make the most efficient use of our existing spaces and then just build what you need. Over the last 3-4 CIPs, around \$30M has been allocated for that building, and to leave it vacant is also concerning. Master planning of the site afterward will incur its own costs. It’s unclear to her what the range is for what it will take to renovate the rest of the site.
  - Jeff Chambers: current career center building can be torn down for a few million dollars, or it can be turned with renovation dollars for another program. The reason we’re talking about renovation speed is because costs continue to rise rapidly, so the costs don’t rise significantly over time. Trying to cover all bases to cover the design we’re working with.
  - Member statement: There should be a better/changed planning process.
  - Member statement: You can plan yourself into a hole, and the member took issue with statements that APS hadn’t done appropriate planning. Stated that they likely had, in fact, taken several factors into account and had done as much planning as they could. Made a statement “for” the plan.
  - Member statement: member statement that, though factors change, it appears that the one thing that hasn’t changed is the CTE seats are needed and updated.
  - Member statement: aligning with those who don’t want to make the best the enemy of the good. Concur with many of the statements made. Maybe she’s totally naïve, but she believes that APS has considered as many outcomes and is working to do the best benefit. From her perspective, it answers the charge given, and the current plan answers the charge.
  - Debate as to whether or not a FAC vote should occur, and if so, what question should be brought forward. FAC Chair: soft “yes” or “no” to the questions being applied.
  - Member statement: there appears to be an interplay of all of the points made thus far. There’s the potential to study this to death and never make a decision, given this has been pushed off for so long. The counterpoint is the amount of money spent and the potential for escalation, now maybe we’re not as comfortable venturing into the unknown. It seems that the dollar figure is constraining based on how high it is and the fear of escalation costs without a comprehensive site plan laid out.

- FAC Board Chair: Should we rephrase the question to whether or not we are “gravely”, “moderately”, or “not at all” concerned about the money and expenditure.
  - FAC vote: questions will be drafted and sent around for a vote.
6. Swing Space: Staff will be working on this and are looking for initial feedback. APS staff needs to have guidance in the next CIP meeting to begin work on this.
  7. Subcommittee on the Long-Range Plan to Renovate Existing Schools: next sub-committee meeting is April 5<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday), and everyone on the FAC is invited to contribute.