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Newsletter of the Arlington County Civic Federation | December 2021 | Volume 106 |  
Number 5

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## December 2021 Membership Meeting December 14, 2021 @ 7:00PM

Delegates, Alternate Delegates, others associated with member organizations, and the public are invited to attend this virtual meeting.

**Advance Registration is required and must be completed by 12 PM, Tuesday, December 14, 2021.**

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAkcOGqqzgpHtOMvXBEGqyjdbio3fk2TLyX>

A confirmation email will be sent with unique meeting log-in/phone-in details. We strongly encourage early check-in, which starts at 6 PM.

To expedite the check-in process please use your first and last name as your profile name this will help identify participants.

*\*\*The [Secretary](#) must be notified of voting member substitutions by 12 PM Monday, December 13, 2021.*

If you are not familiar with Zoom, here is [a link to information and instructions on how to register and participate in CivFed's December 2021 Membership Meeting.](#)

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## December 14, 2021 Membership Meeting Agenda

- 7:00 - Regular Business, pledge, approve minutes
  - 7:15 - Panel on Arlington Broadband
  - 8:05 - New Member Application and Vote
  - 8:25 - Tree Canopy Update
  - 8:40 - Civic Association President's roundtable recap
  - 8:50 - Old Business Bylaws amendment
  - 9:05 - New Business
  - 9:10 - Adjournment
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## President's Corner

Welcome,

I hope the holiday season is going well for everyone. In addition to expressing gratitude, the holidays are a time to celebrate the old year and welcome the new.

The new year brings the budget season for the County and the Schools. The County is seeking feedback on their budget proposals, see further details below in this newsletter. We are also planning our annual New Years joint meeting with the County Board. We will be soliciting questions for the County board via our committee chairs, but please feel free to send them directly to me as well. I will be compiling them and submitting them in advance so that the board can prepare thorough responses.



We held a very productive joint roundtable with County Manager Mark Schwartz for Civic Association President's. Nicole Merlene will provide a recap and next steps at the membership meeting on Dec 14.

The Tree Collaborative group has been very active, Mary Glass will provide an update on their work during the membership meeting.

As mentioned last month, the Task Force in Governance and Election Reform (TiGER) is in the solutioning/ recommendation phase of their work.

I also want to encourage member organizations, committees and delegates to bring forward resolutions that the membership can discuss and recommend to our elected officials to take action. With the upcoming budget season, there are a number of areas where we can provide recommendations. Please reach out to myself, or any of the committee chairs or board members with any topics where we can take collective action. There is power in numbers, and the Civic Federation has a long record of effective advocacy for the good of Arlington and its residents.

I hope everyone is able to take time to enjoy the holidays.

Warmly,

[Allan Gajadhar](#)

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## **Bylaws Committee Update: Proposed Bylaws Amendment Regarding the Nomination Committee**

The Nomination Committee of the Arlington County Civic Federation is an annual short-fused committee tasked with recruiting nominees from amongst the Voting and Alternate Members of ACCF to serve as Officers and Directors of the organization for the upcoming fiscal year.

In recent years, ACCF has been constrained by a strict number of Nomination Committee members under our Bylaws. As a now-incorporated organization, the Nomination Committee has also been time-constrained to recruit sufficient nominees within the short window afforded by the Bylaws. Last year's Nomination Committee, chaired by Juliet Hiznay, published an extensive list of recommendations for future Nomination Committees based on their experiences. The ACCF Bylaws and Rules Committee (Bylaws Committee) has reviewed and updated these recommendations and is now putting forth an Amendment to the Bylaws to allow greater flexibility in the structure and service time of the Nomination Committee. In addition, the Bylaws Committee has worked with the ACCF Board of Directors to develop a standing Procedural Document to implement other recommendations of the FY2021 Nomination Committee and the best practices exemplified by their tenure.

The proposed Amendment was introduced at the November 2021 General Meeting and the amendments will receive a second reading and discussion during the December 2021 General Meeting.

The key elements of the Amendment are:

- Moving the creation of the Nomination Committee to a period ninety (90) to one hundred twenty (120) days before the annual Member meeting (typically June) from the current sixty (60) days.
- Modifying the membership of the Nomination Committee from five (5) to three (3) to seven (7) members.
- Augmenting the reporting requirements of the Nomination Committee to the General Membership.
- Codifying the responsibilities of the Nomination Committee to act in accordance with the Bylaws of ACCF and the Procedural Document.

The full text of the enabling Resolution is available [here](#).

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## December 2021 Meeting Preview: Arlington Broadband Authority

Internet access has become increasingly essential to modern life. During the pandemic, almost overnight, more residents needed good access to work from home, students required good access to participate in virtual learning, and the government needed better internet connections with both government facilities (particularly schools) and to private-sector partners.

Arlington is a highly digital community with extensive private sector network services and infrastructure. In addition, as one of the few municipalities to own its own dark fiber network, Arlington seemed better positioned for the rapid expansion of some network services. Many of our residents were able to transition to work from home and school from home seamlessly due to the robust broadband service most of our residents use. Through public-private partnerships, APS and the County were able to connect ALL students so they could continue their learning online. However, there are still residents who have not adopted broadband service at home for a variety of reasons and there have been challenges to expanding connections.

In 2020 Arlfiber, a recently established group that lobbies for broadband access met with County Manager Schwartz and proposed to expand Arlington's limited dark fiber backbone, ConnectArlington, to create a publicly owned fiber-to-home network. After more discussion, the County 2022 budget approved funding for a feasibility study of \$50,000, subsequently raised to \$200,000. Arlington staff is currently working on the request for proposal (RFP) for the study. The next step is more extended public discussion and consideration of the options.

At the December 14 Civic Federation meeting, the Public Services Committee will host a panel to provide context and perspectives on the key issues. Should Arlington create a public Broadband Authority? What needs would it fulfill that cannot be accomplished now? What risks should we consider? What should be the primary mission and scope? What is the extent of underserved? What are the financing options and associated costs and who will pay those costs? Who will have accountability for building and maintaining the infrastructure and providing customer services? What are other alternatives? What is the most cost-effective way to fill these needs and mission?

Panelists will include:

- **Jack Belcher**, Chief Technology Innovation Officer / Director Department of Technology Services. Mr. Belcher will provide the Arlington digital context for the Arlington Broadband including the scope of needs such as underserved and assets such as the County-owned broadband fiber-optic network, ConnectArlington.
- **Tim Dempsey**, the Arlfiber Collective. Mr. Dempsey will provide an overview of the Arlfiber proposal and the benefits they see for creating an Arlington Broadband Authority.
- **Ray LaMura**, Broadband Association of Virginia (VCTA), President. Mr. Lamura will provide the perspective of current internet providers and the state and

Arlington-level context for establishing a Broadband Authority or other public-private options to address services including cost and access for the underserved.

Following the panel, there will be Q and A from Public Services and from members in the Chat. Mike McMenamin will moderate the panel on behalf of the CivFed Public Services Committee.

If you would like to submit questions in advance, please send them to [public.services.chair@civfed.org](mailto:public.services.chair@civfed.org)

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## **Budget Season FY2023 Is Upon Us: Facebook Live Budget Town Hall Dec. 8, 6:30 pm**

Fiscal year (FY) 2023 begins on July 1, 2022. And the County Board and Manager have begun planning for the upcoming budget. (For those unfamiliar with Arlington's budget, the fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30.)

In a September budget outlook presentation, the County Manager highlighted recovering revenues, with single-family homes appreciating the most in value. But he also cautioned that commercial office vacancy rates remain stubbornly high and projected that assessments for this important revenue source would likely decline in calendar year 2021. So single-family homes are likely to remain the primary source for new revenue in the county's real estate tax revenue stream.

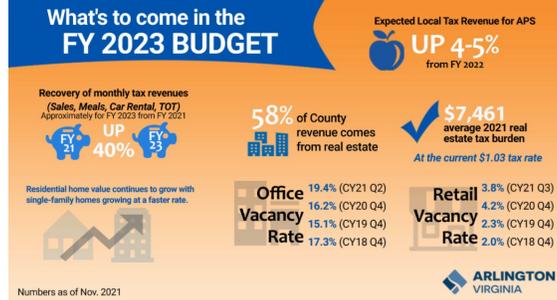
Added uncertainty includes the course of the pandemic, as Arlington exhausts its remaining federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, and potential fluctuations in revenue coming from the state, as a new governor takes the reins.

The County Board has issued its guidance to the Manager to help him craft his proposed FY2023 budget. Unallocated surplus funds left over when the FY2021 budget was closed out on June 30 equaled \$20.4 million. The County Board and Manager have agreed to reserve \$16 million of these one-time surplus funds to provide more flexibility in planning for needs in the FY2023 budget. This is in keeping with the request in a 2016 Civic Federation resolution, asking that a reasonable portion of these funds be held in reserve for use in planning the upcoming budget.

Typically, one-time surplus funds are used for discrete projects of limited duration (to fund a planning study, for example) rather than for ongoing expenses. Why? Because once these funds are exhausted, there is no identified ongoing revenue stream to provide continued funding.

This year, however, the County Board and Manager allocated \$1.8 million of these one-time, surplus close-out funds for a 1% across-the-board "market-pay adjustment" for county employees, which will go into effect in January 2022. Apparently, the Manager is confident enough in future property assessment increases that he will have sufficient, new ongoing money to continue funding this compensation increase in future years.

For those who would like to learn more or pose questions about the upcoming budget and county finances, the county is holding a Facebook Live FY2023 **budget town hall on Dec. 8, 6:30 pm**: <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Departments/CMO/Comms-Public-Engagement/Facebook-Live-Budget-Townhall>



## Civic Federation Appointments

The Civic Federation has traditionally appointed representatives to several County and Schools commissions, including the County's Emergency Preparedness Advisory Commission (EPAC), the School Boards Budget Advisory Council (BAC), and others. We are in the midst of updating the full list of all appointments CivFed makes. Please send [Allan Gajadhar](#) a note with any appointments where you serve as the CivFed representative or appointments that you are aware of in addition to the list below so that we can update our records and appointments accordingly.

Here is our working list:

- Neighborhood Conservation Plan Evaluation Working Group
- Police Chief Advisory Commission
- SPR – Planning Commission
- Emergency Preparedness Advisory Commission
- Open Data Advisory Group
- Utility Rate Study
- Form-Based Codes Advisory Working Group
- School Board Budget Advisory Council

## 2021 ACCF Dues Information

On August 29, the Arlington Civic Federation Board of Directors approved the 2021 – 2022 budget which will be used to pay for administrative and web services for the organization.

**Membership Dues for 2021 – 2022 are \$65 per member organization. Dues should be sent in as soon as possible, and are due by December 31, 2021.**

Dues may be paid by check or by Zelle.

If paying by check:

- Send check to Arlington Civic Federation, PO Box 42091, Arlington Virginia, 22203.
- Please be sure to include the name of the organization on the check as a memo.
- Please send an updated list of delegates to [tosecretary@civfed.org](mailto:tosecretary@civfed.org).

If paying by Zelle, please email [treasurer@civfed.org](mailto:treasurer@civfed.org) including the following information:

- Name of Organization
- Name of Payer
- Phone Number for Payer (for questions)
- Zelle ID (email address or phone number)
- The treasurer will then respond with the ACCF Zelle payment information.
- Please also email [secretary@civfed.org](mailto:secretary@civfed.org) with the updated list of delegates.

Thank you to the following organizations for making their due's payments:

- Friends of Aurora Highlands Parks

- Arlington Tree Action Group
- Bluemont Civic Association
- Lyon Village Citizens Association
- Yorktown Civic Association
- Arlington Forest Citizens Association
- Foxcroft Heights
- Arlington Ridge Civic Association
- Arlington View Civic Association
- Arlington Branch AAUW
- Glen Carlyn Citizens Association
- Arlington Education Association
- Tara Leeway Heights Civic Association
- John Langston Civic Association
- Radnor Ft Myer Heights Civic Association

If you have questions, please email [treasurer@civfed.org](mailto:treasurer@civfed.org) for payment information and [secretary@civfed.org](mailto:secretary@civfed.org) for any other questions. Thank you!

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## The Civic Federation's Website

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### **2021-2022 Board of Directors**

#### **Officers**

President, [Allan Gajadhar](#)  
 Vice President, [Nicole Merlene](#)  
 Secretary, Vacant  
 Treasurer, [Stacy Meyer](#)

#### **Board of Directors**

Board Chair, [Nicole Merlene](#)  
 Board Vice-Chair, [Chris Wimbush](#)  
 Member at Large, [Mary Glass](#)  
 Member at Large, [Julia Tanner](#)  
 Member at Large, [Nadia Conyers](#)  
 Member at Large, [Mona Steffen](#)  
 Member at Large, [Eric Cassel](#)

Voting delegates and alternate delegates who are interested to serve on the Civic Federation's Board of Directors should contact [President Allan Gajadhar](#).

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### **2021-2022 ACCF PUBLIC INTEREST COMMITTEES**

Cultural Affairs – [Chair Tina Worden](#)  
 Diversity Committee – [Chair Alistair Watson](#)  
 Environmental Affairs – [Chair Mary Glass](#)  
 Housing – [Chair John Vihstadt](#)  
 Legislation – [Chair Ron Haddox](#)  
 Parks and Recreation – Chair TBD  
 Planning and Zoning – [Chair Ben Keeney](#)  
 Public Services – [Chair John Ford](#)  
 Revenues and Expenditures – [Suzanne Sundberg \(POC\)](#)  
 Schools – [Chair Allan Gajadhar \(POC\)](#)  
 Transportation – [Co-chairs Jerry Auten and Joe Pelton](#)

- [Airport Noise Subcommittee – Chair Joe Pelton](#)

### **2020-2021 ACCF SUPPORT COMMITTEES**

Audit – [Chair Jay Wind](#)

Awards – TBD  
Bylaws and Rules – [Chair Adam Henderson](#)  
Banquet – TBD  
Communications – [Chair Chris Wimbush](#)  
Membership – [Chair Eric Cassel](#)  
Nominations – TBD

Any Delegate, Alternate Delegate, or member of a Member Organization may participate on any Public Interest or Support Committee. Please contact the applicable Committee chair, point-of-contact, or [President Allan Gajadhar](#) if you are interested in participating on ACCF Committees.

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## LINKS TO MEETING DOCUMENTS

- [Link to Draft November 2021 Meeting Minutes](#), video and audio transcripts [here](#)
- [Proposed Bylaws Amendment Regarding the Nomination Committee](#)

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## Interested in being an Arlington County Civic Federation Delegate

The Arlington County Civic Federation was founded in 1916. Today, it has 85 member organizations dedicated to advocacy and community involvement. The Federation membership reflects the broad array of interests and talents found in the County and is open and welcoming to all groups within Arlington, firmly believing that a broader range of groups creates better problem-solving outcomes for Arlington and its residents. Our purpose continues to be promoting the general welfare of Arlington County and its vicinity in a non-partisan, non-sectarian, non-sectional, and non-political manner.

Arlington County Civic Federation Delegates enjoy the full benefits of participation, voting, and serving in Civic Federation leadership positions. If your organization is a member of the Civic Federation, ask if it has open slots for delegates. If it is not a member organization of the Civic Federation, encourage it to join. Here is a [link](#) to our website for more details.

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## ACCF Calendar FY2022

### December 2021

- NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: December 2, 2021 by 6:00 PM
- GENERAL MEETING: Tuesday, December 14, 2021, 7PM, via Zoom
- BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Sunday, December 19, 4PM via Zoom

### January 2022

- GENERAL MEETING: Annual joint meeting with County Board: January 3rd, 2022, 7:00 via Zoom (further details to follow)

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