

**Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations
February 27, 2019 General Meeting Minutes**

AFCA Co-Chair Jeff Lipsky called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Business meeting:

Treasurer Report: AFCA Treasurer Judy Cooper was not able to attend but submitted the report in writing. AFCA had an opening balance of \$8058.95. Since last month, AFCA had income in the form of dues in the amount of \$30.00 and expenses (membership committee) of \$142.64. Final Balance: \$7946.30.

Approval of Minutes – The minutes from the AFCA meetings on 7 and 30 January were submitted for approval. No objections to the minutes were raised but it was determined that a quorum was lacking, so approval of the minutes was deferred.

AFCA Committee Reports:

Co-chair Report – Jeff Lipsky provided an overview of his meeting with the Vice Mayor Bennett-Parker on 2/27/19. During the meeting, they discussed the Vice Mayor’s priorities, and Jeff briefed her on the AFCA and its focus areas this year. She expressed interest in hearing the AFCA’s voice on issues. Jeff asked how AFCA can help. She wants to hear AFCA voice on matters and may look for AFCA help on grass roots outreach. The Co-Chairs next plan to meet with Council members Jackson and Seifeldein.

Business meeting adjourned for main presentation and resumed at end of the meeting.

Engagement Committee Report: Van Fleet and Dave Olinger reported on their meeting with Karl Moritz and Rob Kerns regarding a proposal to outline conditions and procedures to amend an SUP/DSUP. They reported that Karl Moritz appeared receptive to the proposal. He recommended they next talk with Yon Lambert.

Recommended speakers for upcoming meeting were Karl Moritz and Yon Lambert.

Update on City Board Initiative: Jeff Lipsky reported he had submitted the letter to the Mayor with regard to city boards. Mr. Wilson said he would raise the proposal for process in March.

Communication Committee Report: - Roy Byrd provided an update on the website. In the past month, there were 117 visits and 67 unique visits. 43% of visitors access the home page; 26% look at “News and Resources” tab , 20% visit “About AFCA” tab, and 6% look at “Join” tab. He noted some issues with all element of the webpage showing up on the mobile version, although the key parts are there. Jeff Lipsky asked Roy to update the number of unique visits again at the next meeting to help judge the response to the membership committee’s outreach mailings.

Membership Committee Report: Pete Benavage and Rebecca Hierholzer noted that they had mailed out outreach letters to 10 civic association in February as well as follow-up emails. mailings. They will email letters to 10 additional associations in March and plan to complete initial outreach efforts by April. Rebecca also noted that she will be out of town and is looking for someone to help Pete with the mailings and follow-up while she is gone. Jeff Lipsky recommended to reach out to Erin Winograd to see if she has interest. Note: at the end of the meeting Joanne Bump volunteered to help this committee.

City Committee Reports:

Chief Advisory Task Group 21: Roy Byrd reported that he had been invited to sit in on the hiring committee for a new vice police chief.

Transit Vision Stakeholders Group: The stakeholder group held its second meeting in February, where two concepts for re-envisioning DASH routes in Alexandria were presented. One concept was based on a coverage model and another on ridership. Once approved, changes could begin phasing in in 2021.

Beauregard Design Advisory Committee: Pete Benavage reported that the Eisenhower West and Landmark plans were being fast-tracked and would go to City Council in March.

Emergency Medical Services Council: Rebecca Hierholzer noted that Alexandria Hospital is only the 4th in the USA to be a certified Thrombectomy-Capable Stroke Center. This specialty treatment is saving lives in the entire DC Metro area. Rebecca is asking for a volunteer to substitute for her at the next EMS Council quarterly meeting on Monday, May 13th, 7 to 9 pm.

Jeff Lipsky asked the Engagement Committee to review the budget briefing that city staff provided at tonight's meeting with regard to any issues upon which the AFCA should engage. He also asked the committee to similarly review the parking reduction raised in regard to Robinson Terminal South for similar issues.

Jeff Lipsky noted that it was time to choose a nominating committee and requested that if interested in serving on the committee to contact him.

Presentation: Deborah Collins, Deputy City Manager and Lisa Henty, OMB Assistant Director, provided an update on the city budget.

The proposed city budget reflects City Council's guidance for no tax increase. To meet this goal, city departments were asked to propose a .05% reduction in spending. The budget overall reflects a 1.7% increase in the FY20 budget over FY19. The cost of city operations increased only .6%. Transit funding increased 17.8%. The ACPS budget is fully funded and there are no significant reductions in service. On the revenue side, the average residential real estate tax assessment is up 1.91% due to increase in assessments. Solid resource recover fee up 9%. Dash fare increase to \$2.00.

Key expenditure highlights of the presentation included:

- Implementation of 311
- New development and permitting systems that will allow for online submission of various permit applications
- Advancement of municipal fiber network
- Variable rate prices for on street parking
- Green vehicle fleet with more electric and hybrid vehicles.
- Purchase of energy credits to offset greenhouse emissions by 100%.
- Increase green building goals to Gold and convert streetlights to LED to reduce energy consumption
- Hiring of a racial and social equity office in the City Manager's Office
- Add family service specialists to DCHS
- Add senior therapist specialist to DCHS
- Add family service specialist to DCHS for older adult clinical team.
- Equal Justice Initiative funded to create a lynching memorial in Alexandria
- \$1 million per year for affordable housing.
- Initiate drug court

Upcoming public meetings or work sessions on the budget include:

- 14 March - Work session on economic sustainability
- 20 March – Work session on environmental sustainability
- 27 March– Work session on a well-managed government
- 3 April – Work session on a secure and just community and healthy and thriving residents
- 18 April –Budget and fiscal affairs advisory committee
- 4/23 - Preliminary add/delete
- 4/29 – Final add/delete session

AFCA questions:

What is the total debt and debt service? Response: Total debt service is \$66 million but did not know the total debt offhand. Staff said they would find out and notify AFCA.

Does the amount that the city is allocating to WMATA include costs during the government shutdown when WMATA revenue was down. Response: No, WMATA has not calculated that yet.

What are the specific budget cuts? That information cannot be found on the City website. Response: That information is available in section two of city manager budget.

What is the employee merit system? Response: It enables new employees to be eligible for a 5% merit raise. After 5 years, employees can get a 3.1% merit raise.

How does the city plan to do parking enforcement if it ceases use of decals? Response: The city is funding two additional license plate readers to improve enforcement but agreed to look into the issue and provide a fuller answer.

Planning Commission Case Overview, Rob Kerns and Tony LaColla, Planning and Zoning Staff

March Planning Commission:

- Hank's Pasta Bar: Requesting expansion in number of seats, increase in FAR, parking reduction, and outdoor speakers. Restaurant plans to add a roof terrace and build out current second floor for special events. Staff noted they supported the parking reduction because there are nearby garages and the site is "close to metro."
- Executive Diner, 1400 Duke Street: Requesting an increase in seats and a change in opening hours.
- Text amendment: Amendment refers to conversion of commercial to residential reversions. It would allow any structure that existed as a residence up to 1992 and then converted to commercial to go back to residential, provided it is at the same number of units or fewer.
- Robinson Landing: Request for two restaurants on the parcel, including outdoor dining on the pier. Staff said it will meet the parking requirements— 59 parking spaces.

April Planning Commission:

- Charlies Restaurant, 1503-1505 mount version: Request for expansion of 60 outdoor seats and separating parcel into two restaurants.
- Victory Center, 5001 Eisenhower Ave: Rezoning and subdivision request.

Coming to Planning Commission Later this Spring:

- Episcopal High School athletic field
- Monday Properties
- Virginia Paving
- Eisenhower East SAP

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm

Attendees: Heidi Ford, WOTCA; Jeff Lipsky, FPCA; Tom Walczykowski, CCPCA; Pete Benavage, SWCA; Rebecca Hierholzer, SWCA; Van Van Fleet, OTCA; Bob Gronenberg, Parkfairfax; Bryan Kirkes, OTCA; Joanne Bump, Potomac Yard; Joanne Lepanto, Seminary Hill Assoc Inc; Dave Levy, HRPC; Carter Flemming, SHA; Roy Byrd, CCPCA; Dave Olinger, OTCA