

Minutes

Arlington County Civic Federation

John T. Hazel Auditorium, Arlington Hospital

December 5, 1995

The meeting was **called to order** at 7:40 p.m. by President Scott McGeary.

1. There was **no emergency business to consider**; the **Agenda was approved** with the addition of a third program item on sludge management.

2. **Minutes** of the November 14, 1995, meeting were approved as presented.

3. **Program I: Arlington County School Board**. **Roye Lowry**, Schools Committee Chairman, introduced members of the School Board and Superintendent Gosling and provided a brief review of his Committee's working paper, which presented specific questions for response by the guests on three major areas of concern: 1) academic achievement and English proficiency; 2) alternative schools and pilot projects; and 3) the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). (The Committee's working paper is on file with the Secretary's minutes.)

- ♦ **Darlene Mickey**, School Board Chairman, led this segment of the program and presented a brief introductory statement and, later, a closing statement.
- ♦ **Superintendent Arthur W. Gosling** addressed student diversity and various programs made available to the growing segment of the Arlington school population who do not speak English as their first language. In 1994-95, these students numbered 6,743, more than 38% of the total student population in the County. Dr. Gosling said the schools operate under the following 6-point philosophy with regard to these students: 1) all must be educated; 2) proficiency in English is crucial; 3) to respect their cultural heritage; 4) to aim for highest possible academic achievement; 5) to serve these students in their nearest neighborhood schools or in schools they elect; and 6) to offer a full-range of programs. In funding for the ESOL programs, Dr. Gosling provided the following information: 3,421 students with limited English proficiency are presently being served at a total cost of \$6,391,063. For these costs, the State funds \$191,785; the Federal Government funds \$267,149; local taxes fund the remaining \$6 million. (Dr. Gosling provided two handouts; copies are on file with Secretary's minutes.)
- ♦ **Mary Hines** addressed the alternative schools and pilot projects. Among other points, she described how each of the alternative schools and focus/exemplary programs have been encouraged to "market themselves" and to "describe who they are" by developing a profile. She said the schools and pilot programs have cooperated with enthusiasm and have found the exercise helpful. The aim is "effective schools" and assessment of these programs is ongoing and continuous.
- ♦ **Frank Wilson and Dianne Smith** discussed the Capital Improvement Program. Mr. Wilson described the "major growing pains" in the County (3,000 student increase in past few years), but said not "one thin dime" was misappropriated. He pointed out that an outside consultant (Peat Marwick) has been obtained to review the entire CIP program, and emphasized that there will be continuing opportunities for citizen input. Ms. Smith said there would be a true multi-year CIP beginning in FY 97, that an outside person is being

hired to oversee the CIP, and expressed the belief that the CIP citizens advisory committee is being used effectively.

- New appointee to the Board **Margaret Lampe** was introduced. Mrs. Lampe will serve the remainder of the term of Charles Cervantes who resigned from the Board.
- To **questions from the floor**, the Board members' responses included: methods for evaluating success include test data, academic performance reports, and dropout rates; stronger standards in English proficiency are being required before admission to high schools (in response to specific concerns expressed by Wakefield PTA); added controls on expenses include the addition of two more staff "to shore up procedures"; there are no plans to hire an internal auditor; "good figures" on total cost of CIP are expected to be available soon; gangs are present, but the schools believe they have a "pretty good fix" on the situation, have a close working relationship with the police, and have a "no-tolerance" attitude on the matter; and the School Board has not considered the boat house proposal.

Program II: The Boathouse Project . Parks and Recreation Chairman **Bob Nester** introduced **Carole Robinson**, Chairman of the Arlington Boathouse Coalition and member of the Water-Based Recreational Facility Task Force, who presented a brief report, with a slide presentation, on the Task Force's Draft Report, which recommends the location of a boathouse facility on the Arlington shoreline between Roosevelt Island and the Key Bridge.

Chairman Nester then presented further background on the Task Force's proposal, and his Committee's conclusions that the Draft Report had not established a compelling need for the facility, had not objectively evaluated optional sites, and had presented incomplete and unreliable cost projections.

Chairman Nester also introduced **Audrey Calhoun**, Superintendent of GW Parkway, who addressed the Parkway's and the National Park Service's reasons for opposition to the facility proposal.

****Resolution** (moved by the Parks and Recreation Committee) to oppose the Draft Report's proposal for a boathouse facility on the Virginia shoreline between Key Bridge and the Roosevelt Island (complete wording of Resolution is on file with Secretary's minutes.).

(Note: During discussion, the delegates voted to extend the one-hour time allowance for this matter by another 15 minutes.)

***** Resolution PASSED** (41 in favor; 29 opposed)

Program III: Sludge Management Alternatives Larry Zaragoza, Chairman of the Environmental Affairs Committee, presented a brief report on the Sludge Alternatives Management Study and his Committee's reasons for recommending recycling of sewage sludge and shutting down the incinerator in South Arlington.

****Resolution** (moved by Environmental Affairs Committee): That Arlington County adopt Option III of the Nov. 10, 1995, Sludge Management Alternatives Study (i.e., to shut down the incinerator and to begin land application as soon as possible). (Complete Resolution is on file with Secretary's minutes.)

*****Resolution PASSED** (voice vote)

4. Special Order: Election of the 1996 Awards Committee.

*****Election:** The following delegates were nominated from the floor and **elected by acclamation** to serve on the 1996 Awards Committee: **Frances Finta, David Foster, Timothy Wise, Jim Charlton, Scott Allard.** (The Committee selects the Journal Cup awardee and any recipients of Certificates of Appreciation--to be announced at annual banquet in May 1996.)

5. Treasurer's Report (by Treasurer John Nicholas): Balance: \$3,544.36. Paid memberships: 61; unpaid 7. (Complete report on file with Secretary's minutes.)

6. Executive Committee Report (by Exec. Committee Chairman Frances Finta): The November meeting of the Committee discussed Federation programs for December and January, and plans for the gala 80th Anniversary Banquet in May. The Committee will not meet in December; the next meeting is Jan. 18 at 8 p.m.

7. Announcements (by President McGeary):

- ♦ Planning and Zoning Committee will meet Dec. 10, 7:30 p.m. at Chairman Bill Gearhart's home to discuss proposed zoning ordinance amendments.
- ♦ Banquet Committee will meet at Chairman Jennie Davis's home on Dec. 9, 4:00 p.m.
- ♦ (by Ernest Ragland, Ballston/Virginia Square delegate): Handout available inviting delegates to Ballston/Virginia Square's third annual Christmas party, Dec. 14. \$7.50 charge.

8. Unfinished Business

Frances Finta, Chairman of the Membership Committee, reported on the Committee's findings regarding Delegate John Antonelli's inquiry (at November meeting) as to any Federation policy on public political advocacy by delegates identifying themselves as officers or representatives of member organizations. Chairman Finta reported that the Federation does not instruct member organizations on how to conduct their affairs and that how member organizations work internally depend on their own operating rules. Officers of member organizations are responsible to themselves and to their respective associations. Chairman Finta additionally commented that her Committee believes that any interference into the autonomy of member organizations could have adverse effects on the future of the Federation itself.

9. With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:55 p.m.


Tommye Morton, Secretary

Date Approved: _____