



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

Minutes

December 20, 2020

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

Call to Order at 6:02 p.m.

Board members attending the meeting: Allan Gajadhar, Allen Norton, Tina Worden, Burt Bostwick, Eric Cassel, Mike McMenamin, Stacy Meyer, John Vihstadt, Mike Cantwell, Nicole Merlene and Jesse Boeding. Others attending included Ron Haddox (Legislation Committee Chair); Duke Banks (Parks & Recreation Chair); John Ford (Public Services Chair); Dave Schutz (Ashton Heights); Bernard Berne (Buckingham); Jackie Snelling (Lyon Village); Sarah Shortall (Waverly Hills); Hershel Kanter (Williamsburg); Alistar Watson (Aurora Highlands); N. Edwin Demoney (Rivercrest) and Joseph Young (ORA).

Meeting Format: The meeting was held Virtually using Zoom. Eric was Host and Allan was Co-Host.

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

Approval of November minutes: Approved unanimously.

Officers Reports

President’s Report:

The January Newsletter will be the last that Dennis Gerrity puts together. Allan will handle it until a new editor can be found. Dennis may still deal with registrations. When we put together an Awards Committee it will be suggested that a suitable award be determined for Dennis for his long service.

The members of the AGTF will have their first meeting in January. They will determine the scope, select a Chair and take care of some other organizational issues. They will also determine if the Resolution needs to be modified to allow them to proceed the way they want to. The nominee selection did not go smoothly. The process should be reviewed by the Board at some time.

If any of the Committee Chairs here who haven’t sent me questions for the County Board, please do

The January newsletter will go out this week as the January meeting will be two weeks earlier than normal.

Vice-President’s Report:

Sent a draft to R&E of the County Board’s Budget calendar for this year. It hasn’t been approved, but it will give a good idea of the timelines involved to make a resolution on the budget. There is a time constraint as a R&E Resolution introduced in March and approved in April will not get to the County Board until after their first meetings.

Burt (R&E Chair) said that, given the timing of our own meetings, it was virtually impossible to get a resolution ready prior to the County Board making its final decision. The budget will come out in February and the best we will be able to do in March is to provide an informational report about what it contains and what its impacts are.

A draft schedule for the February, March, April and May was presented. (Mike M: Please put the schedule in the Newsletter)

The new directors and positions were promoted on Constant Contact, placed on our Facebook page and I have asked Adam Henderson to create email addresses for them and update our Web site.

Secretary's Report:

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

Have Paid dues: 58	Emails sent to 77 organizations, 52 have responded
Submitted Contact Sheet: 39	36 Dunning Emails sent on 12-6 (7 Orgs replied)
Submitted Certification: 26	

Treasurer's Report: We have \$21,483. We have paid all our dues including the most recent from Constant Contact. Please forward bills and invoices from organizations to the Treasurer so they can be paid on time and will know who to send the bills to in the future. Try not to pay with your personal credit card. We don't want to lose control of expenditures.

Note: It has taken a lot of effort from Allen and me to get just 2/3rds of the Orgs to pay their dues. It happened last year also and we had to follow up (nag) for the rest of the year to get to 8/9ths. If we want to be taken seriously as an organization we will have to be serious about people meeting the basic eligibility requirements - which means pay your dues on time and submit reports about your organization or you lose your voting and speaking privileges.

Committee Reports:

Environmental Affairs: (Mary Glass-read by Allan) Have conducted 3 workshops (Nov&Dec). They included Developers, Realtors, conservation groups, civic assns, County staff, State delegates and a former board member. Notes without attribution (to encourage free participation) have been compiled. Areas that should be pursued further have been identified. Areas of concern include new tools for preservation, erosion & stormwater, incentives for Developers, money for tree programs and land acquisition, better maintenance for trees and new plantings, addressing the diminished canopy in S. Arlington and inventory trees for better management. A report and resolution will be prepared.

Legislation: (Ron Haddox) We had a meeting today to plan future meetings. The one in May will focus on the County's use of license plate capture technology for other things. A report should be ready by the May meeting. Two more people have joined the committee.

Communications: (Tina Worden) The committee will meet on Jan 3rd at 11:00. We need people as proofreaders to replace Dennis on the Newsletter. Allan can't do it all himself.

Parks & Rec: (Duke Banks handed off to Jesse) We are in the final stage of getting a new White Paper out for review with an accompanying resolution (Equity and Open Space).

Old Business:

January General Meeting:

Allan: We are putting together a list of questions to for the County Board. Have 6, but would like more.

John: The County Board will assign those questions in advance and need them soon to prepare an adequate response. The answers given at the meeting will be short. Please add a request that they answer them more fully in writing (2-3 weeks).

Jesse: What sort of control do we have to make sure that they stay on topic and actually answer the questions? Will they go straight to the questions, give little speeches before going to the questions or answer questions and then open it to the floor? Please put a tight time restriction on the CB members.

Allan: My plan is that they will make a presentation and then will answer our questions, but Libby and I haven't ironed it out fully yet. We need to complete that soon.

John: Libby won't be the Chair when we meet them.

Diversity: Stacy

We have some new members on the committee - Nicole Merlene and Alistar Watson. Have made a pre-draft outline of the project. Our goal for the next 2 weeks is to get 2 or 3 more people (minorities specifically) to round out our committee. We hope to present our findings by the end of the year.

Mike C: What is the focus of this committee? Is it to improve CivFed, the County Government, the population of Arlington in general – how big is the goal?

Stacy: It could be really big. CivFed is the first part of our general plan to promote diversity, inclusivity and transparency. The primary objective is improving our own processes.

Meeting Rules: Allen

Presented a Pre-Draft of the **ACCF Parliamentary Procedures**. It uses concepts from the UBC Rules of Order, Robert's Rules of Order and ACCF Experience. It was prepared by Allen with input from Mike C, Mike M and Sarah Shortall.

Mike C: There is a line in the Principles that says “The rights of the minority must be protected at all times.“. A dedication to this can give one person undue power and affect the agility of the organization. There needs to be a balance between a strong board and a strong membership.

Allen: Perhaps the word minority can be defined as at least 10% of the members present, but I don't want to give people the idea that the views of the minority will be ignored.

Mike M: When do you think this will be finished?

Allen: A Draft will be ready for the January Board Meeting. The Board will make the approval decision, but it would be wise to ask the Delegates for their comments first.

Nicole: Why isn't there a section on uncivil behavior or an objectionable situation?

Allen: The UBC Rules has a section on it, but I didn't copy into the Procedures. I would prefer that the Board decide on the wording. It is a touchy subject that must be handled carefully.

Eric: After the Board sees it in January it will be shown to Committee Chairs and some others. Their input will be requested before final Board approval.

Arlington Governance Task Force:

Allan: The slate has been approved. A date & time will have to be selected for their January meeting. They will have to select a Chair and Co-Chair and determine the scope of the task. The meetings will be public.

John: George Mason and Marymount (Mark Benbow) have offered us resources. It hasn't been determined what those resources will be. At minimum we will have someone from each of the schools be on call. They could also speak to us at one of our meetings. We may also have former County Manager Ron Carlee come and speak. To those worried that the deck is stacked towards a particular outcome, that is not the case. All sides will be reviewed on any issue. Nothing is preordained.

Allan: Agreed. Nothing is preordained. We want to look at all viewpoints. A balanced approach will be taken.

Nicole: Will I be able to participate if I'm not a member?

Allan: Yes. The members of the AGTF will determine if it is recorded or not.

Note: The discussion continued for another 9-10 minutes among Allan, Allen, Stacy, Sarah Shortall and Jesse. The main issue continued to be the member selection policy, but morphed into pragmatic cynicism vs. strategic vision and idealism. Allan agreed to write a short report on how this happened, what happened and what the process was. It will be sent to the Board for review. A number of directors felt this issue had been discussed enough and we should move on.

New Business:**New Member Application: Our Revolution Arlington**

Joseph Young of Our Revolution Arlington gave a presentation.

Stacy: The ORA says it is non-partisan, but is it really a partisan political organization? It is a branch of the national Our Revolution which definitely is a partisan political organization. Eric expressed the same concerns.

Joseph Young: While we were formed from Bernie supporters in 2016, we are not a political group. We will endorse a candidate if they come to us. We have a process for the endorsement decision. Once they reply to our questionnaire, it is sent to all the other candidates for their response. We promote and endorse ideas, not individuals. We have lobbied the County Board and at the state level. We are concerned about transportation, parks, cultural matters, infrastructure, etc. Speakers at our meetings address many topics, though they are generally Progressive. We are not incorporated so don't have tax status We are more like a club. Endorsements are less than 5% of what we do.

Mike: Stef Pryor, Duke Banks and I would like to know a few things. Do you have more than 20 members that live in Arlington and would you provide a list of them? Do you endorse candidates? Please sketch out for us how your organization works so that we may consider it. Also please write up how you are non-partisan.

Joseph Young: We have a lot more than 20 members that live in Arlington. A list will be provided. There are other, non-voting, members that live outside the county. We never initiate endorsements.

Nicole: The PAC of the AEA organization endorses candidates so there is a precedent. Mike C provided other Examples (AOP).

Eric: We will take this up again at the next meeting.

Resolutions Procedure:

Eric wrote a Resolution Creation Procedure. He sent it to all the members of the Board and requests feedback.

Stacy: What is driving this? How did it come to be?

Eric: There is nothing in the Bylaws that says how resolutions are created and how they are handled. It was confusing. There really aren't any documented rules. This is an attempt to create a procedure that a new person could follow to put a resolution together.

Constant Contact Issues:

Tina: Dennis could explain it, but he couldn't make it. I'm trying to address it in my Communications Committee. We need some knowledgeable help, by the way.

February Meeting:

Approval of the December meeting minutes

Public Services: Stormwater

P&R White Paper - Open Space Equity Report and/or Resolution

Nomination Committee

March Meeting: (Tentative)

R&E (Confirmed)

Public Services: Police Practices Group-Mental Health & Alternative Dispute Resolution (Confirmed)

Environmental Affairs Committee Presentation

Nomination Committee

April Meeting: (Tentative)

Livability 22202

Legislation Affairs

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May Meeting: (Tentative)

APS Superintendent: Dr. Duran (Confirmed)

Legislation Affairs

Livability 22202

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Nomination Committee: After the Nomination Committee has been elected and selected a slate they must submit a report to the Board before the meeting before they are voted on. The report will list the recommended slate and the reasons why they were selected.

Allen: The Nominating Committee does not have to be selected until March, but given the difficulty finding candidates for the Special Election, it would be a good idea to start asking for volunteers in every newsletter and meeting from now on.

Mike C: We should step back and take a more proactive look at our nominating process. If we want to have a more diverse Board we should start with the Nominating Committee. Volunteers to serve on it have been hard to recruit. We may need to try a new tactic to get different people involved in the nominating process.

Jesse: I submitted a proposed new Nomination process to Allan and Tina in July. It would hone in on what Mike was talking about. It would focus on not only what are the expectations, what is the process and what is the criteria. It would also provide the committee a process to use that was clear and not opaque and unduly administrative like what has happened in the past. Lets lay it all out on the front end. The draft needs to be reviewed. The process needs to be fleshed out and it should be written.

Mike M: The entire Board, including officers, should be contested ever year. That might bring in new people.

Jesse: There really does need to be some holdovers to ensure that someone remembers all the things we do.

Observer Comments:

Duke Banks: In the past when this Budget time problem has happened we voted on the R&E Resolution in March so it could be submitted to the County Board in April. It will require an Emergency Resolution.

Jackie Snelling: When is the Draft of the Environmental Affairs report going to be ready? The stormwater section might tie in with the work that Public Services is doing which will be presented in February. Allan wasn't sure, but thought the draft might already be done – he will ask.

Duke Banks: The letter to the County Board that will be with the questions should ask the CB members to keep their answers short and crisp (Allan should also emphasize this in his opening remarks). And time should be left for some Delegates questions.

Sarah Shortall: There should be no CB presentation, just questions from us. That's what the Delegates really want.

Sarah Shortall: What was the selection criteria and process for the AGTF members? I want there to be a report about the process that was put together for selecting this committee. It needs to be in writing. There was only one person who applied but was not selected. Why?

Jackie Snelling: Some organizations also use standards for civil discussion and there are examples e.g. don't impugn people's motives, don't call names, don't characterize and instead let people speak directly for themselves

Duke Banks: What does the ORA do for Arlington? There is a thin line between being and not being partisan.

Sarah Shortall: The Reports of my Nomination Committees have included who was on the committee, how many times we met, what type of actions we took and what demographics we used to get a diverse group. A location chart was used to spread Board membership over the whole County and we told everyone what our process was.

The January Board meeting will be a **Virtual** one and will be held on Sunday, January 24th at 6:00 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20
Respectfully submitted by Allen Norton

Resolution Procedures DRAFT (Prepared by Eric Cassel with assistance from Allan Gajadhar)

- I) Introduction of Resolutions
 - A) A committee may by majority vote of at least 3 members, forward a Resolution to be considered at a general meeting.
 - B) A delegate with the second of a delegate from a different member organization may propose a Resolution.
 - C) Resolutions are to be introduced under New Business at a general meeting.
 - D) New resolutions should be submitted to the presiding officer at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting at which it will be introduced.
- II) Initial Action on Delegate Resolutions
 - A) The presiding officer may refer a Resolution to a lead committee. Other committees may be consulted, but only lead committee may act on the Resolution.
 - B) The presiding officer may declare it an Emergency and with the approval of 2/3 of the voting members, consider the Resolution immediately.
 - C) The presiding officer may schedule the Resolution for consideration at the next meeting or with the approval of the sponsors a subsequent meeting.
 - D) The presiding officer may declare the Resolution frivolous or moot. If any committee chair, Board of Director member or 5 members from 3 different member organizations disagree, the Resolution is not frivolous or moot.
- III) Committee Responses to a Resolution
 - A) The lead committee should in a reasonable time meet and discuss the Resolution.
 - B) The lead committee can at that time recommend the Resolution to the presiding officer at the next General meeting.
 - C) The lead committee can table the Resolution for up to a year to study and consider the Resolution.
 - D) The lead committee can amend the Resolution and propose the amended Resolution to the presiding officer of a general meeting.
 - E) The lead committee can reject the resolution and report this to the President.
- IV) Final Resolution Requirements:
 - A) Resolutions and accompanying reports shall be submitted in time for publication in the newsletter and should be posted on the ACCF website at least 10 days prior to final consideration at a membership meeting, except in the event of an emergency.
 - B) Members may amend or withdraw their resolutions prior to consideration by the full membership
 - C) The presiding officer shall allow sufficient time in the scheduled membership meeting for discussion of the resolution.