

Minutes April 2, 2019  
**ACCF Membership Meeting**

**Call to Order:** Federation President Banks noted the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM. President Banks led the meeting in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting's agenda was approved as submitted and the minutes for the March 5, 2019 Membership Meeting were approved as submitted. The April treasurer's report was filed subject to audit.

**Member Organizations All-Stars:** President Banks announced that the following member organizations had two or more delegates and/or alternates present at the March 5, 2019 Membership Meeting: American Association of University Women; Arlington East Falls Church Civic Association; Arlington Tree Action Group; Bluemont Civic Association; Buckingham Community Civic Association; Chain Bridge Forest Homeowners Association; Clarendon-Courthouse Civic Association; Dover-Crystal Citizens Association; Forest Glen Civic Association; National Active & Retired Fed Employees Chap 7, Arlington; Shirlington Dogs II; Waverly Hills Civic Association; Woman's Club of Arlington; and the Yorktown Civic Association.

**Career Center Video Recording of this Meeting:** President Banks thanked Career Center students Seb Duall, Campbell Hamilton-Howard and Emilio Tonelli; and Career Center instructor Tom O'Day for making a video recording of this Federation meeting.

**New Delegate:** President Banks welcomed new delegate Rajan Dudani representing the Arlington Heights Civic Association.

**2019 Annual Meeting:** President Banks announced that CivFed's Board of Directors decided to schedule the Federation's 2019 Annual Meeting for May 7. He said the Nominating Committee would present a slate of candidates for officers and directors that would reflect the Federation's diversity for approval by delegates at the annual meeting.

**Panel Discussion of Arlington County's FY2020 Budget:** Panel members Richard Stephenson, Budget Director, Arlington County, Tenley Petersen, immediate past chair, County Fiscal Affairs Advisory Commission, and Burt Bostwick, a member of CivFed's Revenue and Expenditures Committee gave brief presentations on Arlington County's FY2020 budget and answered the following questions from delegates and alternates: Is Amazon going to pay for child care for its employees? Does the County have a strategic plan, and if not, why not? What is happening with the residential utility tax? Is the average salary of county employees below that of federal employees? Is the proposed tax rate in the county manager's budget below those in Fairfax County and the cities of Falls Church and Alexandria? What would prevent Arlington from raising taxes? How can the county better collaborate with APS?

**Panel Discussion of the Arlington County Public School FY2020 Budget:** Panel members Julia Burgos, APS Chief of Staff; Alvera Wilson, APS Budget Analyst; Jenn Wegener, member, APS Budget Advisory Council (BAC); Michael Shea, former chair APS BAC; and Michael Beer, Chair, Civfed Schools Committee gave brief presentations on the Arlington County School System's FY2020 budget and answered the following questions from delegates and alternates: What is the average class size in elementary, middle and high schools in Arlington this year? What are they predicted to be next year and how do they compare to neighboring and benchmark jurisdictions? What is the current level of APS reserves and does APS have a reserve policy? How is the one percent increase in taxes allocated between one-time expenses and the regular APS annual budget? Are there any on-line or off-site courses available for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students that could be used to ameliorate class size issues? Are there families that do not live in Arlington that have enrolled their children in APS schools?

(back to table of contents)

**Old Business**

**ACCF Cultural Affairs Committee Report:** Tina Worden, chair of the ACCF Cultural Affairs Committee, reported that her committee met on March 19 at 3700 Four Mile Drive. Eleven members attended the meeting. The committee unanimously endorsed a statement outlining concerns over proposed cuts in expenditures on the arts contained in the county manager's FY2020 budget. She said the Cultural Affairs Committee participated in R&E meetings during March to assist with preparing its draft resolution and report. The report determined there was insufficient analysis in support of the proposed reductions and it recommended more complete analysis and eliminating the county manager's proposed cuts in expenditures on the arts contained in the county manager's FY2020 budget. The Committee is preparing a panel discussion on cultural affairs in Arlington for the June Membership Meeting

**Revenues & Expenditures Committee Real Estate Tax-Rate Resolution for FY2020** John Tuohy , a delegate representing the Waverly Hills Civic Association and a member of the Revenue and Expenditures Committee gave a summary of his committee a resolution recommending in relevant *Arlington County Civic Federation, with reservations, supports a tax rate not to exceed the County Manager's recommendation for a rate of \$1.021 per \$100 of assessment and,*

*Be it further resolved that, the Civic Federation encourages the County Board, the County Manager and County staff to continue their efforts to prioritize core needs and identify savings ideas, as stated in the Federation's resolution of June 2018.* Mr. Tuohy moved that the resolution be approved.

Questions and comments on the report accompanying the resolution: R&E's interpretation of statistics on property tax rates and average assessments in Fairfax County, Falls Church and Alexandria was questioned. Mr. Tuohy was asked about the current and future status of the \$7.4 million one-time increase in the APS budget.

Questions and comments on the resolution: Mr. Tuohy was asked about the absence of source material supporting the ninth "whereas" in the resolution. A delegate asserted that without source material, the ninth "whereas" was an opinion, not a factual statement.

**Amending the resolution:** Ms. Shortall moved that the resolution be amended by deleting its ninth "whereas". Ms. Greenwell seconded this motion. In discussion of this amendment, using the words "may or possible" in the nine whereas was suggested as ways to improve it. The reduction in SALT deductions and the effect of a property tax increase on the affordability of housing in Arlington were suggested as factual support for the ninth "whereas." The amendment failed by a vote 15 ayes and 25 nays.

Continuing the discussion of the resolution: A delegate asked about implementing recommendations in the resolution. Additional concerns were expressed about the current and future status of the \$7.4 million one-time increase in the APS budget. A delegate opposed the resolution because it did not address an \$8.9 million shortfall in APS funding for 2020. The phrase "core needs" in the second resolve should be explained. County employees' compensation is "dissed" in the resolution and its report. Failure to increase compensation of public safety employees will affect their retention rates. Will the report be sent to the County Board along with the resolution? Will concerns about the relationship between compensation of public safety employees and their retention rates be included in the report.

Voting on the resolution; There was one vote against calling the question on the resolution. The resolution passed by a vote of 30 ayes, 11 nays and 3 abstentions.

**Motion on submitting the R&E report to the County Board:** Rick Epstein, a delegate representing the Arlington Forest Citizens Association, moved that language added to the transmittal letter to the County Board clarifying that the resolution was voted on and adopted by the membership but the report was not voted on by the membership. Mr. Epstein's resolution was seconded by Ms. Shortall.

Discussion of the motion: Three delegates raised concerns about including the language suggested by Mr. Epstein because it would weaken the credibility of both the resolution and its report. A delegate spoke in favor of Mr. Epstein's resolution because it contained budget reductions not approved by delegates present at this meeting.

Vote on Mr. Epstein's Motion: It failed by a vote of 5 ayes 26 nays and 4 abstentions.

## **New Business**

**Resolution for Civic Association Name Change to Green Valley from Nauck:** Portia Clarke, an delegate representing the Nauck Civic Association, introduced a resolution on changing the name of the Nauck Civic Association to the Green Valley Civic Association which states in relevant part that *effective immediately the civic association currently known as the Nauck Civic Association proposes to change its name to the Green Valley Civic Association.*

Points of information: For those interested in the history of Green Valley, there is a book available in the Arlington County Public Library, Bridge Builders Past and Present of Nauck-Green Valley. Wilma Jones has written a book about Green Valley, and she will discuss it at Marymount University on April 11<sup>th</sup>. There are streets and locales named after Confederate generals in Arlington whose names could also be changed.

President Banks said he would refer this resolution to the Membership Committee and CivFed's Board of Directors.

**Resolution on Election Security:** Don Gurney, a delegate representing the League of Women Voters and a member of the Legislative Committee, introduced a resolution on election security which states in relevant part that *the Arlington County Civic Federation urges the Arlington County Board provide adequate funding to properly secure voting equipment and ballots in accordance with industry best practices, particularly given that the Arlington Electoral Board will have invested in new voting equipment; and*

*FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED, that the Arlington County Civic Federation recommends that the County Board increase the management-level staff of the Office of the Registrar by one full-time equivalent position, in order to operate a satellite absentee-voting polling place ; and*

*FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED, that the Arlington County Civic Federation recommends that the County Board to work closely with developers to ensure that site plans include appropriate spaces for polling locations, and enforce those site plans; and*

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED, that the Arlington County Civic Federation urges the Arlington County Board direct the Electoral Board and General Registrar to conduct a pilot risk-limiting audit and to provide the resources to do so.

President Banks said he would refer this resolution back to the Legislative Committee and to the Revenue and Expenditures Committee.

**Resolution on the Use of the 1101 Lee Highway Property:** Bernard Berne, an alternate delegate representing the Buckingham Community Association, introduced a resolution on Arlington County's use of the 1101 Lee Highway property which states in relevant part that *the Arlington County Civic Federation urges the Arlington County Board to immediately initiate the comprehensive public planning process that the County's 2014 news release regarding the County's purchase of the 1101 Lee Highway property described.*

*FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED, to help assure that the County completes its public planning process for the property in a timely manner, the Arlington County Civic Federation recommends that the Arlington County Board ask the National Park Service to defer any further consideration of the use of the Upper Rosslyn Site for a boathouse support facility until such time as the County government has complete its public planning process for the property.*

President Banks said he would refer this resolution to the Planning and Zoning Committee, the Environmental Affairs Committee, and the Parks and Recreation Committee.

**April Board of Directors Meeting:** President Banks announced that the April Board of Directors Meeting would be held at 6:30 PM on April 7 at Fire Station 2, 4805 Wilson Blvd.

**May 2019 Membership Meeting:** President Banks announced that the May 7, 2019 Membership Meeting will be held in the Hazel Auditorium at the Virginia Hospital Center. The meeting will begin at 7:00 PM. The meeting

will focus on electing the Federation's 2019-202 leadership team; a program on Open Data and Arlington County Government; and discussion and votes on three resolutions -- renaming the Nauck Civic Association; Election Security; and the 1101 Lee Highway property.

**May Newsletter Deadline:** President Banks reminded the meeting that April 25 was the deadline for submitting material for the May newsletter.

Respectfully submitted by Dennis Gerrity