

Arlington County Civic Federation

The civic voice of Arlington for 83 years

Newsletter

May, 1999

Volume 83, No. 9

May Meeting:

Legislative Delegation and Y2K Update

7:30 pm, Tuesday, May 4th
John T. Hazel Conference Center
Arlington Hospital
1701 N. George Mason Drive

7:30 Call to order, adoption of agenda, committee reports and announcements.

7:40 Legislative Delegation, with particular emphasis on the fate of the Federation's Legislative Package recommendations. We have invited all of our State and Federal representatives, and the package is inside this issue to facilitate questions.

9:00 Y2K Update, including the state of the County's readiness as we approach mid-year, some possible consequences if others experience difficulties, and what the issues are for a neighborhood and its civic association.

9:30 Adjournment

Please contact President Randy Swart if you have new business to raise.

Tim Wise Wins Journal Cup

Our annual banquet on April 23rd was a very nice one. Amenities were tops, and the ambience of the Army Navy County Club added a relaxed, friendly atmosphere. Ann Rudd and the Banquet Committee did a great job.

Tim Wise won the Journal Cup this year for his stellar work as our Secretary, President of the Arlington County Taxpayers' Association, Editor of the ACTA Watchdog, member of several ACCF committees and member of the Fiscal Affairs Advisory Commission.

Sherman Pratt won the Distinguished Meritorious Service award for contributions going back to 1972-3 as President of the Federation, to recent Presidency of the Arlington Historical Society and his book on the history of Arlington County. Certificates of Appreciation were awarded to David Jones for work on numerous County committees; Martha Moore and the Lyon Village Citizens Association for taking the lead in traffic calming; Ted Weihe and Randy Swart for raising the infill housing issue, and Sandra Ogilvie for supporting us as the head of the John T. Hazel Conference center, where we meet every month.

ACCF 1999 Legislative Package

1. Administration of Government, Generally

A. Public Employee Ethics. (1) Supports legislation requiring that state ethics brochures be provided to public officials and employees, who must certify in writing that they have read it before they assume their state or local government positions. (2) Urges a legislative study on replacing the existing Virginia Senate and House Ethics Advisory Panels with a comprehensive state/local ethics commission.

B. Requirement of State-Owned Industrial Facilities to Develop Environmental Management Plans. Supports legislation to develop and implement pollution-prevention plans and to establish a state office to coordinate and provide technical assistance.

C. Initiative and Referendum. Requests the Governor of Virginia to appoint a bipartisan study commission to examine how the adoption of initiative and referendum would mesh with Virginia's traditions and weigh the assets and liabilities of I & R.

2. Authorities

Baseball Stadium Authority. Supports repeal of the Virginia Stadium Authority, Virginia Code section 15.1.227-71.

3. Aviation

National Airport. Strongly opposes any liberalization of standards at National Airport.

4. Conservation (environment)

Environmental Quality. Requests the Governor to direct the Department of Environmental Quality to implement all outstanding recommendations of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission's (JLARC) 1997 report titled "Review of the Department of Environmental Quality." This report included 56 recommendations to strengthen DEQ's operation and performance and the Commonwealth's ability to protect its atmosphere and waters from pollution or impairment. Requests the General Assembly to initiate a follow-up review of the State's implementation of JLARC's 1997 recommendations.

B. Appropriation of Resources. Encourages the Virginia General Assembly to appropriate the necessary resources to enforce environmental regulations effectively so that health and the environment are protected.

C. Importation of Trash. Strongly urges Governor Gilmore, our congressional delegation, and the General Assembly to pursue all available avenues to prevent additional importation of trash into Virginia until the state task force and the natural resources secretary can complete their investigations and make recommendations.

5. Counties, Cities, and Towns

Office of Inspector General. Supports authorizing the establishment of an Office of Inspector General for the County to audit and review County performance in contracting, construction of facilities, purchasing, and sale of land or other resources to assure appropriateness of expenditures.

6. Crimes and Offenses Generally

A. Sodomy Laws. Supports prohibition of prosecution under the sodomy law except in conjunction with another charge.

B. Sexual Orientation. Supports the addition of sexual orientation to the coverage of antidiscrimination and Hate Crimes laws.

C. Aggressive Panhandling. Requests that the Arlington County Board be authorized to adopt an ordinance to make it unlawful for any person to panhandle in an aggressive manner, to panhandle within fifteen feet of an automatic teller machine, or to panhandle from any operator of a motor vehicle while standing in a roadway median or on a travel lane.

7. Criminal Procedure

21-Day Rule. Supports modification of the 21-Day Rule (Rule 1.1 of the Virginia supreme court) to permit courts to consider potentially exculpatory evidence which is submitted beyond the 21-day period currently allowed in capital cases.

8. Dangerous or Hazardous Substances or Chemicals

Notification of Use of Lawn Pesticides. Supports adoption of a rule requiring commercial lawn-care firms to post signs for 24 hours before and 48 hours after chemical lawn treatment similar to a pre-spray notification already in place for gypsy moth application.

9. Education

A. State Funding Formula. Opposes any efforts to change the formula for state funding that would result in less funding for Arlington Public Schools.

B. Public School Opening. Supports allowing local school boards to control their public school calendars. Currently in Virginia, by state law, the school year cannot begin before Labor Day. This denies school boards the flexibility that may be needed when establishing the school calendar.

10. Energy Conservation and Resources

Recycling Goal of 40% by 2000. Supports adoption of a state recycling goal of 40% by the year 2000 and comparative progress reports by jurisdictions.

11. Housing

Supports restoration of General Assembly funding for the Virginia Housing Partnership Fund to the level of \$8 million per annum.

12. Insurance

A. Insurance Rates. Supports a law to prohibit insurance companies from raising rates when the insured motorists in accidents are found to be not "at fault."

B. Third-Party Notification. Supports mandatory third-party notification so that incapacitated persons would not lose insurance coverage automatically if they should inadvertently miss a payment.

13. Partnerships

5.D. Limited Partners - Access to Information. Supports legislation that would permit citizen access to names and addresses of limited partners and their financial investments or other contributions in limited partnerships which conduct business with state or local governments of at least \$10,000 annually.

14. Property and Conveyances

Retention of Local Zoning Authority. Supports legislation to prohibit Commonwealth agencies from overriding local jurisdictional use plans and zoning decisions and ordinances.

15. State Corporation Commission

State Corporation Commission. Supports increasing the SCC's membership from three to five and encourages General Assembly members to ensure that confirmation of candidates includes full disclosure review of their qualifications and records with regard to consumer issues.

16. Taxation

A. Consumer Use Tax. Supports repeal of the Consumer Use Tax.

B. Economic (Fair-Market) Rent. Recommends establishment of statewide, economic (fair-market) rent, not contract rent, as the basis for assessments of commercial property.

C. Cigarette Tax. Supports authorizing Arlington County to increase the cigarette tax in a manner similar to that of cities.

D. Local Income Tax. Opposes legislation that would allow a local income tax.

17. Transportation and Highway Safety

A. Transportation Funding. Urges the General Assembly to revise the state transportation funding formula to increase funding for growth areas such as Northern Virginia.

B. Bicycle Safety. Supports requiring the Virginia Department of Transportation to establish sufficient right-of-way for bicycles during planning and construction of state roadways and greater accommodation for bicycles on state roadways.

C. Truck Safety. Supports strengthening measures to improve safety of truck operations on Virginia highways, demands stronger enforcement of speed limits, urges tougher requirements for commercial drivers' licenses.

D. Mass Transit. Supports increased funding for mass transit.

18. United States Government

Professional Sports Facilities. Supports reintroduction and passage of Sen. Moynihan's proposed bill ("The Stop tax Exempt Arena Debt Issuance Act") to end Federal tax subsidy for professional sports facilities.

19. Waste Disposal

Illegal Dumping and Littering of Waste. Supports legislation to allow raising of fines for illegal dumping and to enforce illegal dumping and littering laws and stricter enforcement of environmental laws.

20. Water and Sewer Systems

A. Water Quality Measurements. Supports the development and standardization of methods for the measurement of contaminants in storm waters and waters that feed the Chesapeake Bay.

B. Water Quality Improvement. Supports stabilization of the Virginia Water Quality Improvement Fund Act to permit qualifying localities to receive up to 50 percent of the local costs to design, test, and install biological nutrient removal technologies at waste water treatment facilities.

C. Nutrient Reduction. Encourages the Commonwealth to consider methods in addition to point source control to achieve identified nutrient reduction goals.

Coming Up!

June 1st Meeting Urban Design Program Election of Officers

August 20-23 - Federation booth at the
Arlington County Fair

October 23 - Neighborhood Day



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Briefs

Annual Open House and Heritage Festival at Potomac Overlook Regional Park - May 2

Family fun on a "Celebrating Our Land" theme, featuring photographic displays, food, music, clowns, the Taylor Elementary School Maypole Dancers, cloggers, face painting, a dunk tank, bands and hikes through the woods with a naturalist. End of Marcey Road, off Military Road, in North Arlington. Call 528-5406 for more information. Free admission.

Columbia Pike Blues Festival - May 8

CPRO is sponsoring a Blues Festival and family fun day at Patrick Henry School beginning at noon on May 6th. Five blues acts including Saffire, the Uppity Blues Women, the Hardway Connection, Tom Larsen Band, Alison Radcliffe and David Jackson the Moonlighters will provide lots of authentic blues music. Arlington's finest will be there to register your bicycle, so bring it along. Information 892-2776.

23rd Street Wins Supreme Court Hearing

The Virginia Supreme Court has agreed to hear the appeal of the group of 23rd Street N. residents who are opposing an infill development in their neighborhood. They are now supported by Arlington County, since the residents are appealing a Circuit Court finding that the Board of Zoning Appeals had no authority to make rulings for such properties.

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