

Lyon Park Citizens Association Meeting

Wednesday January 8, 2025

President Michael Kunkler called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. 12 members battled the snowy conditions to attend.

Michael introduced the evening's guest speaker, Arlington County Sheriff Jose Quiroz, who was accompanied by Captain Veronica Cannella. Sheriff is an elected position in Arlington, and Sheriff Quiroz was first elected to the position in 2023. He is an Arlington native, the proud son of Honduran immigrants.

The Sheriff's Department has three main responsibilities: running the jail, protecting the courts and performing civil processes, such as eviction notices, serving subpoenas and collecting levies. A major challenge faced by the department is retention of recruits. In the past, the Sheriff's Department offered important certifications to new recruits, only to have many officers take those certifications to other jurisdictions. Sheriff Quiroz changed the certification process to focus on those skills critical to running the jail, which is about 75% of the department's job, improving retention.

Sheriff Quiroz shared that upon election, he prioritized three key initiatives:

1. A safe and progressive jail (focused on rehabilitation)
 - a. With 351 incarcerated individuals (capacity is 600; 21 are female), he is changing the medical offerings to improve outcomes, replacing the outside medical contractors with 16 in-house clinicians, also working with Arlington County DHS partners.
 - b. The jail gets people at their worst, physically and mentally. He hopes the innovative program will reduce medical transfers to hospitals and minimize escalation of issues.
 - c. Added pickleball, a mentorship program and a fatherhood coordinator.
2. Connecting with the community
 - a. Focused on getting information about public safety and responsibility to new residents.
 - b. Updating technology to work smarter, ensuring more time is spent with the community and not on paperwork.
3. The wellness and development of staff
 - a. Recently acquired two K9s: Weaver (explosives dog) and Hope (wellness dog) join Logan (drug/electronics sniffer). K9s provide expertise but also offer comfort to the staff.
 - b. Added micro-market to support staff and the unpredictable hours. Job is not easy with 65 staff assaults last year, long shifts and mandatory overtime, so staff support is vital.
 - c. Sheriff meets weekly with ACPD and ACFD chiefs to foster cooperation, He also brings staff along to community meetings to develop their leadership skills.

Sheriff Quiroz then answered questions from the assembled LPCA members

Committee reports:

- **Elizabeth Sheehy, Secretary and Historian:** December minutes were approved.
- **Anne Bodine, VP Development:**
 - **Tyndale:** County Board approved the 40 student permit through 2025 in December. The goalposts continue to move, but it seems they will vote at the January 25 meeting on the 80 student proposal.

- **Tree survey:** [Note - See Anne Bodine's detailed recap in the February newsletter] Tree surveys done by the county in 2013 and 2018 were updated a year ago. The Urban Forester suggests that it shows both Lyon Park and Ashton Heights gained tree canopy. Many residents find that hard to accept, so he has offered to do a presentation for the neighborhoods, possibly in March.
- **ARVA:** the site plans for the old Days Inn location has been approved. No building permit has been issued yet. Anne will follow-up
- **Joyce Motors:** Project is set to begin. One lane of 10th Street will be closed during construction.
- **AH Greenway:** Toby McIntosh reviewed again the issue of the small greenway located between N. Irving St. and N. Ivy St behind the Budget Rental lot. It has fallen in to disrepair and Ashton Heights residents are looking to revive the plans approved by the county years ago. Brooke Alexander answered additional questions about the long-neglected project. The AHCA is hoping for support from the LPCA. The issue was tabled until next month. Toby offered verbiage for a Lyon Park letter to the County Board supporting AH, which was approved unanimously by the membership.
- **David Morgan, Sargent-at-Arms:** Forming a committee to look into proxy voting logistics. Contact David if you are interested.
- **Paul Showalter, Special Events:** Paul reviewed upcoming events:
 - January 25: Annual Pancake Breakfast at the LPCH
 - February 7-8: Woman's Club Valentine's Cupcake Sale
 - March TBD: Still looking for volunteers for the Chili Cook-off
 - April 19: Egg Roll and Plant Sale
- **Ann Reimers, Vice-Chairman of Board of Governors:** Laurie Cruz, the new Rental Agent, has started. Ann reviewed the draft rental application and some of the new features and options for cleaning and set-up of events. Details can be found in the February Newsletter. The next meeting is Jan 14.

New Business: Randy Bell would like to discuss Airbnb regulations in Arlington at a future meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm