

McLean Community Center
2018-2019 Governing Board
Regular Meeting
October 24, 2018

MINUTES

- Board Members Present:** Paul Kohlenberger, Board Chair; Desi Woltman; Julie Waters; Elizabeth John; Carole Herrick; Lauren Herzberg; Kat Kehoe; Terri Markwart; Raj Mehra; Alicia Plerhoples
- Board Members Absent:** Megan Markwart
- Staff Members Present:** George Sachs, Executive Director; Ashok Karra, Comptroller; Holly Novak; Jennifer Garrett, Technical Director
- Guests:** Daniele Paul; Jane Edmondson, Supervisor Foust's office

CONVENE MEETING

Ms. Woltman convened the meeting of the 2018-2019 Governing Board of the McLean Community Center (MCC) on October 24, 2018 at 7:35 p.m.

ADOPT AGENDA

The Agenda for the meeting was adopted as written.

PUBLIC COMMENT **Two people attended and introduced themselves.*

Daniele Paul (McLean resident; horse enthusiast) - she appreciates McLean being a very peaceful place. She now lives in McLean House and observed: "There are very rich people around here." Ms. Paul stated that she always tries to listen to what MCC Board is talking about.

Jane Edmondson – Supervisor Foust's office.

APPROVE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 26, 2018 GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

Mr. Kohlenberger requested that everyone review the Minutes of September 26, 2018, which was the Public Hearing on the FY20 Budget Proposal and Regular meeting. After an opportunity to bring up any questions, concerns or suggested edits, there was a motion to approve these Minutes; it was seconded.

MOTION: That the Board approve the Minutes of the Governing Board Regular Meeting on September 26, 2018. **Approved unanimously.**

APPROVE FY20 BUDGET PROPOSAL TO BE PRESENTED TO FAIRFAX COUNTY

Having received public comment over the past six weeks, the Board is now moving forward to approve the DRAFT FY20 Budget proposal. There have been no changes since the last Board meeting; and no public input. The material is exactly what was shared previously. Mr. Kohlenberger thanked everyone for their diligent work – both Board members and staff. There was a motion to approve the FY20 budget; it was seconded.

MOTION: That the Governing Board approve the draft MCC FY20 Budget Proposal, as presented at the Public Hearing on September 26, 2018, and direct staff to submit the final draft of the board-approved budget proposal to Fairfax County on or before October 31, 2018. **Approved unanimously.**

CHAIR'S REPORT / EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee met on October 22, to discuss some personnel issues, review a new org chart of MCC staff, and discuss projects at the Old Firehouse.

Old Firehouse:

1. Landscaping project: Friends and MCF have approved \$30K, targeted for: FY19 landscaping; historical interior improvements in the Old Firehouse building; planters along Chain Bridge Road; pavers on west side of building; enclosure for the trash area. The board is very grateful for this excellent community support.

Question from Jane Edmondson: Did you resolve the property line? Is Montgomery going to do a land survey?

The question of the property line is not resolved. Montgomery's development plan had shown removal of those trees in the back of the building; so they, in good faith, feel as though they own that area.

Question from Jane Edmondson: Is nothing being done on the parking lot side of Giant because they will not allow that?

They will not - unless and until MCC re-routes water drainage from the 1970's section of the roof. Their position is that they are reluctant to remediate that area when any new plantings would be affected by the poor drainage and be lost. Montgomery did commit to putting in additional plantings should it be found that they are in fact, the owners. They will not allow the extension of the patio; but they will complete the pedestrian walkway that MCC is constructing on their end.

2. Historical signage: Ms. Herrick submitted to Fairfax County verbiage for historical commemorative signage on the exterior of the Old Firehouse. The county committee will meet in early November to review the proposed nomenclature.

3. Refurbishment of the flag pole: an electric line to light the pole will be installed.

Booking policy and facilities rental prices: The Executive Committee reviewed a DRAFT revision to the booking policy. Several changes are proposed, mostly relating to changing categories that had been reviewed by the Program Committee for The Alden Theatre (Category 5). Updates are required on this important policy document, which is timely as MCC re-opens for public usage in January 2019. As a point of context, the number of non-resident people using rooms at MCC is significant. Program Committee and Executive Committee will review the document together on November 26; all board members are requested and welcome to attend. The final document will be presented for consideration by the board on December 12.

ACTION ITEM: Mr. Kohlenberger requested that an annotated copy be prepared by staff and sent to Program and Executive Committees one week ahead of the 11/26 meeting.

Honorary naming of Alden Theatre balcony:

Returning to a previous discussion about honorary naming of rooms in the renovated MCC building, Ms. Kehoe requested recognition for Friends of MCC by naming the balcony of Alden Theatre in their honor. A plaque would be designed similar to other plaques in the building. The Executive Committee brings forward this motion now to the full board.

Clarification by staff: Timing is unclear. At the ribbon-cutting, Friends of MCC will be mentioned, but that won't be the official announcement or 'unveiling'. The plaque can't be completed and installed by Dec. 5.

Opinions expressed: Ms. Plerhoples mentioned that, from a communications viewpoint, it's ideal to have multiple, sequential "grand opening" events that can be highlighted in the media. Maximum visibility to the public will be gained by hosting several separate commemorative and honorary events in the months ahead.

MOTION: To approve a recommendation to name the balcony to recognize Friends of MCC.
Approved unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Internal Alignment:

Renovation Update:

- New office furniture was delivered and has been put in place.

- Staff will move back mid-November to the MCC building (assuming that we get occupancy by then.)
- Inspections are proceeding; some have been completed. Some things didn't pass; those inspections will have to be done again.
- There is a large continuous punch list of things will need to be done or re-done, to look better.
Mr. Sachs notices deficiencies immediately; staff should feel free to point things out as well.

Wednesday, Dec. 5 10 a.m. to 12 noon Ribbon-cutting Ceremony:

Mr. Sachs will mention the Alden Theatre balcony being named in honor of Friends of MCC on Dec. 5. All relevant people will be present and we should take that opportunity to highlight this honorary recognition. Staff is working on advance logistics for the event.

Saturday, Jan. 5 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Community Open House:

Staff is working together cohesively on how to best preview and showcase the capabilities of the new building. *Opinions expressed:* Some people may be away because school doesn't re-open from holiday break until Jan. 7. *Clarification by staff:* We were aware; however, the event couldn't be held earlier because the renovation completion timeline was uncertain. A later date would have negatively impacted the start of January MCC classes. That night (January 5) is also the opening of The Alden Theatre season.

External alignment:

Greater McLean Chamber of Commerce **Suits & Sneakers** took place at Turkey Run Park pavilion. MCC had an excellent booth display to showcase our programs and the renderings of the MCC renovation.

McLean 5K was well attended by over 500 people. Planning and staff implementation was excellent.

ArtFest was held on Sunday, Oct. 7, in beautiful autumn weather, which encouraged a high number of attendees. As an annual event, ArtFest has achieved strategic visibility in the community. Publicity was excellent. The MCC parking lot was opened to those attending; it worked out well. **Harvest Happenings** was held at St. Luke's School in September; 500 people attended. The event went very well. **Travel:** Majestic Hudson River Valley trip had 32 participants (four-day tour) - it was very successful. Fall in Amish Farmlands of Pennsylvania (38 people) was also a successful trip.

Financial stewardship:

Staff completed the **FY20 proposed budget** for submittal to Fairfax County OMB. Upon tonight's affirmative vote, it will be forwarded to the county. An **internal audit** by Fairfax County will be completed soon, culminating in a final comprehensive report. Staff will respond by making any necessary adjustments or changes to our internal procedures to comply with all recommendations.

Department 1Q Reports (July/August/September): Performing Arts; Instruction; Special Events; Youth; Teen Center **written reports were distributed* The quarterly view best captures changes and trends in every department (rather than month-to-month comparisons).

Question: FY17 Breakfast with Santa – why is “zero” revenue shown?

Breakfast with Santa was cancelled in FY17; we refunded everyone.

MCLEAN PROJECT FOR THE ARTS (MPA)

A written report was submitted by Deborah Bissen, MPA Director of Communications and Development.

There was strong public interest (10,000 estimated attendees) in ArtFest, which was held in early October at McLean Central Park. The Art Improv teen performance will be November 1 at 7:00 p.m. MPA is happy to be working with MCC staff (Danielle Van Hook). October 25 is kick-off of art & music concerts at 7:30 p.m. The report describes current exhibits, future exhibits, art classes, and several partnerships for outreach. MPA is excited to return to the DuVal Studio at MCC in January 2019.

ELECTIONS & NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

The committee is trying to make the annual election process easier for the public to understand and participate.

- There will be only two voting sites: MCC and Old Firehouse.
- Photos and Candidate Orientation meeting will be simplified: less paper; one person presenting.
- Meet-the-Candidates Reception – May 6, 2019 at MCC (hosted by Friends of MCC)
- The committee will continue to investigate online voting as a possible method for the future.

Absentee Ballots:

The focus is on improving the absentee voting package - which is unclear and confusing when people pick it up. About 10% of returned absentee ballots are in error. A new suggested approach is color-coordinating the ballots and envelopes: adult ballot and envelope and youth ballot and envelope will match-up by respective colors. This will also prevent people receiving a youth ballot mistakenly instead of an adult ballot. By following the colors, everything will be clear when looking at the pieces together. The verbiage will also be streamlined (too wordy; redundant in several places). Hopefully, all the pieces will be user-friendly when the person gets it home and the voting experience will be easier for people to understand and fulfill.

Election dates sequence:

The committee voted for Absentee Voting to begin on April 8, 2019; this is a shorter time frame than in 2018.

April 8 to May 19, 2019 = roughly 6 weeks (5 ½)

The MOU dictates exactly how many days in advance everything must be announced; then you count backwards to arrive at all corresponding process dates.

A vigorous discussion ensued about “pros and cons” of changing the length of Absentee Voting period:

- Local organizations will want candidates to speak; the proposed shorter time frame is concerning because, if the organization doesn't meet during that shorter time period, it will be harder to arrange speaking occasions. Then you lose an opportunity for those potential people to vote for you.
- Election fatigue: we risk the public 'tuning-out.' One board member encountered friends who said they had been intending to vote, but it was spanning too many weeks and they simply forgot about it. A shorter time span will better facilitate reaching out to friends and neighbors.
- But a longer campaign cycle would help busy candidates who travel or have demanding professional responsibilities; such folks need maximum time for campaigning.
- It should be more than just personal anecdotal stories for the board to change procedures; actual data, should be considered: Do votes come in more at the end and not the beginning of the voting cycle? There is a spike when voting first begins; then it goes dormant until last two or three weeks of the election cycle. The date sequence was changed arbitrarily a few years back, assuming more people would vote if it were a longer absentee voting period. It hasn't proven true.

Clarification by staff: The overall numbers were up last year; however, the weather on McLean Day 2018 was very bad. The number of absentee ballots was a little higher. The board examined this three years ago: there was no direct correlation between number of absentee voters and the amount of time given for the absentee voting period. Rather, it is highly dependent on who the candidates are.

- The election cycle is complicated, convoluted and fatiguing. It seems interminable to some. It may well discourage prospective candidates if they are averse to having to campaign for so many weeks.
- The workload on MCC staff is difficult: staff are out at the reception desk distributing and collecting the voting materials and being responsible for it during the entire election cycle.

Absentee Voting locations - MCC and The Old Firehouse:

Placing voting kiosks at McLean and Langley high schools is not possible. Langley HS administration does not accept, nor take responsibility for any external materials from outside groups. The committee decided against placing a kiosk at the Government Center. Being an election for the McLean Community Center Board, it is entirely appropriate to require people to physically show up to the Old Firehouse or the McLean Community Center buildings.

Summary of discussion:

Mr. Kohlenberger asked if the board would approve starting Absentee Voting on April 1 (which allows a full month of meetings of various community organizations) - as a friendly amendment to the motion.

As a procedural matter, Ms. Kehoe was given the opportunity to express her dissent.

Ms. Herrick presented tonight the original work of the Elections & Nominations Committee: that absentee voting begins on April 8, 2019. The committee spent hours getting these dates nailed down; it was not arbitrary. They double-checked that the dates remained compliant with the MOU.

Procedural question to Mr. Kohlenberger: Is the fact you are personally not voting on it because of your being up for re-election next year? Is that a rule that everybody who is going to be up for re-election should abide by?

The practice has long been that anyone who is interested in the Elections Committee is apprised that they cannot serve on the committee if they are going to be running for re-election. And if you are Chair of Elections Committee this year, you cannot be running in the following year.

At this point, Mr. Sachs and Ms. Markwart studied the MOU to make sure that new proposed date of April 1 is appropriate.

Question: Could we modify the friendly amendment so that it is sometime between whatever the original date was and April 1, 2019 - so as not to have to take all this time in tonight's meeting to work out the entire date sequence (i.e. off-line)?

With the board in charge now in this moment, the entire schedule must be defined.

**Lauren Herzberg had to exit the meeting early. Therefore, only nine votes are shown in the following motions:*

MOTION: Ms. Kehoe puts forward a friendly amendment that Absentee Voting begin earlier.
Mr. Mehra makes a friendly amendment to specify it to begin April 1, 2019.

4 approved. 4 opposed. 1 abstention. Motion failed.

MOTION: The Elections & Nominations Committee proposed that Absentee Voting should begin on April 8, 2019 (changing it from March 18, 2019).

3 approved. 5 disapproved. 1 abstention. Motion failed.

Thus, the friendly amendment failed... and the original motion failed.

Mr. Kohlenberger: Does anyone still want it to be March 18, 2019? If not, someone can propose a new motion.

Comment: We took a vote. Are you going to put forward a new motion on the same exact vote that was just 'settled'?

The consensus is that there is no good reason to shorten the Absentee Voting period from March 18, 2019.

The Elections Committee must go back and revise all dates to the proper sequence under the MOU.

Mr. Kohlenberger advised the Elections Committee to look at it again and perhaps present a compromise at the December 12 board meeting, and we'll go from there.

Ambiguity about voter turn-out and participation:

There is curiosity about any statistics from when voting first started at McLean Day - questioning whether there has been a huge increase over all these years after the lengthy absentee voting processes were added.

Clarification by Mr. Sachs: We have statistics on total number of votes during my tenure. It is two different issues: voter returns really aren't affected by any of these dates. The election cycle duration is all about convenience for people who are running to serve on the board: the amount of time they are expected to campaign and being visible out in the public square.

Opinion expressed: I think the timing also takes into account how many votes come in. Years ago, it was only in-person voting at McLean Day. Then absentee voting was increased to three days before McLean Day; now absentee voting runs for 7 or 8 weeks. Yet, I don't see any benefit as to the total number of votes being returned these days.

Opinion expressed: If such proposed changes are really for the convenience of board members who are running, then I don't like the optics of us trying to make it necessarily easier for people to run again for this seat. If you shorten the election cycle, it is much more likely that a person who is already sitting on the board has the upper edge because they don't have to campaign much. A new, prospective person might think, "Well, you can't get

your votes in because you're up against someone from last year." Incumbents do have an advantage; but I don't want to give them even more of an advantage. That's not a very compelling reason to revise the date sequence.

Mr. Kohlenberger summarized: I'm hearing two issues: 1. campaign fatigue; and 2. staff resources are a concern, at such a time when they are moving back into the facility.

Responsive to this discussion, a revised date sequence was proposed, representing a 'typical' election cycle:

Petition packet pick-up begins: Tuesday, January 22	Candidate Orientation & photos: March 16
Petition must be filed/returned by: March 15	Absentee Voting begins: March 18

ACTION ITEM: These dates were communicated to the PIO office as a revision for the final Winter Program Guide copy (which was due the following morning).

Procedural problem: It wasn't brought up as a formal motion in the September Regular Board meeting that the Elections committee had voted on a revised date sequence; it should have been. There is general displeasure that the full board was not able to vote on the proposed date sequence. **Failure to put forward a motion at the 9/26 board meeting about revised election dates was a violation of proper order.**

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, October 30 at 9:30 a.m. This will be a working meeting with Ms. Novak to revise candidate packet and ballot materials. All Board members are welcome to participate, as able.

CAPITAL FACILITIES COMMITTEE

The committee is still awaiting new pricing for landscaping work at The Old Firehouse.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, November 6 at 6:30 p.m.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The committee did not meet in October so there is no business to conduct this evening.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, November 19 at 6:30 p.m.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee worked hard prior to the September board meeting, to prepare the FY20 budget. The motion is now approved tonight to present the proposed FY20 budget to Fairfax County.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

A new video is posted on the MCC web site as promotion for The Alden Theatre upcoming season. The new Program Guide will be coming out soon with excellent new program offerings for winter.

Ms. Edmonson offered to put The Alden Theatre upcoming season video on Supervisor Foust's web site, to promote it.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, November 26 at 6:30 p.m. (combining with Executive Committee)

The purpose will be reviewing in detail all booking policies and rental fees, preparing this policy document for a vote by the full board on December 12, 2018. Staff has recommended several changes.

ACTION ITEM: Chair requested that the full board receive an **annotated copy of the booking policies/rental fees document**. It hasn't been changed much in the last 20-30 years. Everyone is asked to please read through and provide any comments or questions. Most of the revision work will occur at the joint Executive/Program committee meeting on November 26, to have it completed and ready for vote at the December 12 board meeting.

LIAISON TO FRIENDS OF MCLEAN COMMUNITY CENTER

Friends has not met since the last MCC Board Meeting, which was in September.

OLD / NEW BUSINESS

Nothing was mentioned as being new business for consideration this evening.



McLean Community Center

1234 Ingleside Avenue
McLean, Virginia 22101
703-790-0123 /TTY: 711
FAX: 703-556-0547
www.mcleancenter.org

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Kohlenberger adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

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