

**ALEXANDRIA CITY SCHOOL BOARD BUDGET ADVISORY COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 25, 2023 – 6:30 TO 8:00 P.M.**

MINUTES

Budget Advisory Committee Members Present: Nancy Drane; Ryan Reyna; Bridget Shea Westfall; Christina Hildebidle; Bill Pfister; Abdulahi Abdalla

ACPS Staff Liaison Present: NA

School Board Liaison Present: Kelly Carmichael Booz, Board Member (attending on behalf of Kelly Carmichael Booz)

Also in Attendance: Alex Scioscia, observer interested in potentially joining BAC

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. There were no public attendees.

Public Comment

- There was no public comment.

Approval of Prior Minutes

- A motion to approve the September 27, 2023 minutes was called for and approved by voice vote.

Chair Report

- Community Budget Forum (CBF)
 - Scheduling issues occurred with CBF, The High School Project and Youth Survey all hosting meetings on the same night
 - 15 in the room; 50 online
 - Questions focused on staff salaries, numbers of staff, staff ratios
 - Took 8-10 questions mostly from online
 - Concern from BAC members about the general approach of the CBF as an event for delivering information rather than a robust conversation
 - There is an ongoing perception from the community that they are not “being listened to” so the Division needs to find better ways to demonstrate this
 - General concerns were noted about communication, deep listening, true engagement, lack of cultural competence, use of webinar system (for budget forum but also in general)
 - How can BAC partner with the Board and the Division to engage more communities? How could we do more to meet people where they are?

- Could the Division go to other community meetings (i.e., PTA meetings)? Work with the FACE Center for outreach and to ensure culturally competent presentation of information?
- Division Updates
 - ACPS is beginning a K-8 analysis to review the Division's current approach to Elementary and Middle grades. Review is beginning in November and BAC Chair requested further information from ACPS
 - ACPS Liaison (Robert Easley) is connecting BAC Chair with the individual within the Division that handles grants to speak to BAC at a later date
- Ad Hoc Committee on School Board Advisory Committees
 - Chair Reif is leading an Ad Hoc School Board Committee to review how the Board uses its Advisory Committees, including BAC
 - BAC Chair participated in an initial conversation and offered recommendations for how the Board could take better advantage of the BAC
 - There is not currently a consistent approach to how the Committees are used and Dr. Reif would like to see the Board more deeply engage with each
 - The Ad Hoc Committee will offer recommendations to the School Board in the near future

School Board Report

- Member Booz Carmichael shared Board updates regarding ongoing conversations between the City and ACPS around the upcoming budget
- Both public bodies want to be fully prepared for the potential of collective bargaining for educators and would like additional information about how other jurisdictions have set budgetary parameters
 - A committee has formed to put forward the collective bargaining resolution. If adopted, bargaining units will need to form and be approved prior to any negotiations.
 - Board has secured an attorney to support the process and they are in contact with the City's attorney who handled previous bargaining agreements
- The Superintendent was preparing to release her Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget at the start of November. The expectation is that there would be some reductions and/or delays in previous estimates given the slowing down of revenue.
- Marcia Jackson will be leading the redistricting process from ACPS and further details will be shared soon. Desire to have BAC members (and others) involved in the process

Staff Report

- Staff was unable to participate in the meeting due to a last-minute conflict, so no report was provided.

New Business – Scope of Work

- BAC Chair discussed SOW with Chair Reif and Member Booz Carmichael
- Board members encouraged focus on 2 issues, hopefully in partnership with BFAAC: revenue sharing and budget expectations around collective bargaining.

- Desire for BAC to conduct research on jurisdictions in VA and elsewhere that have (1) established revenue sharing agreements between City/County and their Schools and (2) school divisions that have instituted collective bargaining without full budgetary control
- Would like for this research to inform future conversations rather than offer specific recommendations. The desire is to really understand the pros and cons on the first and the process for establishing budgetary guidelines for the second
- BAC Chair conducted some initial research and found ~8 large jurisdictions that have revenue sharing agreements with their school divisions and 3 states that have similar legal set ups between jurisdictions and school divisions that allow local collective bargaining agreements.
 - Further research will need to be conducted
- Goal is to conduct the research in time to submit a memo for a Spring Joint meeting between the City and Schools
- School Board members also encouraged a continuation of BAC's recommendations around community engagement and communications, as well as learning from other jurisdictions about the Board's role vis a vis the Superintendent in budget formulation and finalization.

Recruitment

- BAC had further discussion about how to expand membership recruitment
 - Two ideas offered were to engage NOVA RAFT and the precinct captains
- BAC Chair is drafting a flyer for BAC review. Once language is finalized, it will be shared with ACPS for translation
 - Intend to share with PTAC and FACE Center for broad distribution
- Observer Alex Scioscia submitted application to join BAC and was added to the November Board agenda

Final Comments

- BAC Chair is meeting with BFAAC School Board representative to discuss opportunity for a joint BAC – BFAAC meeting in early 2024

The meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.