



**2020-2021 MCC Governing Board
Regular Meeting**

January 27, 2021 *virtual

ZOOM meeting ID: 864 350 08668 Password: 874737

MINUTES

Board Members present: Raj Mehra; Terri Markwart; Maria Foderaro-Guertin; Suzanne Le Menestrel; Melanie Sletten; Ivy Chen; Tyler Jensen; Barbara Zamora-Appel; Bill Glikbarg; Carla Post; Carole Herrick

MCC Staff present: George Sachs, Executive Director; Ashok Karra, Comptroller; Mike Fisher; Sabrina Anwah; Holly Novak; Catherine Nesbitt; Jennifer Garrett

Guests: Leila Gordon (Reston Community Center); Camila Alfonzo Meza (Supervisor Foust's office); Jen Wormser (MPA); Deb Bissen (MPA)

CONVENE MEETING

The following motion by Chair Le Menestrel was spoken aloud to duly convene this meeting electronically:

Motion for Electronic Meeting

On 14 April 2020, the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County issued an emergency ordinance pursuant to VA Code Section 15.2-1413. The ordinance permits county boards, including this board, to conduct fully remote meetings in order to continue the organization's essential services, so long as the following conditions are met:

(1) adequate notice is provided to the public and county; (2) the public is given a means to access the remote meeting; and (3) the purpose for the meeting is given in that notice, and that purpose serves to continue our essential services.

I believe those requirements have been satisfied. I therefore move that this board approve that the proposed agenda items are necessary to assure continuity of MCC's services, and that we are unable to meet in person per usual procedures due to the continuing state of emergency.

This meeting of the Governing Board of McLean Community Center was thus convened on January 27, 2021 at 7:31 p.m. using ZOOM meeting technology, which enabled Board members, MCC staff, and the public to participate virtually.

ADOPT AGENDA

No changes were requested to the proposed Agenda. The Agenda was adopted by acclamation.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Deb Bissen (MPA): Director of Communications and Public Affairs at MPA. It's nice to see you all! Hopefully, you've had a chance to read the MPA report (distributed in advance). Two current exhibitions (both were reviewed by a DC arts community publication: *East City Art*). *The Washington Post* reviewer will visit the exhibitions this week. MPA staff is working remotely but do make appointments available for people to make a reservation to see the Emerson Gallery. Atrium Gallery is open to the public whenever MCC building is open. Both exhibitions continue through February 20; also available online.

Jen Wormser (MPA): ArtReach is continuing to thrive and expand virtually during this time; partnering with Service Source. Best Buddies program at McLean H.S. received art bags; MPA will continue to reach out to Langley H.S. next month! It is wonderful to reach out to these younger kids when schools are virtual – to offer a way for kids to socialize and enjoy a fun activity online! MPA's Director of ArtReach has really enjoyed working with the Best Buddies kids. MCC's MLK activities are published in MPA newsletter and social media posts. MPA appreciates the partnership, so please share information about MCC activities and events. MPA will help to promote summer camps (together with MCC) as well. New classes began this week in DuVal Studio (in-person for adults (safe environment with plenty of space to spread out); those more comfortable doing things online can sign-up for virtual classes. We are happy to provide art classes to the community again – it's a nice way for people to have an activity that they enjoy.



Question: How many students did you have bags for in the Best Buddies? Have you gotten any feedback from those families? Art is a way that will reach Category A and Category B students. I'm very excited to hear this and to continue going forward (not just because of COVID-19) in the spring and fall. Families with special needs children are looking for as many opportunities to be with everyone. The feedback from families has been terrific! MPA was featured in Best Buddies nationally – it was one of the best things that the program has done! 43 students at McLean H.S. participated and received art bags. Langley hasn't finished their numbers, but it will probably be about the same number. Ms. Wormser is working with the president of the club to target March. We hope to continue to expand to other Best Buddies in the area because there was such a success! We want to continue the program to other schools. The paint party was fantastic – the kids loved it and everyone had a wonderful time. **Thank you to MCC Governing Board for giving MPA the idea to launch something like this in the community – it was a real success!** MPA spoke with the national director for the DC area and when it is safe and things start to open back up, they will bring kids into MCC for these paint parties.

Opinions expressed: The pictures were fantastic! We thank Board member Terri Markwart for pushing forward this idea for MPA. Kids with disabilities are struggling so much more than others. So, if there is a way MCC or MPA can do anything more, that's great.

APPROVE MINUTES: DECEMBER 9, 2020 REGULAR MEETING

Minutes of the December 9, 2020 board meeting were distributed for review. No changes were requested.

MOTION: To approve Minutes of the December 9, 2020 Governing Board meeting (which was convened virtually on ZOOM). **Unanimously approved.**

BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Chair Le Menestrel welcomed Leila Gordon, Executive Director of Reston Community Center, which is considered a “sister” organization to MCC, with many similarities. Ms. Gordon has been RCC Executive Director since 2008. RCC celebrated their 40th anniversary last year. Ms. Gordon will explain RCC's experiences this past year... how their team has pivoted... and sharing any lessons learned. The reason for these “board development” segments is to help MCC Governing Board think about how to strategize and plan for the future, and to understand how things have changed. Since life likely won't go back to exactly the way it was before COVID-19, it would be great to hear what RCC has learned from this experience thus far.

Remarks by Leila Gordon (recorded here verbatim; summary points are shown in bold type):

Thank you, Suzanne. It's a pleasure to spend some time with all of you tonight. George and I talk frequently and share notes; so, there are no surprises about what I will share about what RCC has done since almost one year ago, when facilities were closed. Like all of you, RCC Board's first concerns were centered around how to plan fiscally to “ride out” what was going to be a really significant drop in achieving revenue performance from programs and services. We spent a great deal of time examining our resources (very glad to have had reserves to support RCC, if needed). Fortunately, the tax base for Reston has not suffered as dramatically as it might have (proximity to DC has served Fairfax County's tax base quite well). Reston has about a 50/50 split between residential and commercial property tax base. MCC's tax base relies considerably more on the residential side of that equation. **The main fiscal impact from COVID-19 has been: 1. in the loss of fees from programs and services; and 2. since RCC derives a significant portion of tax revenue from the commercial base, in FY22 we will have a more substantive hit on that base than on the residential side. So far, because Tysons/Reston has been rapidly developing in the past 3-5 years, we have seen a ramp-up in revenue from taxes. What this will affect is basically a kind of 'pause' as people regroup and figure out what the future holds – particularly in terms of office and mixed-use retail environments.**

RCC's first order of business was to cope with the financial realities and plan ahead for the future. They established some targets for revenue achievement based on ‘best guess.’ Our staff, like at MCC, for the first several weeks were consumed with managing refunds (RCC lost close to \$400K in summer camp revenue in 2020). It was a dramatic period of

processing refund requests! RCC has four lines of business: aquatics; arts & events; leisure & learning; facility rentals. All took substantial hits; but we dropped about 98% of participation and revenue performance from the professional touring artist series in the theater. She expects that MCC experienced similar kind of devastation for The Alden. In standard programming delivery, RCC made a decision very early to pivot to delivering as much virtual content as possible. She gave kudos to the creativity and ingeniousness of The Alden Drive-thru drama experiment! RCC is very proud of the very creative effort of MCC Performing Arts staff team, in coming up with something phenomenally creative and clearly was well-received by the community. In late summer, RCC offered outdoor summer concerts (tentatively resuming in-person outdoor program delivery environment). By then, the summer period had nine concerts in August in a variety of locations. People were so starved for some kind of communal experience that they were very compliant (mask-wearing, social distancing, 10-foot distance between artist and audience areas). We anticipated that people might not be compliant – but they were willing to do almost anything just to hear live music, and to be outdoors and among other people.

RCC buildings reopened on July 6; Governor Northam's orders have allowed for fitness and aquatics programming to go on under very strict guidelines. Those program offerings have been extremely popular. RCC vastly reduced capacities in those offerings, but they are filled. **“Drop-in” programs are no longer offered; they developed a “pass” sales system and options. Reservation time slot (free); for each usage, the swipe debits the pass for that use.** RCC will probably keep such structure well into the future because it has permitted more predictability for people to want to use the ceramics studio or swim in a lap lane. People have said that they really appreciate knowing there is a cap on the number of people using the pool lap lane and they have certainty that they will be swimming in a comfortable situation.

RCC intended to **launch a YouTube channel** with 40th anniversary (6 short films were created). But now they have many families and classes and program presentations – we will keep using that channel to have ‘evergreen’ and a whole array of programs on it so that people don't have to come to RCC to get a sense of what their content is.

Like every Fairfax County agency, RCC had to adapt to numerous changes in policies, procedures, leave options for employees, training for all employees, strategies for maintaining a safe work environment (plexiglass barriers). All those things have been a real adventure on some weeks... and on other weeks, it has been just heartbreaking. **Community centers are places where you want people to come in, relax, feel welcome, develop friendships and interactions – yet those are completely impossible in the context of COVID-19.** We stopped printing the theater brochure and Program Guide – because things were changing so fast. RCC designed all publications in virtual formats and did very small print runs so that there would be a handful at the two facilities for people to look at, or if they wanted to pick-up, in a marketing context.

We hope to have a closer-to-normal summer camp season – maintain and monitor capacities until confident that they can be increased. We anticipate a period of dealing with ‘wait-list’ demand; we hear every day from families who looking for options and trying to get their kids out of the house. **We will see a lot of pent-up demand in Summer/Fall if the vaccinations campaigns are successful and this pandemic gets under greater control.** If we continue to have to grapple with COVID-19 much longer, RCC will have to revisit their financial assumptions and continue to rely on reserves and on the tax base to help weather the complete loss of revenue from fees. RCC has had some rentals (meetings and cluster associations). When the virus heated back up in fall and directive from Gov. Northam, RCC stopped accepting social rental requests (which is a significant part of RCC's facility rental service to the community). It's been a year RCC can have “lived through” if we get to the fall and can start achieving their normal program revenue. But if RCC goes through many more months beyond the fall, and normalize operations, they will be able to slide back gently to a standard structure. RCC's fiscal policy is to recover not more than 25% of their Operating budget from direct fee payments. People look at me like I'm crazy in normal years. But when you lose all your revenue from fees (if you're not making more than 15-18% of your costs in those fees) you are not nearly as harmed by their total loss as it would have otherwise been. In a weird way, it's been a silver lining: because our community is very grateful for what RCC has been providing to them now. **Because RCC is**

keeping fees low and keeping as much content as can be offered free or at minimal fee levels... people have really grown appreciative of the tax district model of funding for the programs and services that RCC does. Lastly, we looked for every opportunity to continue program sponsorships with non-profit organizations in Reston. RCC had long conversations with those organizations about how they could... event sponsorship – \$10K for a 5K run – transform it into a virtual format for their event. Rather than ‘pull’ the sponsorship, RCC left it in place and documented the non-profit organization’s transition. The marketing benefit is all the same; RCC continued the marketing benefit derived from the sponsorship. Local community-based non-profits have very little cushion and reserves; they really depend on (not just fees or what people might pay for what they are offering) annual fund-raising events that are critical to their bottom line. Those fund-raising events just disappeared (could not happen) during COVID-19. **Finding creative ways to sponsor virtual and online events and keep their community partners whole was a huge priority for RCC Board. It was a very important way to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the community.** RCC is connected with Fairfax County “Opportunity Neighborhood” initiative (targets under-resourced neighborhoods in Reston; subsidized housing residents and families with substantially less economic means). Those areas were hardest hit by the pandemic (loss of income; loss of jobs; calamities resulting from schools being closed). RCC delivered programming bags; delivered food and supplies (partnering with Cornerstone) to those areas where folks were really hurting.

This is summary of what RCC did and it may sound familiar to you. **Similar to the 2008 huge recession, the Reston community has really seen the value of this kind of model of community-building and content/service provision. Everyone contributes a little bit... and you create the resource structure that the tax districts allow for – you are so much better situated and prepared for a real catastrophic event like COVID-19 or an economic downturn... to continue those supports and continue the kind of ‘invisible network’ that holds a community together in a crisis.** It has been challenging; but it’s also been very rewarding.

Q&A: *Chair Le Menestrel thanked Ms. Gordon for her remarks and noted that all RCC classes are filled!

Question: I work for Leidos in Reston so I’m quite familiar with RCC; Leidos partners with Cornerstones. Reston’s community premise is “work-play-live:” the community is really built on what you do for all the inhabitants (that motto is the back-bone of the community.)

Regarding the two events coming up: Regina Carter performance and Founder’s Day event for Bob Simon. How are you doing those safely? The contract rider for Regina Carter (performance in Center Stage) has elaborate COVID-19 protocols that RCC will follow. RCC reduced the capacity of Center Stage to 30% (Governor Northam’s current directive) including the audience + performers + technical staff. It is an intimate performance although it will be “filled” because everyone will be 6-feet apart from each other. Total = 50 seats for the performance. Vinyl banner will cordon-off seats to preserve distance. No intermission – they will control pace of people entering and leaving the house (no entrance line or bunching up). It feels weird at first (very strange to be in a theater with only 30% occupancy!); but [a live performance] is so much better than watching a filmed performance. RCC is welcoming any artists who can travel to Reston and will align with COVID-19 safety protocols. Regina Carter will be the first live performance since December 2020. “Founders Day” event (Lake Anne concerts last August 2020 had taped 6-foot circles; directional way-finding on the brickscape; 3-4 different locations) – hopefully by April 2021 it may be feasible to hold an outdoor event. It depends on the virus and the current VA state requirements for outdoor programming - making sure that RCC will be able to control enough to enforce those protocols.

Question: Regarding reducing your footprint of printed materials – MCC board and staff has talked a lot about MCC’s Program Guide and how COVID-19 is changing everyone’s uses of paper. How do you see COVID-19 impacting future plans for producing printed materials? It’s a great question. We keep getting feedback from people who are RCC mainliners (participate in everything!) that they miss the physical Program Guide because they refer to it often (older adults). They have had to acclimate to so much during COVID-19 (ZOOM; Facetime; all the virtual ways they’ve had to connect) – there is a kind of yearning for what used to be ‘normal’ A lot of research and literature suggests that, for recreation and arts programming, printed products are relied on to an extent you wouldn’t imagine. We are too close to it; we are too familiar with what we are producing to know what our audience is expecting or anticipating. It may be that what we can do on a permanent basis is condense descriptions, text, pages. We will have to see how it goes; it’s difficult to measure. We filled everything we are offering – but the

capacity is only 8 people (that would normally be 25 people)! We will go back to printing a Program Guide in the fall. It's also a marketing tool to get [RCC visibility] into the addresses of 25,000 Reston households. It helps people see: Wow! What's this? As the community is growing with more and more new residents, that will be increasingly important to RCC. I don't know if we will be able to permanently reduce our printing. Truthfully – you still have to create, design it... and push it out in all these other different arenas to get people to link back to it on your website – so the savings are really just in print run costs and postage. You might think that if you stop printing 25,000 Program Guides three times a year – that's got to be a lot of money. But it turns out that we save only about \$30K; which is not as much as we expected to save. The printed Program Guide has always been justified because it is something that the public wants (we always run out of them; they have appeal). To be honest, I'm not sure what the long-term impact of COVID-19 is going to be... just because we keep hearing so much from people who can't wait to go back to the way things were.

Question from Ms. Gordon: Our RCC staff is tired of working from home! Are all of you finding it challenging to be away from your worksites... or places you used to go? She lives in DC and commutes to Reston every day – it has been beautiful!

Various opinions expressed: Reston got "Best Cities" award for being the best places for teleworking... Frankly, I am tired of being at home! ... Having young kids at home makes it more challenging. But I don't miss the commute to DC... I don't mind just getting out of bed and going to work; but at the same time, I like to walk and I miss it; so I'm ready to go back.

Chair Le Menestrel and Mr. Sachs thanked Ms. Gordon for attending and sharing her insights.

CHAIR'S REPORT / EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

*Future Board Development guests: March – Rob Jackson (Pres.-McLean Citizens Association); Amy Swaak (Pres. McLean Community Foundation) in April. Hopefully, this has been interesting for everyone to hear from other community partners.

*Governing Board election: All board members are encouraged to share with their networks the information about the Governing Board election; Candidate packets are now available for pick-up at the front desk. The electronic public interest card is available to forward to people or post on social media networks. We encourage everyone on the board to do so.

**Chair Le Menestrel specifically requested for these Minutes*: Commending Sabrina Anwah and the PIO team for excellent media coverage about MCC! It has been great to receive the emails from Sabrina and to see and all the work the PIO office is doing. MCC social Media is receiving a lot of traffic – it has been great!

*Executive Director search process: The Executive Committee, working with George, has started to review candidates for the position and individuals will be selected for the first round of interviews. Following that, three finalists will be selected for the full board and staff to meet with. Things are moving fast!

*Virtual staff/Board gathering in January: perhaps in March ("March Madness" or St. Patrick's Day). Any suggestions or thoughts? We normally have a gathering with MCC staff at Christmas. Maybe something could be held outside...

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Internal Alignment: Andrew Carter is now OFC General Manager! OFC is short-staffed but we are working on filling Andrew's former position and another vacancy in the After-School program. Cydnie Davis is the new part-time assistant registrar; she is very helpful and is learning the registration system. MCC and OFC interior areas and furnishings received Purifi sanitation treatment on January 20. The sanitation treatment is effective for 60-90 days.

Approx. 135 applications for the Executive Director position came in. Fairfax County vetted and forwarded 50 applications for the Interview Panel to review and narrow-down by Wednesday, February 3. Executive Committee is reviewing those applications, grading them and determining if we can narrow-down to bring in some candidates for interviews.

Question: Why narrowing it down to just three people? I was under the impression they would first narrow-down to 10 and then down to 3.

Clarification by Mr. Sachs: It could even be only one person; it depends on the talent that comes through. If there is a leader of the pack that is way out in front of everybody, then we will look at that person. Three [top candidates] is an arbitrary number. We really won't know if we have a really close group of "top people" OR... if we need more of a broad, complete board/staff determination for the 'right-fit' person. So, it may perhaps narrow-down to 6... or 5... or so.

External Alignment: 33 classes were held in December; TOTAL = 110 people attending. OFC Learning Connection continued with five participants. Virtual Trivia = 12 participants.

*Seven decorated homes participated in “Light Up McLean” (446 votes) – people gave wonderful comments. “It brought us great joy to see so many neighbors driving by the house listening to our music and enjoying seeing our dancing lights.”

People enjoyed ‘touring McLean’ to look at the holiday light contest – it was a perfect socially-distant family activity for COVID-19. It gave families something fun to do to celebrate the holiday. **Congratulations to MCC staff for developing this new program quickly; it will grow in the future because it met a significant need in the community.**

*MLK offerings: virtual book discussion about Marion Anderson biography; podcast series discussion group on “Seeing White”; community service project “Our Beloved Community” – uniting through stories. The board is encouraged to register to participate as a storyteller (something to share); registration for collecting stories runs February 5 thru April 30.

*Friday, January 22 – American Red Cross used MCC Community Hall for a blood drive – they received about 40 pints from scheduled donors between 1:30 to 6:30 p.m. It was arranged by Marshall High School’s National Honor Society’s blood drive team. They were very appreciative of Jonathan Davis’ help in facilitating the logistics. It worked out well: very well-scheduled, well-organized and well-staffed.

Question: Are there any plans to do it more often? They really want blood from people who have had COVID-19 (plasma donations).

Clarification by Mr. Sachs: That’s a different process; plasma donations require a longer stay. This was a community service rental - \$1.00 rental to Marshall High School group. We are open to more blood drives and whomever wants to organize it. It was initiated by Marshall High School and they were looking for a facility to hold it.

Clarification by Vice-Chair Post: My company (Leidos) is a strategic partner with Red Cross, which does four blood drives per year. It’s been a challenge because so many sites have closed down; and yet so many people want to help by giving blood. All sites book-up very fast (Power Red; regular blood).

ACTION ITEM: Ms. Post will gladly reach out to national POC at the Red Cross to see if MCC could host something regularly (up to four per year). Red Cross is great. They test donors for COVID-19 antibodies – so if you give blood, you find out within a couple of days if you have antibodies. And if you give blood right now, you are entered to receive tickets to the Super Bowl!

Question: Could MCC serve as a COVID-19 vaccination site? Did we ever receive a response back about that?

County-wide it is not a matter of not having enough vaccination sites; it’s a matter of control of vaccine supply. All community centers have offered availability of space; the county is aware of MCC’s willingness (but no plans yet).

Financial Stewardship: We are preparing the mid-year budget comparison report for FY20-FY21 comparison, to be presented at the next Finance Committee meeting on February 16. We are also preparing Q3 Adjustments for FY21 which are due to Fairfax Co. on February 12.

PROGRAMS AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Comment from Chair Foderaro-Guertin: The MLK events are excellent! The author of the “Seeing White” podcast series tweeted MCC’s event and that has resulted in people from across the country participating to join the conversation!

Timing/Duration of OFC Learning Connection:

Question: Will OFC Learning Connection continue through February until students go back? Kids are going back to school in mid-March. FCPS teachers who had scheduled appointments for the vaccine through INOVA – those appointments were cancelled.

Clarification by staff: Mid-February is the likely date for in-person FCPS resuming. We have committed to continuing OFC Learning Connection through end of February in case families still need it. **We are also trying to evaluate whether families will be interested in the after-school program once in-person school resumes. If there is interest, then OFC will switch back to after-school program. But if we can’t gauge the interest, it might be safer to continue offering OFC Learning Connection for the remainder of the year in order to provide that as an alternative for families** [if they don’t feel comfortable returning to in-person learning]. So, while the long-term plans are up-in-the-air, OFC Learning Connection will continue through February. *T.B.D.*



*Santa in a Snow Globe went over very well! The community was very appreciative of that opportunity.

Comments by Catherine Nesbitt: BeFit McLean went well – topics were “Science of Happiness”; how to be resilient in these times; nutrition information by Kristin McGill at Giant Food. Jeff Virchow was the host; he did a dance lesson! This event demonstrated the **success of MCC’s after-event residual marketing: because we have been putting the virtual events on MCC website with links to the YouTube channel, Holiday Craft show has now had 550 participants since the show concluded in early December. There has been much continuing after-event traffic (triple the amount of people who attended McLean Uncorked events). Similar on PetFest: a lot of views after the event itself. This means that people are going back to look... word-of-mouth spreads as people refer others to view things on MCC website. This is encouraging. Despite the fact that we are all tired of ZOOM, the public is still participating virtually!**

Communications: PIO Sabrina Anwah presented a great overview of all the various platforms MCC is using to get the word out on activities and events. Sabrina is doing a great job! All in the PIO office are fantastic!

Discussion about McLean Day: *Question: What is the current plan?*

Mr. Sachs is narrowing the considerations: we are having difficulty finding locations (local churches; schools) that would be a ‘destination.’ It is not working out; and it is not cohesive with CDC guidelines on social gathering situations. The plan is to hold a drive-thru type of event on-site at MCC. We will also extend McLean Day... to “McLean Days”: beginning in mid-March through mid-May. We will try to offer things that are community-related: McLean Earth Day (Saturday, April 17) will coincide with Open Voting by offering a “drive-thru” option: encouraging people to come to something on-site and vote when they arrive. McLean Day will have some fun things on the drive-thru route... entertainers or give-aways of cotton candy and bags (carnival-style). MCC staff is working on it.

Chair Foderaro-Guertin reminded everyone to actively promote MCC events on social media and local neighborhood ListServes.

McLean Uncorked 3 is coming up soon! The host is Julie Waters; speaker/presenter is John Coleman from Balducci’s (he does all wine, cheese and specialty item purchasing at Balducci’s). The wine is available now; cheese platter + special jams will be available next week (\$55 for four wines; cheese platter is \$25). Valentine’s Day “dinner for two” is posted on Balducci’s website a link on MCC website: many of those wines will be pairing with that Valentine’s Day meal. It is Super Bowl Sunday – so this is a “pre-game opportunity”! And at a great price - it will be lots of fun!

Opinions expressed: Similar to the Best Buddies program, I love pairing with the wine stores and restaurants. **Post-COVID-19, something I would love to see MCC accomplish is more collaboration with local businesses... because that creates “community.” I love the idea that MCC is taking our network of people and our outreach ability and pumping-up the local business community. That’s awesome and is exactly what we should be doing.**

AD HOC COVID-19 RESPONSE COMMITTEE There was no meeting this month.

CAPITAL FACILITIES COMMITTEE There was no meeting this month. **NEXT MEETING:** Thursday, February 4

FINANCE COMMITTEE January 19 meeting was cancelled (no current business). **NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday, February 16

ELECTIONS & NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

ENC has been the most active committee! Thank you to Sabrina Anwah and Holly Novak –ads and public notices have gone out. Thus far, we have three adult candidates and one youth (McLean H.S.). Chair Markwart will contact those folks this weekend. We want to make it more of a welcoming process so that if candidates have any questions, they can be answered. Thanks to Bill Glikbarg’s suggestion, we have advertised an option for individuals to make an appointment to have the Candidate packet brought out to them in the MCC parking lot if they are uncomfortable coming inside the building.

Link for requesting ballots for your household will be available when Open Voting begins. It has been tested and it works!

Youth election: Tyler Jensen and Ivy Chen worked together to create an awesome infographic for the Youth election! Youth candidates have different age requirement; different boundaries; different term of service. They reached out to their respective high schools to receive SGA guidelines. Ivy and Tyler came up with excellent guidance for the youth candidates based on their experience last year. We also added a Parental/Student Acknowledgement form; MCC has not had something like this prior. Based on a sample from OFC field trips, it has a substantive description of the role of youth serving on MCC board. Ms. Zamora-Appel suggested: 1. to inform parents that adults and/or local press/media may reach out to their youth while a candidate running for MCC Governing Board; and Ms. Markwart included: 2. that their child could be FOIA-ed if elected, and it is recommended to create a unique email address for campaigning and MCC Governing Board business. We also added a recommendation on the Adult FAQ's to create a unique e-mail for Governing Board business. This information was realized after-the-fact (and it wasn't a big deal). But we want the public to know about these things up-front in case it is an issue for them.

Adult election: Barbara Zamora-Appel and Maria Foderaro-Guertin came up with an excellent "FAQ's" document of practical guidelines, rules, and tips for campaign activity by the adult candidates. These are wise changes that have been added this year to the campaigning information.

On February 8, ENC will discuss possible "drive-thru" voting in MCC parking lot at the Earth Day and McLean Day events.

Discussion about requirement of 10 signatures on the Candidate Petition:

Questions: The rules for candidates currently state that you must get signatures of 10 sponsors in Small District 1A-Dranesville; in COVID-19, that is hard to do. Should we be relaxing that requirement? That's a great point - can the signatures be submitted electronically?

Clarification by Chair Markwart: If it's actually in the MOU – that means we can't touch it.

Clarification by Mr. Sachs: Actually NO – it is similar to the verification that we require people to provide when they cast their votes by absentee method: we must have a way of verifying their address. The signature is an 'Affidavit' function; we need a signature to match the name/signature and address to verify peoples' location [as qualification to cast a ballot].

Opinions expressed: But the way the signature requirement is currently structured where ten individuals put their name on a form and sign it is almost impossible in COVID-19 conditions. Unless we are more flexible, candidates will not be able to obtain ten physical signatures.

Comment by Chair Markwart: If it's just in the "ENC Policies and Procedures", that we could amend. Everything has already gone out to the public; but I don't disagree. I suppose you could leave it in a mailbox for them to sign. Obviously, we are not trying to make this hard.

Question: It is a big 'gating' issue. Could electronic signatures be done – scan the form to someone; then they scan their signature and e-mail it back? I realize that's a lot of work. 1. This not in the MOU. 2. If the individual is a resident of Small District 1A-Dranesville, why do they need to get sponsoring signatures? And WHY do they need 10 signatures? Why would we require ANY signatures?

CLARIFICATION: The MOU has a "Revision Approved by the Board of Supervisors on January 22, 2007. Under 3-c, it says, "Petitions are required to bear no less than the names of ten(10) qualified petitioners."

Comment by Ms. Novak: If I may – the whole point is that this election process is all about engagement with the community. And that begins, essentially, at the Candidate process and carries all the way through why we do things as we do. It isn't a virtual process – someone sitting at their desk who happens to live in an outlying area can't just say, "Hey, I want to run for the MCC Governing Board" and have no connection to either ever coming inside this building or being with people. So, I think the processes reveal our philosophy of 'engagement.' I agree that it is a difficulty, but it's not impossible [to get 10 signatures] – we are all finding ways to interact with folks.

Opinion expressed: Following up on that, I still think we ought to reduce it from 10 signatures to something more practical in the situation of COVID-19. Maybe cut it in half or something.

Opinion expressed: Well, you could just send out 10 copies of the form to 10 different people; or leave it in their mailbox and you come by later to pick it up. It's not impossible; you can absolutely get signatures. This is all about engaging with the community and the people whom you are hoping to receive their support.

Opinions expressed: I just think we want to make things practical in the conditions of COVID-19; and if this is a known gating issue for candidates... only three people have picked up Candidate packets so far, correct?

Clarification by Ms. Novak: I've talked to all of them personally as they came in. They have all said: 'O.K.; no resistance to it.

Comment by Chair Markwart: If somebody hasn't turned-in their packet, I will ask them if it's because that is an issue. One reason for the requirement was that a student was disqualified two years ago - who returned their petition the day before, but one of the signatures wasn't in the Dranesville district; so, they had to be disqualified. It is in the ENC Policies & Procedures; but not in the MOU -which means we could have indeed voted to waive the requirement to get 10 signatures.

Question by Chair Le Menestrel: *But we will accept people turning in 10 separate petitions each with one signature, correct – and that wouldn't be an issue (they could do that). That seems like a good solution.*

Opinion expressed: Well, we need to make it very clear. MCC website shows that nothing has changed; it still reflects 'old' procedures. If we allow for these workarounds, we must find a way to communicate this to the candidates.

ACTION ITEM: ENC Chair Markwart will follow-up with each candidate to ask if they are comfortable with the process; if not, we will work with them. If it is an ENC "Policies & Procedures" issue, we would need to vote for a one-year waiver or some sort of an *ad hoc* different method as an alternative.

Clarification by Mike Fisher: This is similar to what is called "reasonable accommodations" under ADA: it would be a "reasonable accommodation" to adjust the requirement for obtaining signatures (phrased this way): "For anyone needing reasonable accommodations with their signatures, we can work with you to provide an alternative option that is more conducive to the COVID-19 situation."

Opinion expressed: It's not just a matter of picking up the phone and calling the people who have picked up a Candidate Packet. We need to also put this on the website for people who are looking there; we need to make it very clear.

Opinion expressed: This is an issue for the Fairfax County attorney – it's a county election: any time you run for office you have to get so many signatures of supporters (standard operating procedure). I don't see getting 10 signatures as a big deal; but it's a more than a simple notion that 'we can just change this.' MCC is a Fairfax County agency, under county rules. We need to talk to county authorities before we would do any such change.

Question: *If the county attorney says that we are a public election and we need to get some signatures...but for clarification: are five signatures enough? Are seven signatures enough?*

ACTION ITEM: There is a standard that MCC falls under – MCC just can't arbitrarily change or make the processes different. Mr. Sachs will reach out to Fairfax County Election Board or county attorney to get an answer on the signature procedure.

Also, we are addressing the situation this year during COVID-19 by the following:

1. talking to people individually when they come in to pick-up a Candidate packet, to explain the process; and
2. they receive a follow-up phone call from ENC Chair Markwart to address any questions.

Chair Le Menestrel thanked Ms. Herrick for bringing up the important point about checking with the county about our processes.

Chair Markwart noted: It's important and we need to talk about these things.

OLD / NEW BUSINESS *Such discussion is permitted in the context of COVID-19 emergency.

Nothing else was mentioned as a topic for discussion this evening.

ADJOURNMENT With no further business, Chair Le Menestrel adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted – Holly Novak, Executive Assistant to the Governing Board