



FY 2026 – Q3 BOARD MEETING - VIRTUAL

NATIONAL LANDING BID

Wednesday, January 29, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

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### **Minutes**

**Directors Present:** Catherine Anchin, Katharine Ange, Christina Brady, Stacy Brayboy, Mark Carrier, Gary Cook, Ashleigh de la Torre, Aubrey Dennis-King Fenton, Kimberly Driggins, Franki Fitterer, Nick Giacobbe, Rock Harper, Freddie Lutz, Chris Madoo, Donna Marquez, Andrea Murray, Dolores Navia, Abbey Oklak, Mara Olguin, Patrick Phillippi, Regina Rees, Judy Freshman, Shannon Flanagan-Watson, Harmar Thompson

**Directors Absent:** Shavini Fernando, Joe Oyler, Robert Peck, Kingdon Gould

**Staff Present:** Tracy Sayegh Gabriel, Rob Mandle, Malaika Scriven, Haroni Tewolde

**Others Present:** Keegan Callender, Jeramy Olmack, Ked Whitmore

### **Welcome**

- Tracy Gabriel opened the meeting by welcoming attendees virtually and sharing brief updates on the BID's efforts to support communications effort to educate property and business owners about snow removal responsibilities from sidewalks and streets throughout National Landing.
- Kimberly Driggins officially called the Q3 meeting to order.
- Tracy thanked members for pivoting to a virtual meeting hosted from the BID office.
- Kimberly provided an overview of the agenda.

### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

#### **Recent Wins**

- **The Lodge**
  - The Lodge transformed Metropolitan Park into a ski-inspired holiday celebration, welcoming more than 4,000 attendees throughout the day and generating significant engagement on social media. Tracy thanked Patrick and Amazon for sponsoring the event.

- **Riverhouse**

- In December, the Arlington County Board unanimously approved a rezoning and a set of final site plans, clearing the way for the River House neighborhood redevelopment in Pentagon City.

- **Breakfast Bingo**

- From January 15 through February 15, the BID's second annual Breakfast Bingo campaign spotlights nine restaurants across the district. Participants can have physical bingo cards stamped for any purchase made before 11:00 a.m. to work toward bingo and be entered to win Open Rewards cashback.
- Beyond the traditional three-in-a-row, four participants have already submitted completed cards with all nine spots stamped.

- **Day Drift Opening**

- Day Drift opened in the former Mah-Zah-Dar space across from Water Park. The new concept combines a café and bookstore and has seen strong foot traffic since opening. BID staff have frequently used the space for working and stakeholder meetings.

### Motion on Approval of FY2026 Q2 Board Meeting Minutes

- Motion: Stacey Brayboy
- Seconded: Mara Olguin
- Abstention: None
- Discussion: None
- Approved Unanimously
- Opposed: None

### Treasurer's Report

- Rob provided the Treasurer's Report in Robbie's place.

- **Appeals Results**

- Appeals resulted in a 2.1% revenue reduction, equating to approximately \$103,000.
- This reduction was fully covered by a \$136,900 surplus in the Appeals Reserve and a \$64,850 reduction in County Retained Funds.

- **Q2 Financial Close**

- **Year-to-date revenues are tracking at 105% of plan**
  - Year-to-date expenses are tracking at 92% of plan, down slightly from 96% last quarter.
  - Administration and Marketing are ahead of plan, events is tracking close to plan, and Economic Development, Public Realm, and Transportation are behind plan.

- **Reserve Funds**

- Reserve funds remain mostly unspent and are being held primarily for the BID's brand refresh and the underpass placemaking initiative.

- **The Operating Contingency has been used to cover:**

- A small number of FY2025 invoices received late
- Unexpected recruitment support costs for the new Marketing and Communications Manager

## **Discussion**

- Dolores Navia asked what contributed to the 10% overage shown on the Administration slide.
  - Rob noted some additional office set-up expenses were involved, but stated he would investigate further and share findings with the Board.

## **FY2027 Work Plan & Budget**

- Tracy introduced the FY2027 Work Plan and the County submission and review process.
- Tracy noted that, as the County faces increasing budget constraints, the BID's role in supplementing and enhancing services is even more valuable to maintaining quality of life and ensuring commercial areas remain vibrant.

## **Board Feedback**

- Katharine Ange thanked staff for the thoughtful work plan and shared enthusiasm for moving the work forward.

## **FY2027 Budget**

Tracy and staff reviewed key budget updates, including:

- Assessments are projected to decline by 2.4%, equating to approximately \$119,000 in revenue.
- This reduction is fully covered through the reallocation of the \$125,000 Appeals Reserve Contribution, as the reserve has reached its cap of 5% of the overall budget.
- Staff also noted that the FY2026 bonus pool will be moved into FY2027, with an additional \$10,000 expected due to reduced administrative fees and an additional Appeals Reserve draw.
- For context, Rosslyn had anticipated a 5% increase in assessed revenue but ultimately experienced a 7% decline.
- Staff requested board feedback and noted that, due to the assessment change and County feedback on the Work Plan, revisions were made and the board would need to reapprove the updated FY2027 Work Plan and Budget.

## **Discussion on Bonuses:**

- Shannon Flanagan-Watson noted that the BID is well positioned due to proactive budget scenario planning, cost management, and strong reserves, acknowledging the organization's preparedness in the current environment
- Christina Brady asked whether FY2026 bonuses would be paid in FY2027.
  - Tracy explained that employee bonuses are typically paid around June 30 but are now expected to shift to July, requiring a carryover.
  - Christina asked whether staff understand that this change does not impact compensation. Tracy confirmed staff are aware and that the intent is to keep payouts close to the June 30 timeline.
- Rob added that this shift aligns with updates to the performance review process, and staff have been involved throughout the transition.
  - Mark Carrier cautioned against this strategy noting that bonuses are typically accrued in the year performance is completed.
  - Rob stated staff would confirm best practices with the BID's accounting firm and proceed accordingly.
  - Tracy emphasized that the BID will follow whichever approach is most appropriate as directed by our accountants.

## **FY2027 Assessment Analysis**

- Rob clarified that the assessment categories include Commercial Office and Residential (apartments).
- Mark asked whether hotel assessments could be broken out to distinguish new property growth, noting that hotel performance data was down approximately 13% over the past year and questioning how a 6.3% increase in valuation was calculated.
  - Rob agreed to share additional hotel assessment data.
  - Tracy noted the BID should be prepared for significant hotel-related appeals.

## **Additional Board Questions on Bonuses**

- Gary Cook asked whether the BID should consult with accountants before approving the budget, particularly regarding employee bonus timing.
  - Tracy responded that she did not believe the vote should be delayed, noting that adjustments could be made elsewhere in the programmatic budget if needed.
  - Gary reiterated concern that paying FY2026 bonuses in FY2027 could increase the appearance of expenses in FY2027.

- Ked Whitmore suggested approving the budget with a request that staff obtain clarification from the accounting firm and report back before the next meeting.
- Stacey Brayboy supported Ked's recommendation, suggesting accountants return with guidance to help resolve concerns.
- Dolores Navia asked what specific changes were being voted on within the Work Plan.
  - Tracy explained that the revisions were not substantive, but rather reflected minor updates and notes on opportunities for the new year, as shared in the planning matrix.

### **Motion on Approval of Revised FY2027 Work Plan and Budget**

- Motion: Christina Brady
- Seconded: Freddie Lutz
- Abstention: Shannon Flanagan-Watson
- Discussion: None
- Approved Unanimously with the note that accountants be consulted

### **Board Committees**

#### **Nominating Committee**

- Tracy provided an update on the Nominating Committee
- The committee requested that board members submit potential candidate recommendations for consideration.
  - The Committee noted that candidate outreach should prioritize a mix of asset class representation, needed skills, and diversity.
- The Committee met last week to discuss the approach to filling two current board vacancies and developing the upcoming FY2027 Board Slate.
- Members were reminded of the required guidance outlined in the BID's Bylaws and Business Plan.
- The Committee emphasized that existing vacancies must be filled in a way that maintains the requirement that at least 60% of the Board be assessed owners.
- The Committee expressed interest in focusing one additional vacant seat on a commercial office tenant representative.
- Additional expertise in legal matters was also identified as a beneficial skill set for future board composition.

## **23<sup>rd</sup> Street Committee**

- Freddie Lutz provided an update on the 23rd Street Committee.
- Rodent abatement and other corridor-related topics were discussed at the Committee's most recent meeting.
- Acknowledged that the BID is exploring the purchase of trash receptacles as part of this effort.

## **Planning Committee**

- Dolores Navia provided an update on the Planning Committee.
- The Committee last met on December 4 and discussed:
  - Public realm and signage initiatives
  - The formation of the Innovation District, with an anticipated launch in winter 2026
  - Updates related to the River House redevelopment
- Placemaking efforts were also reviewed, including:
  - The 12th Street installation projects
  - Ongoing pigeon abatement strategies
- The next Planning Committee meeting will be held on March 5 in a hybrid format.

## **Equity Committee**

- Donna Marquez provided an update on the Equity Committee.
- The Committee has been focused on programming and engagement tied to heritage months.
- Upcoming and ongoing initiatives include:
  - Virginia Black History Month Gala -scheduled for February 28, hosted at the Renaissance.
  - The BID will host a table and plans to extend invitations to board members and select staff.
- Blerdcon
  - The BID continues to be actively involved in supporting and participating in Blerdcon programming.
- Small Business Vendor Showcase
  - On June 6, the Hyatt Regency Crystal City will host a small business vendor showcase as part of June programming.

## **Transportation Committee: Harmar**

- Harmar Thompson provided an update on the Transportation Committee.
- The Committee discussed ongoing planning related to the CC2DCA Bridge, with a focus on ensuring the bridge functions as a cohesive and accessible connection to the station area, despite multiple independent projects occurring on different timelines.
- Key discussion points included:
  - Pursuing station naming opportunities that would include National Landing.
  - Exploring the potential for a single coordinating entity to oversee the scope, schedule, design, and operations of the various transportation projects currently underway.
  - The next Transportation Committee meeting will be held on February 10 at 10:00 a.m.

## **Marketing Committee**

- Franki Fitterer provided updates on behalf of the Marketing Committee.
- Key updates included:
  - Several Marketing Committee members participated in a focus group over the past month as part of the BID's brand refresh process with DNCO. The discussion was engaging and generated valuable feedback to support DNCO's research and discovery work.
    - DNCO spent a week immersed in National Landing, conducting tours, focus groups, and interviews with a diverse range of stakeholders and residents.
- DNCO delivered a Discovery Findings presentation in mid-January, which staff noted was highly aligned with the BID's goals and priorities. The team expressed excitement about DNCO leading this work and is looking forward to the first round of deliverables in early February.
- Franki thanked the BID team, particularly Madeline, for coordinating the brand refresh effort.
  - Mara Olguin also thanked both the BID team and DNCO for their work.
- The BID marketing team is collaborating with partners to develop press and digital materials for the Innovation District launch and the upcoming event on February 11.
- The marketing team also wrapped a successful digital campaign for The Lodge, including:
  - New influencer partnerships that produced strong results
  - High newsletter open rates
  - A 60% increase in page views to The Lodge microsite compared to last year
- Staff noted continued coordination with founding partners in advance of the official Innovation District launch in February.

## **Strategic Planning**

- Tracy previewed that the BID will begin a new strategic planning process later this year.
- Tracy suggested the Board may participate in an in-depth workshop and discussion as part of this effort.
- She encouraged members to begin thinking about priorities and areas of emphasis for the next iteration of the neighborhood's growth and the organization's work, noting this is a timely opportunity to elevate key themes through the planning process.

## **Board Discussion**

- Stacy commended the BID team for successfully raising the profile and brand of the organization, noting this was a major goal of the current Strategic Plan.
- Tracy emphasized that a central component of the upcoming strategic planning process will be implementing the brand refresh already underway.
- Tracy also noted that organizational culture will be another important focus area.
- Judy Freshman was unable to provide comments due to microphone issues.
- Andrea Murray shared excitement about participating in a full strategic planning process from the beginning. She noted that "clean and safe" remains a top priority and expressed interest in learning more about the trash pilot Freddie referenced for 23rd Street. She asked how this effort may layer into broader clean and safe initiatives.

## **Clean and Safe Discussion**

- Rob provided additional context on efforts to support 23rd Street businesses in addressing rodent and sanitation concerns. He noted:
  - The BID's clean team is sometimes deployed on an ad-hoc basis.
  - A key hurdle is navigating regulatory frameworks tied to individual site plans and avoiding the supplanting of mandated services and managing service gaps between properties.
- Dolores Navia requested an example of these challenges.
  - Rob explained that if a service is mandated by the County, the BID must be careful as they are prohibited from supplanting required responsibilities
- Ked added that the County's position is often that if site plan conditions assign responsibility to a developer, they do not want the BID to step in and override those obligations.
- Patrick Phillippi commented that it would be helpful to understand how clean and safe programs operate in practice in peer districts, such as Rosslyn or NoMa, and what effectiveness looks like on the ground.

- Kimberly Driggins concluded by noting that staff will ensure the Board has baseline information and examples to support future strategic planning discussions.

### **CC2DCA / VRE Update**

- Tracy provided an update on ongoing coordination related to the CC2DCA connection and the VRE station entrance design.
- The BID recently submitted a letter to VRE advocating for an entrance design that is cohesive with the surrounding station area and broader CC2DCA vision. Staff noted progress has been made in collaboration with JBG Smith.

### **Station Access and Design Considerations**

- Tracy emphasized that station access will determine long-term usability and functionality. The BID has advocated for the inclusion of escalators and at minimum, one elevator, with a strong push to incorporate two elevators.
- The BID is also pursuing the potential renaming of the station to include “National Landing.” While there has been receptivity to the concept, staff noted a name change is more likely once the full station redevelopment is complete.

### **Board Discussion: Escalators and Maintenance**

- Gary asked why VRE is opposed to escalators, noting that from a rider functionality perspective, the absence of escalators creates challenges for travelers with luggage or mobility needs.
  - Tracy explained that VRE has expressed concerns about escalators due to operational and long-term maintenance burdens.
- Dolores Navia noted that maintenance is a significant long-term issue. While not opposed to escalators, she emphasized that the immediate priority is ensuring sufficient funding to build the entrance, with escalators potentially added later.
- Harmar Thompson highlighted uncertainty around who would maintain escalators over time and noted the Committee’s emphasis on securing two elevators as a more reliable accessibility solution.
- Tracy added that VRE is moving ahead faster than other project components and is focused on completing the entrance without delay. However, she acknowledged that the current proposal is not yet an ideal solution for what will ultimately function as National Landing’s “Union Station.”
  - Tracy noted this issue will continue to be addressed through the Transportation Committee.

### **County Coordination and Next Steps**

- Tracy shared that BID staff met with Arlington County’s project team last week, along with representatives from JBG Smith and Amazon.

- Much of the County’s work remains focused on aligning partner agencies, including VRE, to establish a strong baseline design.
- Tracy emphasized that significant design work remains ahead and encouraged board members to serve as champions for a solution that is:
  - On budget and on schedule
  - Architecturally iconic and civic in character
  - Highly usable and accessible
- Tracy noted that staff will share template letters for board members to support County efforts in advocating for a high-quality final design.

### **Additional Board Comments**

- Patrick Phillippi stated that the current design is not aligned with community aspirations and remains in need of architectural improvements.
- Nick Giacobbe noted that a CC2DCA design open house will take place on February 19.
- Ashleigh de la Torre expressed agreement with the discussion and priorities raised.
- Tracy referenced prior conversations about incorporating benches, landscaping, and long-term maintenance partnerships into the station area plan.

### **National Innovation Quarter / Innovation District**

- Malaika shared that the name for the Innovation District has been finalized to represent the full range of stakeholders, from anchor institutions to small businesses.
- The official launch will take place on February 11 at the Experience Center.

### **Placemaking Updates**

- Malaika provided brief updates on current placemaking initiatives:
  - Artechouse is seeking a host site for a one-year immersive art installation.
  - The 12th Street placemaking project is nearly complete.
  - Underpass placemaking efforts remain ongoing.

### **Trust for National Landing**

- Rob provided an update on the Trust for National Landing.
- The Trust’s Board of Directors met in January to advance organizational next steps.
- Rob shared that the Trust expects to:

- File its 501(c)(3) application within the next few weeks
- Establish a bank account within the next month
- Current priorities include:
  - Finalizing accounting policies and financial infrastructure
  - Identifying priority initiatives, particularly in art and culture, where the Trust may pursue grant applications and sponsorship opportunities
- Staff noted that the Trust is beginning development of a broader funding strategy to support future programming and investment.

**Closing Remarks**

- Kimberly Driggins thanked Board Members for their time, participation, and continued contributions to the BID's work.

The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 29 and will take place at the BID offices located at 1550 Crystal Drive.