Arlington County Civic Federation

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES, TUESDAY 10 NOVEMBER 2026

1. Welcoming Reception | 6:40–7:00 p.m.

Members gathered for an informal reception before the meeting.

2. Open Meeting and Approval of October Minutes | 7:00–7:10 p.m.

President Nicholas Giacobbe opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence in recognition of Veterans Day.

The October meeting minutes were presented and approved without recorded opposition or abstentions.

3. Legislature Fireside Chat with Delegate Dan Helmer | 7:10–7:50 p.m.

Delegate Dan Helmer, Chair of the Virginia House Committee on Counties, Cities and Towns, joined the meeting for a discussion moderated by Francine Friedman.

Delegate Helmer reviewed the Virginia legislative process, including bill drafting, committee assignments, crossover between the House and Senate, conference committees, and the Governor's options on legislation. He explained the Dillon Rule, under which local governments have only those powers granted by the General Assembly, and discussed the balance between state authority and local decision-making.

Members were encouraged to engage with legislators through email, phone calls, newsletters, and town halls. Delegate Helmer also recommended the Virginia Legislative Information System (LIS) as a resource for identifying legislators, tracking bills, and following committee activity.

Discussion covered housing affordability, energy costs, transportation and parking policy, public safety, juvenile justice, and local governance. The conversation also addressed the challenges of balancing competing community needs and the importance of constituent input.

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4. Second Reading and Vote on Legislative Agenda Resolution | 7:40–8:10 p.m.

Legislation Committee co-chairs Dave Schutz and Francine Friedman presented the proposed 2027 ACCF Legislative Priorities for a second reading and vote. The priorities address:

- Environmental resilience, tree canopy protection, stormwater management, and energy efficiency.
- Juvenile justice reform, due process, and civil asset forfeiture.
- Local governance and Arlington's authority over its form of government and election structure.
- Local authority over parking requirements.
- Removal or relocation of abandoned utility facilities that obstruct accessible routes.
- Timely VDOT review of locally funded road improvements.
- Expanded local authority to regulate personal e-mobility devices, including e-bikes

5. New Business and Adjournment | 8:10–9:00 p.m.

Members discussed the relationship between the Federation's legislative priorities and the County Board's approach to local governance. Further discussion addressed ranked-choice voting, representation, and the need for continued review of e-mobility safety and enforcement. The Public Safety and Transportation Committees are also reviewing related issues.

Announcements included:

- The Housing Committee will meet November 23 at 6:00 p.m. to discuss expiring affordable housing commitments, including Ballston Park.
- The December meeting will include County Manager Mark Schwartz.
- Members were invited to share specific issues for the County Manager in advance so they can be provided to County staff.
- The adopted legislative priorities and accompanying letter will be sent to the Arlington delegation and County Board and posted on the ACCF website.

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