



Arlington County Civic Federation

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

Minutes

March 16, 2021

Arlington County Civic Federation (“ACCF”) Membership Meeting

Call to Order: Federation President Gajadhar noted the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM. President Gajadhar led the meeting in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Meeting Format: The meeting was held virtually using Zoom. President Gajadhar was the Host. Vice President Tina Worden and BOD Chair Eric Cassel were Co-Hosts. The meeting registration URL was listed in the email newsletter and posted on the ACCF Facebook event page. Alistair Watson and Dennis Gerrity managed member and guest attendance and distributing electronic ballots to delegates for the meeting.

The Treasurer’s report for January was in the February Newsletter. The Minutes for the February 16th Membership Meetings were submitted. David Hughes (Bluemont) made a **Motion** to approve them. Duke Banks (Arl Historical Society) seconded it. A voting email was sent.

The vote was: **53** For, **0** Against, **7** Abstained and **1** Did Not Respond. The February Minutes were **Approved**.

Member Attendance: Alistair Watson kept roll as the Members and Guests entered the meeting. There were 99 Total Attendees with 77 Members and 22 Guests. There were representative from 44 Organizations. 23 Organizations had two or more delegates and/or alternates present: Arlington East Falls Church CA, Arlington Forest CA, Ashton Heights CA, Arlington Tree Action Group, Aurora Highlands CA, Ballston Virginia-Square CA, Bluemont CA, Boulevard Manor CA, Buckingham Community CA, Columbia Heights CA, Crystal City CA, Douglas Park CA, Glencarlyn CA, NAACP #7047, NoVa NORML, Old Glebe CA, Opera NOVA, Penrose NA, Tara-Leeway Heights CA, Waverly Hills CA, Westover Village CA, Williamsburg CA and Yorktown CA.

Organizations that still owe dues for 2020-2021: Arlington Coalition of Police, Black Oak Cluster Community Association, Bromptons at Rosslyn HOA, Center for Urban Education, Civic Coalition for Minority Affairs, Hyde Park Condominium Association, Old Dominion Citizens Association, Rock Spring Civic Association, Westwind Homeowners Association.

Senator Mark Warner, COVID Update and Q&A:

0: 07:50

Senator Warner gave an update on the many aspects of COVID and then took questions.

Will the Long Bridge Project be funded in the Infrastructure Bill? What other items might be in it? What is your highest priority in this bill for Virginia? Metro is in a funding crunch and has identified a number of service cutbacks. Given the importance of Metro for the Federal workforce, how much money will Metro receive from the Federal Government and will it be ongoing? Can you say a few words about the events at the Capitol on January 6th? Why were the Capitol police so unprepared? What about the role of the FBI, DHS, and DOD? Would you say there was a failure of imagination? Beyond the temporary aspects, what are your thoughts on the larger transformational aspects of COVID? President Biden aggressively flags climate change. How do you think Arlington

can reflect that sense of urgency in planning and budgeting. Arlington is experiencing a crisis of unnecessary environmental degradation. The loss of trees and natural areas in the cities is devastating and shrugged off as an unavoidable requirement for development, but both can be enhanced simultaneously, resulting in better air quality health, wealth and enjoyment. How can you help us bring climate change solutions forward as well as down to the local level? Would you talk about the voting rights act and voting suppression and the current efforts underway to try and mitigate them?

Adult Mental Health Presentation: Nicole Merlene, Chair: Public Services Mental Health Subcommittee 44:10
Nicole Merlene moderated a Presentation given by Naomi Verdugo, Police Practices Group; Deborah Warren, Deputy Director Health & Human Services; Michael Rowling, Captain, ACPC Operations Division.

Between the Crisis Intervention Center that you all are setting up and existing partnerships that you might have with Virginia Hospital Center and A-SPAN, the homeless services facility, will there be integration with those existing relationships and how will those interplay with your plans and goals? A lot of these crises require ongoing medication, therapy, and those types of things. That's often held up by things like mental health insurance parity or not being there. Are there things that Arlington can do to overcome these hurdles or are there things that the state needs to do to help us assisting those needing services after they've interacted with you. If you look at outpatient care you find it difficult to find a mental health professional, even when there is funding. Without funding available, it's nonexistent. So even if you add capacity, are there the professionals in the area that are going to be able to stop that. When you talk about a drop off location at the Crisis Intervention Center how would that be different than dropping an individual off at Virginia Hospital Center or any other current services that you provide. There are a lack of Mental Health beds in Virginia. Will the Crisis Intervention Center improve that? And then what's the current state of play there.

(Note: Jackie Snelling (Lyon Village) was very helpful in putting this presentation together.)

Environmental Affairs: Briefing on Tree Preservation and Tree Canopy Resolution: 1:27:42

Mary Glass of ATAG gave opening remarks and Karen Firehook (Executive Director: Green Infrastructure Center) gave a Presentation and took questions.

Do zoning ordinances need a more comprehensive look, given the lot coverage and more restrictive ordinances you were talking about? What other locales in the DMV seem to be doing a good job of trying to take action? What strategies do you suggest for convincing or requiring infill home builders to preserve onsite trees, and also protect neighboring trees, where the roots are shared across a property line and then also to require planting more extensively. There are permeable driveways, trails, roads and rain gardens. To what extent can they be used close to trees? And are there any applications where these porous pavers really aren't very beneficial?

Eric Ackerman (ATAG) talked about the next steps on the Scoping Collaborative done last November and December. Mary Glass presented the Environmental Affairs Committee Draft Resolution on Public Collaboratives to Preserve Arlington's Trees

Chanda Choun (Buckingham) made a **Motion** that the Resolution be adopted. Michael Raizen (Boulevard Manor) Seconded it.

The vote was: **52** For, **3** Against, **5** Abstained and **1** Did Not Respond.

The motion was **Approved**.

Old Business:

Nomination Committee: Slate for Membership Approval

2:20:08

Juliet Hiznay (Columbia Heights), Alistair Watson (Aurora Highlands), Dennis Gerrity (NoVa NORML), Mike Cantwell (Lee Highway Alliance) & Nadia Conyers (NAACP)

Eric Cassel (Crystal City) made a **Motion** that the slate be approved. JD Spain (NAACP #7047) seconded it.

The vote was: **54** For, **1** Against, **5** Abstained and **1** Did Not Respond.

The motion was **Approved**.

New Business:

New Member Application – Our Revolution Arlington:

2:23:02

Joe Young of ORA described the organization and took questions.

Michael Raizen (Boulevard Manor): Are you affiliated with any political candidates or people who are in office right now?

Allen Norton (Bluemont) made a **Motion** that ORA's application be approved. Lisa McAvoy (Foxcroft Heights) Seconded it. Membership requires a two-thirds majority.

Chris Hoh (Barcroft): So my question is for somebody on the board. What's your rationale for endorsing this group? You said the board had endorsed it. I'd like to know what the board was thinking when you made this recommendation.

Eric Cassel (Board Chair: There are certain things that we have as a requirement for new members. So we went through the list and tried to check them off. For example, they have to have 20 members in Arlington, so we asked them to provide them, literally had them provide names and addresses. So there are a set of things that we had to check off, for example do they have bylaws. So did they meet the requirements that we have? There were several different questions about whether they were non-partisan. There were some questions about that. The Board did decide to move forward. However, I did want to mention that there were numerous abstentions. There were some people who had to abstain for a of variety reasons. But the board did approve that they meet met all the requirements we have of incoming members.

Chris Hoh (Barcroft): Their website talks about how they're lobbying Democrats in Congress, and then a couple places that mentioned the Democratic Party and their work with the Democratic Party, and there's nothing for any other political party. I know they're officially non-partisan. But my concern is whether they're non-partisan in fact, or just in name. And since the Civic Federation is supposed to be non-partisan., where does this put us in terms of our own rules.

Kirit Mookerjee (Westover): In addition to my Civic Association I belong to Our Revolution Arlington and I'm not a member of the Democratic Party. When they have a survey for candidates, the survey is on the issues that ORA believes in. Now I know people may be looking at the National website. This organization has had speakers on all different topics. The last meeting they had an educational presentation, similar to this group, on Trans rights explaining a lot of the things people don't know about Trans. I think it's officially non-partisan and has endorsed candidates from parties of various affiliations.

Mike McMenamin (Board Member): I abstained because I'm still concerned about the fact that they didn't meet the 20 signature threshold at the Board meeting. I was told that they were going to meet that threshold by this meeting, but have heard nothing. I also have trepidations about their partisanship, given the fact that they do endorsements. This would be an easier thing to do if they didn't do endorsements, but I am concerned about the non-partisan aspect of the Civic Federation has held in the past.

Allan Gajadha (President): They did provide those 20 names to us. The Board had agreed to provisionally endorse them, assuming they provided the names. They did.

Detta Kissel (NAACP): I was there at the last Board meeting and was struck by the fact that the bylaws are being looked at in a very strict manner with respect to this organization and perhaps not in a way that has applied across the board. There was some discussion about the names and addresses of the members and there was discussion that this hasn't necessarily been followed strictly for other organizations. So my suggestion is that the bylaws be followed. This is not primarily a political organization. I have worked with this organization on several issues. One of them being broadband, one of them being Community Land Trust's, one of them that was trying to start up some economic activity in Green Valley. It is a very much issue oriented organization. There have been speakers across the entire political spectrum at their meetings. If there is nothing

in the bylaws that prevents an issue organization like this from being a part of the Civic Federation, I really don't see why it can't be. It almost sounds like there's a progressive organization people don't want in the Civic Federation. So I would suggest that everybody think really hard about following the bylaws and accepting diverse views on issues.

David Hughes (Bluemont): I would like to Call The Question. We are going around in circles. It's time to vote.

President: The motion being moved and seconded, ballot emails will be sent out.

The vote was: **40** For, **11** Against, **9** Abstained and **1** Did Not Respond.

The motion was **Approved**

Revenues & Expenditures Draft Resolution: Burt Bostwick

2:56:03

This is budget season. The R&E committee reviews the county budget every year and tries to bring to the attention of the Civic Federation membership those aspects of the budget we believe are important. This year we're offering a Resolution which goes to the heart of how the annual budget is developed, specifically the independent oversight that is necessary for jurisdictions of Arlington's size and complexity. This Resolution is similar to that approved by the membership last year. However, we believe that the subject is sufficiently important, for the present and the future, that it needs to be re-emphasized. The final Resolution and the associated report will be available on the Civic Federation website. Everyone will be able to read it prior to the next meeting, when we will vote on it.

March Board of Directors Meeting: President Gajadhar announced that the March Board of Directors Meeting would be held at 6:00 PM on March 21st. It will be a **Virtual** meeting.

April 2021 Membership Meeting: President Gajadhar announced that the April 20th, 2021 Membership Meeting will be a **Virtual** meeting. The meeting will begin at 7:00 PM. Entry to the meeting Waiting Room will start at 6:00.

The meeting adjourned at 9:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Allen Norton

Video of the meeting is on Vimeo at: <https://vimeo.com/525103491>