



Committee: Directly to Council
Committee Review: Completed
Staff: Selena Mendy Singleton, Esq., Clerk of Council
Purpose: Final action – vote expected
Keywords: #BUP

AGENDA ITEM #4Q
November 30, 2021
Action

SUBJECT

Bethesda Urban Partnership Board of Directors County Council recommendation to the County Executive.

EXPECTED ATTENDEES

None.

COUNCIL DECISION POINTS & COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Council received five applications. Of the five, one declined to interview, citing privacy concerns, one other had a family member in need of care and therefore no longer had time to devote to BUP. The PHED Committee interviewed three applicants on November 19. **The Committee recommends that Dan Schlaff, Lauren Lefkowitz, Sean Oberle be nominated as candidates for consideration in that order of preference.**

DESCRIPTION/ISSUE

Section 68A of the Montgomery County Code authorizes the creation of urban district corporations within an urban district with certain procedures to operate as a commercial district management authority. **The Council must submit three nominations to the County Executive for one position on the Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP) Board of Directors.** The nominees must live in a residential community outside of, but in close proximity to, the urban district.

Each term on the Board is for three years and directors are limited to two terms. The second term of Deborah Michaels expired in October 2021; she is not eligible for reappointment.

SUMMARY OF KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

Not applicable.

This report contains:

Draft Memorandum to the County Executive @ 1
Resumes: Dan Schlaff @ 2
Lauren Lefkowitz @ 4
Sean Oberle @ 8

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

MEMORANDUM

November 30, 2021

TO: Marc Elrich, County Executive

FROM: Tom Hucker, Council President

SUBJECT: Bethesda Urban Partnership Board of Directors

Section 68A of the Montgomery County Code authorizes the creation of urban district corporations within an urban district with certain procedures to operate as a commercial district management authority. The Council must submit three nominations for one position on the Bethesda Urban Partnership Board of Directors for your consideration. The nominees must live in a residential community outside of, but in close proximity to, the urban district.

The second term of Deborah Michaels expired in October 2021; she is not eligible for reappointment. The Council nominated the following candidates for consideration for appointment to the Bethesda Urban District Board of Directors, and the nominations are listed **in the order of preference**:

1. Dan Schlaff
2. Lauren Lefkowitz
3. Sean Oberle

Attachments

Resumes: Dan Schlaff
Lauren Lefkowitz
Sean Oberle

August 18, 2021

Council President Tom Hucker
Montgomery County Council

Re: Application for *Bethesda Urban Partnership Board of Directors*

Dear Council President Hucker,

I am pleased to submit my application for the upcoming vacant position on the Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP) Board of Directors. This is a truly exciting opportunity to help give back to my community by shaping the future of downtown Bethesda as a dynamic and magnetic urban district.

I have been a Bethesda resident since 2016 and a homeowner since 2017, currently residing in the Greenwich Forest neighborhood adjacent to the BUP. As a self-described urban development nerd, I have thoroughly enjoyed the transformation of downtown over the past several years and believe Bethesda is increasingly serving as a model for intelligent, inclusive urban growth and development. My wife (a Bethesda native) and I regularly walk our 20 month old daughter downtown, where she loves to run around the open streets and eat at the growing number of great restaurants. I'm eager to help make Bethesda an even more compelling and engaging downtown resource and center of activity for my daughter and all members of our community.

Although I would serve on the board as a member of the community, I am excited to leverage my professional expertise and experience at the intersection of urban development and transportation to inform the BUP's mission. I help lead business development for Via, the world's leading public mobility technology company, where I work with transportation executives and municipal leaders around the world to transform public transit using advanced technology. Prior to this, I spent several years as an urban policy researcher, and then as a mobility consultant to both the private and public sectors, advising clients on how disruptive trends in the transportation and technology sectors will transform urban systems. I believe that my understanding of the trends, organizations, and policies shaping the future of transportation and urban areas will provide valuable perspective to the BUP Board's work.

Thank you for your consideration of my application. I look forward to this opportunity to serve the Bethesda and Montgomery County communities as a member of the BUP Board.

Best Regards,

Dan Schlaff

EXPERIENCE

VIA

Vice President, Strategy & Business Development

Director, Strategy & Business Development

- Direct 10-member global BD team to win 50+ transit technology and services contracts with municipal governments and transit authorities, driving over \$150M in revenue growth from 2020-2021
- Transform go-to-market operations by growing BD organization, scaling and automating RFP response processes, collaborating with Product and Operations teams, and assuming BD responsibilities for new portfolio acquisitions
- Led Via's federal funding strategy, successfully winning multiple competitive grants from the Federal Transit Administration to fund innovative microtransit, paratransit, and autonomous vehicle services

Washington, DC

2021 – Present

2018 – 2021

DELOITTE CONSULTING

Manager, Strategy & Operations

Senior Consultant, Strategy & Operations

- Developed a cloud-based IoT platform for a global automotive OEM by managing a partnership with 3 Independent Software Vendors (ISVs) to build the business case, architecture and implementation plan
- Established the go-to-market strategy for a venture-backed engine technology supplier
- Created a mobility product and service roadmap for a \$70B transportation & logistics client through leading an innovation strategy engagement with executive leadership
- Achieved double-digit growth for Deloitte's Future of Mobility practice by leading go-to-market efforts for mobility services and solutions, and developing partnerships with mobility ecosystem stakeholders
- Identified \$150M in annual savings across 16 technology divisions through analyzing labor capitalization processes for a \$164B telecommunications client

Washington, DC

2017 – 2018

2015 – 2017

MBA CONSULTANT

- **BARCLAYS INVESTMENT BANK:** Produced a geopolitical risk and scenario planning tool to advise client's equity research group on risk facing investment portfolios in Russian oil & gas industry
- **CROWDABILITY:** Created the go-to-market plan and product strategy for a digital media startup
- **SLEUK RITH INSTITUTE:** Developed the strategic plan for a leading Cambodian NGO to launch a new research university (winner, 2014 Columbia Business School International Development competition)

New York, NY

2014

NEW SECTOR ALLIANCE

Senior Summer Consultant

- Developed two-year strategic plan to increase an international health organization's fundraising by 150%

San Francisco, CA

2013

MDRC

Public Policy Researcher

- Partnered with public sector policymakers and major philanthropies to design, launch, evaluate and scale innovative urban development and social impact programs using behavioral economics
- Designed and managed two award-winning economic development initiatives in partnership with the NYC Mayor's Office for Economic Opportunity and the U.S. Social Innovation Fund
- Communicated impact of multimillion-dollar urban development programs to senior policymakers

New York, NY

2009 – 2012

EDUCATION

COLUMBIA BUSINESS SCHOOL

MBA. May 2015

New York, NY

2012 – 2015

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY - SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL & PUBLIC AFFAIRS

MA, International Affairs. May 2015

TULANE UNIVERSITY

BA, Political Science; Minor in Business. May 2007

New Orleans, LA

2003 – 2007

Internship: Louisiana Department of Labor: Restored Orleans Parish operations post-Hurricane Katrina

PUBLICATIONS

- [*Experiencing the Future of Mobility: Media in the new Transportation Ecosystem*](#) (Deloitte Insights, August 2017)



Career and Mindset Coach | Lauren Lefkowitz Coaching
Bethesda, MD 20814

Council President Tom Hucker
Montgomery County Council | 100 Maryland Avenue | Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Councilmember Hucker:

I was so pleased to learn of an opening coming forth on the Bethesda Urban Partnership Board of Directors this October! I am a long-time resident of Downtown Bethesda with a true love for our community and neighbors. I moved to Bethesda about 20 years ago, first as a renter at The Seasons and then as a condo owner at Whitehall Condominiums.

In 2007, I joined the Bethesda Transportation Solutions Advisory Board, serving as chair in 2009, and continuing to serve through 2013. While I served on the Advisory Board, we worked through strategies for extending the hours and availability of the Bethesda Circulator (back when the trolleys were used!) and other important transit issues. During that time, I also served on the board of the Alzheimer's Association National Capital Area and did pro bono work for other nonprofits, while working full time.

In 2012, after learning my residential area was slated to have meters installed, I began a petition among neighbors to stop plans for installation. After several hundred signatures in fewer than two weeks, I reached out to then-Council President, Roger Berliner to ask him to present the Department of Transportation with our neighborhood's opposition. I was relieved to receive a reply that the Council unanimously agreed with our opposition, presented it to the DOT, and subsequently, no meters were installed on Battery Lane, nor on North Brook Lane.

In 2021, I took my coaching business full time. With this new business venture comes a new level of choice and freedom in where I focus my energy. I would love nothing more than to serve the Bethesda community again in the capacity of Bethesda Urban Partnership Board Member.

Please feel free to reach out to me at laurenlefkowitz@gmail.com or 301-656-7535 with any questions. Thank you for your consideration of my application.

Warm regards,

Lauren Lefkowitz

Lauren M. Lefkowitz

, Bethesda, MD 20814

After 20 years in human resources and operations, side-gigs in career coaching, training, resume and cover letter writing, interview coaching, and other HR and operations related small-business consulting, launched Lauren Lefkowitz Coaching, a coaching program for mid-career and executive leadership professionals who want more from life than work, sleep, repeat.

In managing several departments outside of HR, including Meeting and Event Planning, Communications and Marketing, Finance, and other corporate departments, recognized that career and mindset coaching was one avenue of professional development that applied to any department, job, and company.

Now, in support of those who feel stuck professionally, Lauren Lefkowitz Coaching offers opportunities to learn how to get unstuck and allow clients to offer themselves permission to dream and pursue their goals, find joy, excitement, challenge, and balance in their careers...and still have a personal life to love.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Lauren Lefkowitz Coaching

2020 to present

Career and Mindset Coach - Founder

- Partner with individuals, small groups, and small businesses to coach and consult with mid-career professionals and executive leaders who want to find joy, excitement, challenge, and balance in their careers, and still have a personal life to love.
- Coach on topics including building confidence, overcoming imposter syndrome, developing strategic thinking skills, learning to manage up, over, and across organizations.
- Support clients in better understanding who they are, who they want to be, and what prevents them from transition.
- Offer clients opportunities to safely step out of their comfort zones, try new ways and new strategies to achieve their goals, and support the pursuit of their visions for their own futures.

Pulmonary Hypertension Association, Inc.

2015 to 2021

Vice President, Human Resources & Operations

- Built organization's first human resources department during rapid growth phase and imminent retirement of former President & CEO; worked closely with incoming President & CEO to form human resources structure, develop employee culture, and create team-driven strategies.
- Developed structured processes for recruiting, onboarding, temporary staffing, payroll, complaint resolution, compensation, performance management, progressive discipline, and termination.
- Created new policies and worked with managers to develop communications and workflow processes in a new work-from-home environment during COVID-19 outbreak, resulting in a proactive and smooth transition to a work-from-home circumstance, determining coverage of essential in-office functions in a safe, manageable way, and regularly communicating business plans with employees.
- Shifted hiring philosophy from culture of hiring eager and passionate, but inexperienced, candidates to a right-skilled and right-experienced philosophy, resulting in higher retention, longer tenure, better employee engagement, and improved workflow continuity.
- Partnered with President & CEO and Vice President, Finance to budget for and implement a more competitive compensation and benefits package, which included bringing previously noncompetitive salaries to market and improving organizational benefits package.
- Orchestrated life cycle of major organizational restructuring, which resulted in elimination of one third of staff immediately and additional staff through attrition. Focused on risk mitigation through fair selection processes, detailed documentation and compassionate delivery of separation notices.

- Improved and automated a variety of human resources and payroll products and vendors; conducted RFP processes where needed and implemented new, more efficient systems for HRIS and payroll, benefits administration, and retirement plan administration.
- Lead solutions-based processes for complex, sensitive employee relations issues, including executive level conflict resolution, legal situations, and course-correcting interdepartmental partnerships.
- Oversaw office move, which involved hands-on vendor management, contract negotiation, budget management, and facilitation of physical relocation to new office during COVID-19 outbreak.
- Manage employees in business operations and meetings departments. Acted as interim Vice President, Communications & Marketing; interim managed Finance, Development, and Program department employees and processes during related leadership transitions.
- Completed full employee policy and process handbook revision, researching best practices, legal updates, and policy change cost impact, resulting in more flexible, progressive policies and competitive ancillary benefits; changes were either cost-neutral or cost-saving.
- Created and implemented structure for setting departmental and individual performance goals and standards based on organization's new strategic plan, conducting group and one-on-one training to help employees connect individual contributions to big picture strategy.

Calvert Investments, Inc.

2006 to 2015

Human Resources Business Partner

- Managed and implemented the full cycle recruiting process, utilizing a diverse collection of sources to ensure a diverse pool of candidates. Recruited for a variety of positions, entry level through executive.
- Counseled executive staff, managers, and supervisors on employee relations issues, including progressive discipline, management of interpersonal issues, general management, and employee development.
- Invited to work with parent company on a variety of projects, including implementation of a new applicant tracking and onboarding system and creation of new training materials and workshops.
- Created and managed job descriptions and worked with compensation specialist to determine equitable and competitive salary ranges for positions. Conducted full audit of more than 100 job descriptions, partnering with department managers and employees to verify and update information.
- Supervised entry- and mid-level human resources professionals.
- Created and facilitated training for managers and employees. Topics included: effective interviewing, management development, leadership skills, change management, conflict resolution, and performance management.
- Collaborated with national team of human resources professionals to develop, write and/or edit, and subsequently communicate consistent, fair policies and procedures for parent company and for Calvert.
- Created new, structured intern program; oversaw full cycle of internship implementation, intern activities, job descriptions, hiring, and legal compliance.
- Managed annual Affirmative Action Plan, EEO-1, and VET-100 reports; submitted annual human resources functional and activities report to Board of Directors; applied for external best-places-to-work awards.

Enterprise Rent-A-Car

1999 to 2006

Human Resources Generalist Supervisor

2001 to 2006

Prior positions: Car Sales Administrator (1999 – 2001) and Fleet Services Account Manager (2001)

- Selected to establish human resources department in newly created region of company. Served as human resources department manager in three different regional offices, serving up to 350 employees.
- Managed benefits administration, HRIS database updates and changes, new hire and termination processes, and employee complaint resolution.
- Directed performance management and progressive discipline processes, from coaching and development to termination. Conducted one-on-one training with all levels of management based on individual needs.

- Trained and managed human resources staff and other administrative employees; served as peer advisor to human resources generalists in several other regional offices.
- Supervised hiring and promotional processes for employees, including candidate application, interviewing, decision-making, documentation, and follow up. Conducted employee retention interviews, employee exit interviews, and company investigations.
- Managed Affirmative Action Plan, OSHA reporting and bi-annual employee opinion surveys, analyzing results, and proposing operational and managerial changes.
- Managed worker's compensation, unemployment claims, EEOC inquiries, and all hearing proceedings.
- Created human resources and safety audit processes and conducted regular audits within human resources department and in rental car offices to ensure legal compliance.

EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- **BA Psychology, Concentration: Human Development and Education** – University of Maryland
 - **Senior Certified Professional (SHRM-SCP)** – Society for Human Resource Managers (SHRM)
 - **Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR)** – Human Resources Certification Institute (HRCI)
 - **Professional in Human Resources (PHR)** – Human Resources Certification Institute (HRCI)
 - **Claritas® Investment Certificate** – CFA Institute
 - **Certified Leadership Trainer** – Achieve Global Training
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COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Alzheimer's Association of the National Capital Area

Board Member (2009 to 2012), Compensation Committee Chair (2011 to 2012)

- Managed full cycle recruitment for Chief Executive Officer role, including hiring committee management.

Bethesda Transportation Solutions

Advisory Board Member (2007 to 2013), Advisory Board Chair (2009)

- Served on local commuter relations board, working to improve Bethesda commuter experience.

Pro Bono Work

- Provide human resources services to nonprofits entities (staff and boards of directors).
- Offer training and coaching to underemployed individuals on the subjects of job searching, interviewing, and cover letter and resume writing.

Sean Oberle

, Bethesda, MD 20814

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Montgomery County Council
Council Office Building
100 Maryland Avenue, 6th Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear members of the Montgomery County Council:

I would like to apply for the opening position on the Bethesda Urban Partnership Board of Directors. This is the slot for a resident in a neighborhood adjacent to the Bethesda Urban District. I am a homeowner in the Whitehall Condominium between Battery Lane and the NIH campus.

I also run my sole-proprietor business within the Urban District in an office building on East West Highway near BCC High School. What this means is that nearly every working day, I walk to and from my job through the Woodmont Triangle side of the Urban District. Besides improving my quality of life, it literally makes me a citizen with my "feet on the ground." Add to that all my free time walking, running, biking, eating, or shopping around Bethesda, and I've naturally come to know and love the neighborhoods that the BUP board serves.

I see lots of potential in the growth that is occurring. Of course, I also see some needs such as more retail on the Woodmont side. But regardless of what I see now, serving on the board would give me an opportunity to better understand and help address the needs of a city that I admire and where I plan to reside for decades.

I'll leave you with this related story. In the 2018 and 2020 election cycles, my wife and I ran a nonpartisan voter-registration booth, mostly at the farmers' market at Bethesda Elementary. As the pandemic took over everything, we found that what people mostly needed was help in simply understanding how to cast their votes. We shifted gears and became a voting-information booth too, closely following the 2020 changes and passing them along, including figuring out how do so "non-contact" with posters bearing QR codes.

Other people were involved with the booth to begin with, but eventually, and especially during the pandemic, it was just my wife and me. That wasn't a problem. Instead, it was wonderful. Over and over, we were gratified in helping neighbors. The experience confirmed something I already knew but brought to the forefront of how I think of civic duty – keep showing up and remember that the little acts matter as much as the big, maybe more.

Please let me transfer that conviction to further serving Bethesda on the BUP board.

Best Regards,

Sean Oberle

Resume attached

Sean Oberle

, Bethesda, MD 20814

Work Experience

- Owner: Dec. 2002 – present
Assumed control of *Product Safety Letter*, an established newsletter focusing on safety regulation by the Consumer Product Safety Commission and similar government agencies. Served as editorial manager of this weekly newsletter from 1992 - 1998.
- Freelance writer: Mar. 2001 – Dec. 2002
Assignments included: writing a monthly 8-page newsletter on pharmaceutical research outsourcing; writing a 500+ page book on the privacy and security requirements of HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act); editing introductions to and compiling more than 10 books on FDA regulation; managing the production of a buyers guide of services for complying with an FDA regulation; writing a humorous piece on the kitsch of using rotary phones; covering Capitol Hill hearings and various regulatory agencies as a stringer; writing a newsletter on biometric security devices.
- Director new products: Aug. 1999 – Mar. 2001
Washington Business Information, Falls Church, Va. – Oversaw product development for company focused on Food & Drug Administration regulation of biologics, medical devices and pharmaceuticals.
- Publisher: May 1998 – Aug. 1999
United Communications Group, Rockville, Md. – Oversaw the editorial, marketing, conference and administrative needs of a small publications division serving people who manage telephone services and mail services for large organizations.
- Editorial director: Jun. 1992 – May 1998
Washington Business Information, Arlington, Va. – Ran 10-publications focused mostly on FDA regulation of biologics, medical devices and pharmaceuticals. Others focused on product safety and hazardous materials transportation.
- Various editorial jobs: Mar. 1989 – Jun. 1992
Washington Business Information, Arlington, Va.
- Writer/reporter: Aug. 1988 – Mar. 1989
Youth Policy Institute, Washington, D.C.

Qualifications

- 32+ years in the news business, doing everything from proofreading to managing a 10-publication department to running a company.
- 19+ years owning a news business, including shepherding it to a 50% growth in revenue in 2002-2009.
- Strong ability to see the evolving needs of a served community and develop ways to address them.

Education

- B.A., English – 1988
Hampden-Sydney College, Virginia.

Recent Civic Service

- Ran a nonpartisan voter-registration booth in Bethesda, MD during the 2018 and 2020 election cycles. This evolved into a voter-information booth during the pandemic to help people understand the changes in how they could cast their votes.