

YORKTOWN PTA MEETING MINUTES

Monday, March 11, 2024

Meeting: 7:30pm

I. **Welcome**

II. **Approval of Minutes-** February 2024 meeting minutes Minutes approved

III. **Principal's Update:** Dr. Clark

Thank you Mr. Cantwell and Officer Smithgall and Officer Giroux for joining as speakers tonight.

Thanks to PTA for spring grants - those have come out and teachers have submitted proposals..

Want to share that March 15 is early release - get out at 1:00

Next week have pep rally on 3/22 to jump into spring break. Will be celebrating many of the programs at the pep rally.

Spring break - 3/25 - 29. End of third quarter April 12 with telework day on 4/15.

Les Miserables is spring theater show - April 4 - 6.

Day off April 10 - end of Ramadan which just started today. Observation of Eid.

Want to highlight that the "Your Voice Matters" survey is open. All parents have received a personalized link from Panorama Education. Use this to evaluate school and APS goals. Have a goal around parent engagement and really want feedback. Students took it - 80% response rate. Thanks for everyone for taking the survey.

Have "Silent No More" coming up on 4/16. Announcing program called Opioid - substance use prevention program that involves people from US Attorney's office in Alexandria, DEA Agent, MD, and individuals who have lost loved ones due to overdoses. Had it at WL and Wakefield last year. Important program for students to be aware of dangers of fentanyl and other substances. Students need to be aware of impact on them, in addition to understanding how to keep themselves and others safe. Things like Narcan. Program will be for all students.

APS is organizing a parent session across the three high schools. APS is sending out the dates of all the sessions. Parents would get the same presentation that the kids are getting.

Congrats to girls swim team - 3rd state championship in 4 years.

Spring sports have started. Come out to see a game and support our teams! Information on Yorktownsports.org. Will start around August 5 in summer for fall sports.

Senior activities - Check the website for activities. Graduation speaker auditions for kids who have above 4.0. That information will be shared with students coming out next week.

May 1 - will have a request for extra tickets for graduation.

Senior experience starts in May. Graduation program in June.

IV. Treasurer's Report:

Report covers Feb. 2024 - beginning balance just over \$41,000 and the ending balance rounded to \$41,000. Receipts totaled \$712, disbursements totaled \$1294 and were teacher grants. Year-to-date expenses remain on track with the budget.

V. Committee Reports and other PTA items

a. Guest Speakers:

Mr. Mike Cantwell, Sergeant Smithgall, and Deputy Chief Giroux: Mr. Cantwell - long time Yorktown civic association president - for 11 years now. About 10 days ago, had an incident where someone spray painted racist/antisemitic things on Yorktown neighborhood cars. Mr. Cantwell coordinated with church, police, etc. Had a rally against hate at Rock Spring Church last Friday - this was covered in the media. But believes that this should be a whole of community effort to find the perpetrators and ensure they are appropriately dealt with. Wants to prevent acts like this in the future. Has noticed an uptick in graffiti throughout Arlington. Important that we figure out how to discourage this in the future.

Sergeant Patrick Smithgall (psmithgall@arlingtonva.us) - reported that a resident found antisemitic graffiti on sidewalk. Noticed vehicles with racial comments and graffiti. Ring doorbell footage was recovered that night. It appears to be three juveniles that are involved in the matter. Can't see gender/race. Ongoing investigation. Don't have more info but if public has info, please do share it. This occurred between 2/18 - 2/19 and would like to encourage people to look at their Ring footage. This is the only documented case in Yorktown neighborhood. Recently there was an antisemitic incident at the career center. 2 students reported that they received messages via social media that had antisemitic undertones. Homeland security section is involved. In terms of help from community, with everyone having cameras and being familiar with who lives around them, if you see something, say something. If you see something suspicious, report it. As you start to see graffiti, make sure you report that - graffiti lends itself to other crimes. They do keep a log with emergency communications centers - they can always circle back and take care of it and have it removed. If graffiti is not being reported, then data is not as accurate as they would like it to be. Get a lot of questions about laws and destruction of property - \$1000 is difference between a misdemeanor and felony. If hate based, that elevates it. Hardware stores are not supposed to be selling spray paint to minors. Be mindful about where you keep your own paint. Make sure you are having the conversations within your home. Know who your kids' friends are. 16 - 23 years old are at more risk of getting into trouble, especially when parents don't know where kids are or who they are hanging out with.

Deputy Dave Giroux - commander in criminal investigation. In police department for almost 29 years. For this specific type of incident there is a dual track. Gang and graffiti investigator. Generally the graffiti they see is not gang related. It is tagger related. If it rises to the level of a hate crime, that goes to the homeland security section. Depending on the circumstances, determines how it is investigated. From a security standpoint, to avoid something being done to your car, park your car in a well lit area. Has lived in the neighborhood since 2002. He parks on the street as well but parks under the street lights. From a personal standpoint, as a parent, the decision-making model and prowess of adolescent male is not one primed for perfection, especially with drugs and alcohol. Exacerbated by social media. So to the extent that teens want to interact with their parents, he encourage you to do that and touch on the human aspects of this crime. Commends Mike for putting on public display and community support.

If you can't answer these questions about your teen, you may have a problem: 1) where are you? 2) who are you with? 3) what are you doing? If can answer these, probably in good shape. Kids talk a lot on social media. Be aware and open channels of communication. If kid knows of a threatening behavior about something that is happening in the school, encourage them to report it. They do not need to identify your child in an investigation. Won't have problem for being a tattletale or snitch. Lastly Dr. Clark talked about opioids. Did a lot of narcotics work in earlier part of his career - recommends a speaker, Chris Heron (basketball player) who became addicted to drugs. Great story and great ability to connect.

Deputy Chief David Giroux #1031, 703-228-4062, Dgirou@arlingtonva.us

Sergeant Smithgall, #1536, psmithgall@arlingtonva.us

Mr. Cantwell - don't know who the perps are. Don't know if they are YHS students or the gender. But wants to emphasize that there is no graffiti "artist" - you are a graffiti "criminal". Spray painting someone's car or public property is a felony. Just lay it out for your kids. Has concerns with spring break and days off, a lot of shenanigans that can go on. Become good friends with your immediate neighbors and ask them to tip you off if a bunch of people start showing up at your house.

If graffiti is on public property, the police can clear it up. If it is private property, the owner has to clean it up.

Graffiti in Arlington is not necessarily trending upward. APD has tried to make reporting easier. Not seeing higher rate overall during the past year.

To report - <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Topics/Report-Problem>

- b. **Looking for a 3 person search committee** to help seek candidates for PTA Board Vacancies for the 2024-2025 school year- Vacant positions: President, External VP, Internal VP, Secretary, possibly Treasurer. Please be willing to serve on the search committee.
- c. Jill Gasper - had sent out an email via PTA newsletter about open positions. Have a confirmed vacancy for SAT/ACT test prep coordinator role. A couple of committee chair members that are going to stay on but If anyone else is planning to stay on, please email volunteer@yhs.pta.org to

confirm. Also, generated a google form for people to pre-populate if they are going to stay on. By next month, will have a better idea next month what the vacancies will be.

d. Spring dance is now April 13.

VI. **Adjournment (8:14pm)**- Thank you for attending