

RNA June Meeting, 6/29/20 (Virtual)

Participants: 30

Board members: John, Rachel, Rebecca, Jennifer, Jeff Dewberry, Jackson and Joelle

### Bill Ferguson, President of MD Senate, and 46<sup>th</sup> district senator

- January elected as President of the Senate serving concurrently as 46<sup>th</sup> senator
- Role: “conductor” of the orchestra- set agenda, work with speaker, assign councils
- Legislative session had 4 huge initiatives + pandemic
- passed all things + some in 71 days
- Governor veto 3 of 4 initiatives due to financial uncertainty
- BLM movement and policing issues rise- which was unpredictable
- challenging 100 days post session due to pandemic related issues
- Baltimore was different from 2015, and our protests ended differently than other cities, and believe its due to progress made, although there is a lot more to be done. There is a sense that somethings have changed and we have started the building blocks. Baltimore is an example for the rest of the country.
- We are in a history making moment. We have an incredible city with amazing neighborhoods. It is an honor to represent you.
- Question: at home education, whats going to happen in the fall? There are no experts yet, and we dont know what it will be. There were amazing attempts made at distance learning in the Spring, and it was so hard as a parent. Access got better over time, but engagement dropped as time went on. There needs to be serious assessments made to see where the gaps are. There is going to be learning loss and we need to be transparent. We have to radically change our view of the school year to make up for the gaps that have happened and will happen. Gov put forth a good plan today re: funds for the fall.
- Question: student food cards- where can donations go. SBGP is going to set up donation sites for the food. The card cannot be donated.
- Question: special sessions scheduled? Extremely unlikely to have a special session- most likely regular January session. There is a HUGE budget deficit (2.2 billion projected) coming for FY 2021 (starts 7/1). We need the Federal Senate to act fast re: state recovery.

### Congressman Sarbanes, US House Representative

- In Capital today, and doing a round robin of votes. Votes are not on the floor, due to cov-id. Vote in groups.
- Discussions w/ neighborhood associations are some of the most important conversations right now. We are pushing funds right now into the communities and its important to see how the funds are actually working. Ex: cov-ID small business loans.
- Listening to concerns re: mortgage and rental freeze expires was addressed in the HEROs act, which was passed by the House and is stopped in the Senate- in negotiations. The resurgence in the South and West will put pressure on the Senate to pass something
- Pandemic issues and whats going on: challenge to get assistance out and quickly, you have to rely on existing systems. However issues arose quickly and it ceased up quickly. Issues were addressed. MD was a state that had an unprecedented amount of unemployment filing, and there was a huge delay. Direct payments (\$1200 per adult and dependents) have been issued. Re: PPE and testing the Trump Admin has fallen short on putting forth a plan, and its been left to the States to figure it out. Which has put States in competition with each other.
- Tonight we passed a bill which strengthens the Affordable Care Act, but its not likely to pass the Senate or get signed by Trump
- George Floyd killing woke a sleeping giant in America of frustration and enough is enough. We are willing to acknowledge the embedded racism and we need to move rapidly to do the right thing. Baltimore post Freddie Grey led to the Federal consent decree under Pres. Obama and made the BCPD address issues and do better, including relationship building. Last week the House passed police reform bill- banning choke holds, banning no knock warrants, require justice dept to investigate, and stop selling of military grade weapons to local police departments.
- If you look at our disadvantaged communities they lack political power in our democracy. We have to restore their faith and raise their voices.
- Question: are we making progress on infrastructure projects? Next week we will be moving forward on

a trillion \$ infrastructure projects. Rebuild bridges, roads, tunnels throughout the country and will invest in clean energy and green infrastructure.

- Question: will there be a federal mandate re: masks? I do not believe this will happen, b/c Trump does not support it. This is very frustrating. We cannot allow politics to interfere with health and safety. If people are paying attn I hope people will see the reasoning behind wearing them.

- Question: re: energy committee, what is coming up? Stay focused on health re: to current crisis, through oversight and putting together the relief packages and getting services to essential workers. How do we truly support and respect essential workers. When we get on the other side of this crisis we change our economy and treat this population better. We need a fairer society.

#### Jeff Dewberry via Rachel Wagner, crime and safety chair

- larceny other- package left
- vehicle larceny
- crimes of opportunity- please pay attn to your home and car

#### Jackson, Riverside Park

- Park “stuff” has been going well during the pandemic.
- Thank Domino sugar, who usually funds our concerts, but they funded a stone pathway on the Johnson and Heath entrance. Next to the staircase. This will allow bikes, strollers, ect to use this path.
- Shannon, a volunteer has been taking care of the entrance gardens.
- Rec and Park will be taking out of a few dead trees.
- Expect the pool to open, TBD from Rec and parks on policies and protocols for safety.
- Some activity by the athletic fields that is related to DPW and a water main break and NOT the field reno
- Field reno proposal bids have gone out. Fall start time.
- Question: BMI farmers market will be returning back to the BMI parking lot? Waiting for med star to finish with the site re: testing.
- Question: the park lawn mowing has been resolved? Yes, a new contract has been signed.
- Question: what is going in with the homeless living in the pavilion? City services has been out many times to address and offer services. Residents have not accepted services. Please let us know if there are any specific instances that happen and we can follow up.

#### Rachel, Social Media

- Recycling starts this Friday
- Fed Hill 4<sup>th</sup> parade is canceled, but there is a community “event” happening from stoops- 11am stoop sing. Facebook has more details.