

Arlington County Civic Federation

John T. Hazel Auditorium, Arlington Hospital

Minutes - November 11, 1997

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:36 p.m.
2. The prepared agenda was approved.
3. The minutes for the October 1997 meeting were approved with one amendment.
4. The Treasurer reported that: 1) the Federation has \$3,743.39; 2) there are 49 paid-up members.
5. ~~Randy Swart, Executive Committee chairman, submitted the Executive Committee~~
6. Committee Actions/Reports:
 - ☐ Membership Committee. The application for readmission to the Arlington County Civic Federation of the John M. Langston Citizens Association was approved unanimously.
7. Announcements:
 - ☐ Bill Nolden, President, asked delegates to submit questions for the School Board and/or Superintendent.
8. Programs -- Consideration of Legislative Package. The Secretary's notes of comments and votes during the discussion and debate of the legislative package are included with these minutes.
9. There was no unfinished business.
10. The meeting adjourned at 10:19 p.m.

Recorded by Timothy M. Wise, Secretary

Date Approved: _____

Arlington County Civic Federation
Notes from Legislative Program, November 11, 1997
Amendments, Votes, etc.

Section 1. Education

There were no changes, and the section passed unanimously.

Section 2. Transportation and Highway Safety

Existing Item F. There was one amendment, proposed by Sherwin Landfield, to replace the existing item F, and involved improving safety, decreasing noise and addressing environmental concerns at National Airport. The amendment read as follows:

"F. Safety, Airport Use, and Noise at National Airport.

1. National Airport should be designated a short-range airport, and its current perimeter should remain at 1,250 miles.
2. A single master plan should be developed to coordinate efficient development and usage of MWAA airports according to the characteristics of each site, as required by existing legislation.
3. WMAA should permit no 2-aisle wide-body jet operations.
4. There should be no loopholes in the mandate that there be no more than 37 operations per any 60-minute period (the sum of takeoffs and landings; multiple sections of one flight shall not be counted as one operation only).
5. MWAA should permit no commercial flight operations between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m.
6. MWAA should develop immediately a plan for preventing the flow of highly poisonous de-icing solutions from flowing into the Potomac River.
7. Detailed measurements should be made of all airport-polluting substances that result from all land and air vehicles.
8. Congress should ensure there are no international flights at this airport."

There was considerable discussion on the amendment. Frances Finta asked how this amendment meshed with the existing footnote 2; the president suggested the concerns listed here could replace the second sentence in footnote 2, and he asked the Legislative chair if she would accept it as a "friendly" amendment. The president later asked Mr. Landfield if Mr. Landfield preferred inclusion of the amendment as part of footnote 2 or whether Mr. Landfield preferred a vote to replace the existing item F with his amendment. Mr. Landfield left the decision to the president. The president eventually decided that Mr. Landfield's **proposed amendment would be "accepted as a friendly amendment at the end of footnote 2," i.e., replacing the second sentence in the existing package.**

The amended section 2 passed almost unanimously, with only a very few 'nay' votes.

Section 3. Housing and Human Services

Existing Item B. Dave Foster motioned, and there was a second, to delete item B, Human Services. After some discussion, the motion passed with the president deciding there were more 'aye' votes than 'nay' votes, and thus the 'ayes' have it to **delete the existing item B.**

The amended section 3 passed almost unanimously, with only a very few 'nay' votes.

Section 4. Fiscal and Tax Policy

New Item F. Sherwin Landfield proposed a new item F that read as follows:

"Arlington County should collect appropriate property taxes at National Airport just as Fairfax County does at Dulles Airport."

After some discussion, **the motion to add a new item F passed with a recorded vote of 21-18.** Section 4 then passed with a unanimous vote.

Section 5. General Government

(Old/Existing) Item B. Discussion of the entire section then followed. After some discussion about the merits of having the County Board select members of the Board of Zoning Appeals vis a vis selection by the Circuit Court, a motion was made, and seconded, to delete the existing item B. The motion then passed with the president deciding there were more 'aye' votes than 'nay' votes, and thus the 'ayes' have it to **delete the existing item B.**

(New) Item B. Robert Atkins proposed the following amendment to replace the just deleted item B:

"Retirement Plans. (The Civic Federation) opposes any efforts to change formulas or actuarial assumptions in public employee retirement plans which directly or indirectly reduce retirement benefits for current and former Arlington County employees."

After some discussion, the motion passed with the president deciding there were more 'aye' votes than 'nay' votes, and thus the 'ayes' have it to **pass the proposed replacement (i.e., new) item B.**

Items 5.H. and 5.I. John Antonelli, Columbia Heights Civic Association, proposed the following addition to the legislative package:

"That prosecution under the sodomy law be prohibited except in conjunction with another charge. And, require the Commonwealth of Virginia (to) recognize same sex marriage that take place in Virginia and also recognize same sex marriages from other states."

After some discussion concerning one or the other halves of this item, Jean Mostrom moved for division of the proposal. Thus, prosecution under the sodomy law will eventually become item 5.H. and same sex marriage will become item 5.I. The vote on whether to divide the proposal passed 28-7. After some discussion, the now divided motions passed with the president deciding there were more 'aye' votes than 'nay' votes (two separate votes), and thus the 'ayes' have it to **pass the proposed items as 5.H. and 5.I., i.e., passing without recorded votes.**

Existing Item 5.G., Office of Inspector General. Sue Zajek proposed from the floor that this item be deleted. Several delegates spoke on behalf of this item, noting such things as the wasted \$25 million in the schools CIP; the County Board's sweetheart land deal at Stuart Park for \$365,000 that county taxpayers had paid over \$3 million just six years earlier; and, the Loop Bridge fiasco where the County's cost to construct the bridge skyrocketed from the original estimate of under \$1 million to over \$5 million. It was also noted that the County recently

purchased 10 laptop computers for \$186,000. Another delegate (David Ryan) from BVSCA noted the county's OIG is needed to provide a system of checks and balances. The proposal was defeated unanimously.

Proposed Item 5.J. Sherwin Landfield made the following proposal concerning the reduction of noise:

1. Arlington County should investigate the availability/use of Federal noise mitigation funds for protecting Arlington County's residents and workers.
2. Arlington County should investigate whether the County's existing building codes are sufficient to protect against the noise impacts from operations at National Airport on new development.

After a brief discussion, the **proposal failed unanimously**. The entire, amended section 5 was then passed as amended.

Section 6. Environment

Proposed New Item G. Ernie Ragland of the Ballston-Virginia Square Civic Association, made the following proposal:

"That the Federation support stabilization of the Virginia Water Quality Improvement Fund Act to permit qualifying localities to receive up to 50 percent of the local costs to design, test, and install biological nutrient removal technologies at wastewater treatment facilities. Also the Federation strongly encourages the state to consider methods in addition to point source control to achieve identified nutrient reduction goals. Further, the Federation encourages the Virginia General Assembly to appropriate the necessary resources to effectively implement environmental regulations so that health and the environment are protected. This includes providing required and necessary state resources and enforcement."

(Nancy and Dave, see my footnote #1, below) ¹

Mr. Ragland noted that his proposal will considerably enhance the County's already excellent set of environmental proposals in its current legislative package, as well as being consistent with their package. After some discussion, **the proposal passed unanimously**.

Existing item 6.F. After considerable discussion centering on the precise recycling goal (i.e., whether it was 20% or 25%) and on whether the goal was by weight or by volume, a floor motion to delete the entire item 6.A. failed unanimously.

¹ Nancy, please review what Ernie proposed and the existing environment item F. I think you will agree that Ernie's is far superior. The history of the existing 6.F. (I think it's there at least for a second year) is as a reaction to Governor Allen's "concerns" about the state's environment. Ernie's proposal should result in greater funding than just to "pre-rollback levels." Also, note that Ernie's proposal could easily be 3 separate proposals, i.e. 1) water quality improvement fund, 2) nutrient reduction, and 3) and, appropriation of necessary resources. In addition, to include 6.F. and then to include Ernie's as 6.G. would raise questions about their internal consistency. Suggestion -- as committee chair, accept a friendly amendment and replace the existing 6.F with Ernie's.

Existing item 6.C. Motion by William F. Munson, Waycroft-Woodlawn Civic Association, to insert in line in line 3 (newsletter copy) "24 hours before and" after "post signs" so that the item reads "Supports adoption ... lawn-care firms to post signs 24 hours before and 48 hours after chemical lawn treatment ... gypsy moth application." After very little discussion, the motion passed with the president deciding there were more 'aye' votes than 'nay' votes, and thus the 'ayes' have it to **modify the existing item 6.C. as proposed.**

Section 7. Miscellaneous²

New Proposals. Mr. Antonelli submitted two new proposals that were debated under this section. Although the secretary does not have copies of these, Mr. Antonelli did submit them in writing. He also tried to get them at least one of them included in last year's legislative package.

- ❑ Mr. Antonelli's first proposal involved a mandatory prison sentence for the second conviction for child abuse and rape. On a roll call vote, **the proposal for failed 18-8.**
- ❑ His second proposal for this section involved reimbursement of the ASAP program for convictions of DUI and/or illegal drugs. **This proposal also failed on 17-9.**

Section 7 was then passed unanimously.

New Section 8, Legislative Committee Proposals With Significant Support, But Not Approved

The Committee considered three proposals during its deliberations (I&R, aggressive panhandling, and public school opening), but did not include any of them in its final package. However, each of the three had sufficient support in committee so that it was clear there would be floor amendments for each by delegates during the monthly meeting. During the November 11 meeting, delegates took action to change only the I&R proposal. Bob Rackmales, Stonewall Jackson Citizens Association, proposed the following substitute motion:

"(The Federation) requests the Governor of Virginia to appoint a bipartisan study commission to examine how the adoption of initiative and referendum would mesh with Virginia's traditions and weigh the assets and liabilities of I&R."

In support of his motion, Mr. Rackmales pointed out that the many of the states with I&R passed their I&R legislation early in this century. Mr. Wise, Federation secretary and delegate from the Courtlands Civic Association, noted that some states meet some of the objections of opponents of I&R by using the indirect form of I&R. In the indirect form of I&R, a state's legislators have the opportunity to pass legislation proposed by the people through initiatives. Citizens only vote on initiatives in such states when the legislature fails to act on legislation that the citizens propose. For the record, the Federation has supported an I&R proposal for the past four years.

There was a tie vote of 12-12 on the proposal for the Governor to appoint a commission to study I&R. For the first time in some delegates' memory, the president voted to break a tie vote. In this instance, the Federation president voted for the proposal; thus, **the proposal passed 13-12.** The new section 8 was then approved, as amended, with the president deciding there were more 'aye' votes than 'nay' votes.

² The miscellaneous section in the newsletter was inadvertently shown as being number 8. It should be number 7.

Approval of Overall Package

The president then asked for a final vote on the entire package, and the Federation's legislative package, as amended above, was approved by a voice vote.