



[**Due To The Current COVID-19 Virus This Was A Virtual Meeting**]

Minutes

November 22, 2020

**Arlington County Civic Federation (“ACCF”)
Board of Directors Meeting**

Call to Order at 6:00 p.m.

Board members attending the meeting: Allan Gajadhar, Allen Norton, Tina Worden, Eric Cassel, Mike McMenamin, John Vihstadt and Mike Cantwell. Others attending included Dennis Gerrity (Membership Chair); Michael Beer (Schools Chair); Ron Haddox (Legislation Committee Chair); Joseph Pelton (Airport Chair); Jerry Auten (Transportation Chair); Duke Banks (Parks & Recreation Chair); Lois Koontz (Alcova Heights); Rick Epstein (Arlington Forest); Dave Schutz (Ashton Heights); Sharon Valencia (Ballston-Virginia Square); Bernard Berne (Buckingham); Josiah Stevenson (Clarendon Courthouse); Juliet Hiznay (Columbia Heights); Don Gurney (LWV); Jackie Snelling (Lyon Village); JD Spain (NAACP); Detta Kissel (NAACP); Timothy Dempsey (NAACP); Maya Jones (NAACP); Sherrice Kerns (NAACP); Michael Hemminger (NAACP); Nicole Merlene (NORML); Stef Pryor (Penrose); Sarah Shortall (Waverly Hills) and Hershel Kanter (Williamsburg).

Meeting Format: The meeting was held Virtually using Zoom. Eric was Host and Allan was Co-Host. Dennis controlled entry into the meeting.

Chair Intro: There will be a 2 minute break at 7:00.

Approval of October minutes: Approved unanimously.

Special: NAACP & Resolution from Tuesday’s Meeting:

Bernard Berne (Buckingham Community CA) introduced a controversial Resolution at Tuesday’s meeting.

Julius Spain (Observer) explained why this resolution was offensive.

President Gajadhar called for a CLOSED Session to discuss this (Bylaws 3.10(d)).

Eric Cassel made a motion that we go into Closed Session. Mike Cantwell seconded it. A voice vote was held. A 2/3 majority is required. 6 voted to go into Closed Session and 2 voted against.

End Of Closed Session.

Allan Gajadhar **moved** that this Resolution be **rejected** as out of order because the membership rules were followed, the vote was valid and there is no reason for this resolution. John Vihstadt seconded it. A voice vote was held and the **motion** was approved unanimously.

Officers Reports

President's Report: Several organizations have contacted me. The County Council of PTAs has a fundraiser and has asked us to notify our members. The Center for Youth and Family Advocacy would like to partner with us on their "Promoting Empathy through Equitable Resolution" (PEER) program. I have forwarded it to the Chairs of the Public Services, Legislation and Schools Committees.

Vice-President's Report: None

Secretary's Report:

Dues/Contact Sheet/Organization Certification Status For Member Organizations:

Have Paid dues: 40 Emails sent to 77 organizations, 45 have responded
Submitted Contact Sheet: 33
Submitted Certification: 23

Candidates for December's Special Election:

Dennis Gerrity (NORML) removed himself from the candidate list. We only have two candidates now, Nicole Merlene (NORML) and Jesse Boeding (Green Valley).

Allen: The reason for the Board expansion was to get greater diversity. Without more candidates that goal will not be reached. It was assumed that there would be numerous nominations, but there hasn't been. That implies that Delegates are losing interest in the ACCF.

Treasurer's Report: There has been no change in the balance since the close of October. We have \$21,391.80. Picked up 4 dues payments Friday.

Committee Reports: None

Old Business:

December General Meeting:

Time has been allotted for the candidates for the Board to speak.
Joe Pelton (Airport Chair) will moderate a panel giving a presentation on Airport Noise Mitigation.
Senator Mark Warner may come. It hasn't been confirmed.
VHC will give a presentation on their new Trauma Center.

Mike M.: Can we shorten these meetings? In the past at 9:00pm people started to lose interest and leave. We may be overbooking and trying to do too much in the meetings.

Arlington Governance Task Force:

Allan: There have been concerns raised about the transparency and visibility of the process for the nominations for the Task Force. We should have done better and given more advance notice. My plan to address those concerns is to publish the slate as it currently exists (with a brief bio of each person) in the Newsletter; clarify the process we will use going forward and ask for comments in advance which can be discussed at the next meeting.

Mike C.: The President can select members for Ad Hoc committees. The AGTF could have been set up months ago. This selection by election method has set a precedent that could affect future Ad Hoc committees.

Allan: The Resolution called for the members of the AGTF to be nominated by the president and approved by the Membership. It is a unique situation and hopefully will not set a precedent.

Sarah Shortall (Observer): Please make the selection process for the AGTF members more transparent this time.

New Business:

Robert's Rules of Order:

Eric: There are numerous alternatives to Robert's Rules of Order. They run from using RROO exclusively, using it partially, using a different set of Rules or even simple consensus. We could also write our own. A list of possible Rules of Order systems (Sturgis, Reddicks, UBC, etc) was sent to each Board member.

Allen: I don't like RROO. It's too easy for an expert to use them to bring a meeting to a halt over technicalities.

John: A rigid set of rules turns people off and will not grow the Civic Federation.

Burt: In the past RROO has been used to disrupt rather than facilitate proceedings. We should use our Standing Rules and minimize the use of RROO.

Mike C.: Should write Standing Rules for ourselves. Don't mention "Robert's". They need only be a few pages.

Allan: There are gaps in our Bylaws, policies and procedures. We need some sort of formal way of addressing them. Robert's is not my preference, but we should have something.

Burt: If there is any particular need for a standing rule or policy or procedure either by the Board or the membership, that it be referred to the committee for appropriate disposition.

The President gave Allen (Bylaws Committee Chair) the task of writing or selecting new Rules of Order. Eric suggested that the UBC ones should be used as a model (besides being simple it has the merit of being free). A progress report will be made at the December Board meeting.

(Mike Cantwell, Mike McMenamin and Sarah Shortall are willing to help)

Allan: We should put a notice about this endeavor in the Newsletter along with a request for comments. Also that questions should go to the Bylaws chair.

Three Presidents Memo:

Eric: A memo on the "... need for balanced programs and presentations " composed by three former President's (Stef Pryor, Duke Banks & Mike McMenamin) was sent to the Board. A response to this memo written by Ron Haddox (Legislation Chair) was also sent to the Board - as was a response from the Board Chair.

Do we have a problem with the process we use to create an Agenda for membership meetings?

Mike M., Allan & others: We really need to look at our Bylaws, existing Standing Rules, best practices and the way we have done things in the past and come up with a reasonable policy for handling programs and presentations.

Allan: We have finally solidified the registration process. Voting continues to be a problem. We wanted to propose a change to the bylaws to remove the concept of " in-person " from virtual meeting and in general allow people to vote without making registration overly burdensome or complicated. We need to address that. Balancing Zoom and Constant contact is complicated.

Allen: Some small changes to the bylaws would allow electronic voting procedures to adapt to the constraints of the voting software.

Mike C.: It is important that the people voting by electronic means are actually at the meeting. Mike M. agreed with him.

The President gave Allen (Bylaws Committee Chair) the task of determining which specific changes would be needed to the bylaws to allow electronic voting procedures to adapt to the constraints of the voting software.

Registration in Zoom and Constant Contact Voting:

Tina: It is very complex. The method we use now is unsustainable.

Dennis: People get out of and log back into meetings all the time. You cannot tell if a person is actually at the meeting when the vote gets called. The waiting room in the beginning is especially stressful. Constant Contact voting does have some protections against errors, but it is complicated and time consuming. There may be some useful tools, though, that make it a little more sustainable.

January Meeting: This is the joint meeting with the County Board.

Libby Garvey has confirmed the meeting, but we are not entirely sure what day it will be. We will put a notice in the December Newsletter explaining the details of this meeting and soliciting questions for the County Board.

John: We should start soliciting questions soon from the committees and the membership. They should be edited and combined into a dozen total. The County Board will want the questions submitted to them at least two weeks ahead of the meeting. The questions will need to go to the President by at least three days before that so that they can be edited for final submittal.

Duke Banks (Observer): In previous January meetings we dealt with organizational issues, Old Business and New Business, but the meeting with the County Board was always the Main Event.

Observer Comments:

Mike Hemminger: Read the response written by the Legislation Committee to the Three Presidents Memo.

Ron Haddox: This letter was put together to respond to some perceived attacks.

Stef Pryor: Putting a balanced panel and presentation together with proper notification to the members takes a long time. The Board and Committees need to plan further ahead.

Juliet Hiznay: The Board needs to be careful not to control the programs of the committees.

Board Comment:

Mike C.: It is important that committees should stay within their charters. Sometimes they have had to expand beyond their charter to deal with specific issues. Perhaps working groups or ad hoc committees can be set up to deal with those situations.

The December Board meeting will be a **Virtual** one and will be held on Sunday, December 20th at 6:00 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58
Respectfully submitted by Allen Norton