



George Washington Birthday Celebration Committee (GWBCC) Alexandria, VA

Monday, March 18, 2024

7:00 PM

Lloyd House

220 N. Washington Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Attendance: Patrick Wilson, Carol Myers, Colin Eilts, Edgar Bates, Sandra Welch, Jeanne Jacob (virtually), Lauren Augustine (virtually), Peter Duggan, Ally Collender, Sue Johnson, Andrew McCarthy-Clark, Jacque Martin, Laura Packard (virtually), Kristen Eastlick, Bob Garbacz, Michele Longo (staff liaison), Bud Jackson (guest)

Excused: Tyler Vanice

Absent: Stephen Konya

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.
2. February 5, 2024 minutes were approved with spelling edits.
3. Reports
 - a) Chair –Sue opened the meeting by reading thank you notes from parade participants. There were 8 floats in the parade and four bands/drum corps,
 - b) Outreach subcommittee—Jeanne shared the Friendship Veterans Fire Engine Association thanks for attendance at the Veterans’ breakfast, especially Washington’s remarks and the presence of the French Embassy. The Association and the Bishop Ireton Cheerleaders were thrilled to receive awards.
 - c) Social Media Subcommittee—Kristen noted they have hundreds of photos and a video of the parade to organize. Patrick recommended using photos of sponsors in the parade as part of a thank you. Bud introduced the newest committee member Laura Packard, who will be able to assist with social media and the GWBCC website. The growing collective effort has paid off with the expanded social media presence.
 - d) VA250 and Alexandria 250 Subcommittee—Edgar shared an update from the most recent Alexandria 250 meeting. There will be a Fairfax Resolves event on July 18 at 6 p.m. on Market Square. October 2024 will mark Lafayette’s visit to Alexandria. In 2026, Alexandria is working to host tall ships as part of the Sail250 program.
4. Unfinished Business
 - a) Nominations for GWBCC Secretary—Sue will be reaching out to committee members in the coming month.
 - b) Update on Parade Revenues and Expenses: Sue provided an update on where expenses and revenues stand. The GWBCC was able to reduce a deficit in anticipated revenues due to the George Washington Legacy Foundation’s grant of \$1,000 versus the \$25,000 request by raising \$13,000 more in sponsorships and donations than originally budgeted. Total net revenues will

be between \$59,000 and \$60,000, and we are awaiting the final City bill to determine final expenses. She thanked individual Committee members for fundraising efforts and personal contributions. The Old Town Business Donation Drive, a first-time fundraising effort, raised \$2450 and is a promising program for future years.

- c) Parade Recap: The Committee had encouraged parade participants to “jazz it up”, and units really stepped up their game this year. Continuing to recruit music and performance groups will be important. Patrick suggested seeking donations for cash prizes (for bands and floats) and band sponsorships to be able to help encourage participation, if the budget permits in the future. The social media did a great job creating buzz in advance of the parade. End point could use more volunteers posted to assist with directing traffic. The mix of floats and pedestrians made it challenging to ensure safety while keeping people moving, but three volunteers made it manageable. There weren’t as many gaps this year (note the Blue and Gray military vehicles makes a lot of exhaust and the color guard at the beginning needs to set a slower pace). We could touch base with dignitaries to ensure they know they have space at the viewing stand and a ride back to it. We had enough cars, but should start recruiting volunteers earlier this year to ensure we have enough. Sue brought the Committee’s attention to an Order of March available online so spectators can follow along, and it includes a list of sponsors on the side. Signs along the route with a QR code would help direct people to the Order of March. Jacqu offered to create a survey to send to parade participants to solicit feedback.
- d) Events Recap: American Legion Post 24 Walk, Run, and Roll and over 113 participants. Gadsby’s Tavern Museum’s Birthnight event was sold out. Around 70-80 people attended the wreath laying. The additional signage helped attract people. Hunt for Washington had a north and south route featuring Lafayette. People submitted photos taken on their Hunt, and Kristen will create a page to feature these. Winners will be announced this week. George Washington tours took place every Sunday with 50 registrants (the limit) every week but the first. The Duvall House fundraiser had 35 attendees and cleared around \$3200. The post-parade reception took place at Hotel AKA, who sponsored the event, and approximately 40 people attended.
- e) The Cherry Challenge had 18 restaurants participate and over 600 votes.
 - i. Beverage Winner: Bastille Brasserie & Bar’s “Fleur de Cerise”
 - ii. Appetizer: Julia’s on the Potomac’s “Crispy Winter Rolls”
 - iii. Entrée: Dishes of India’s “Cherry Chicken Tikka Tandoori”
 - iv. Dessert: Kiwi Cuisine’s “Monumental Cherry Pie”

Honorable mentions include:

- i. Beverage: BRABO Brasserie’s “Shirley Blossom” and The Light Horse’s “Cherry Amour”
- ii. Entrée: Murphy’s Irish Pub’s “Cherry Duck Confit”
- iii. Dessert: Bastille Brasserie’s “Cherry Cheesecake” and the Italian Place’s “Cream and Cherry Bombolini”

5. New Business

- e) 2025 Parade theme and Grand Marshal—come prepared to discuss at the April meeting. If there are anniversaries, please bring them to our attention. Themes also need to be connected to George Washington. Ideally, the Grand Marshal would help with fundraising and bring attention to the parade.
- f) 2025 Sponsorship Package—This will be brought to the committee in April

6. For the Good of the Cause

Sue noted we do have people interested in joining the committee, however all citizen spaces are full. There are three vacancies for specific organizations or a City Manager appointee left to fill.

7. Adjournment—The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

The next meeting will be April 15, 2024, 7 p.m. at the Lloyd House.