



George Washington Birthday Celebration Committee (GWBCC)

Alexandria, VA

Monday, February 3, 2025

7:00 PM

Lloyd House

220 N. Washington Street

Alexandria, VA

Minutes

Attendance: Sue Johnson, Michele Longo, Tyler Vanice, Peter Duggan, Carol Myers, Edgar Bates, Jeanne Jacob (virtual), Laura Packard, Lauren Augustine, Carol Myers, Stephen Konya, Bob Garbacz, Patrick Wilson, Kristen Eastlick,

Excused: Hunter Ihrman, Colin Eilts, Jacque Martin, Sandra Welch,

Unexcused: Ally Collender,

1. Sue called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.
2. Approval of January 6, 2025 and January 21, 2025 minutes with the change of Hunter Ihrman's name to its correct spelling. The minutes were unanimously approved as revised.
3. Chair's Report:
 - a) Sue talked with Mayor Gaskins regarding funding the 2026 parade. The City is facing a steep deficit, so it will be a challenging funding year. Building a coalition that can come before City Council to support the parade for a variety of reasons would help. March 10 is the meeting for public comment around the budget. The rest of March is the best time to meet with individual council members. Patrick motioned and Bob seconded the March meeting move to March 3. The motion passed unanimously.
4. Unfinished Business
 - a) Marketing: The parade notice will go out this week. George Washington was featured on the cover of the Zebra. Michele distributed flyers for the upcoming events.
 - b) Resident/business notification flyer distribution: Almost all flyers have been distributed. Only questions that have come in have been about impact on parking garages, which we will note impact on next year's route notifications.
 - c) Parade fundraising
 - i. Sponsorships: Sue reviewed sponsorships that have come in so far. Any sponsors that come in by February 8 will be included in all the pre-parade marketing.
 - ii. Old Town Business Donor Drive: Four businesses have donated so far. Sue is continuing to reach out to past donors who have not yet donated. Committee members volunteered to distribute decals to those who have donated.
 - iii. Fundraising events
 1. January 16 Port City Brewing Company Trivia Fundraiser
 2. February 1 Duvall House fundraiser—Thanks to those who assisted with the event and donating drinks. 35 paid attendees at \$150 per person, for a total of \$5,250. One new person had heard about it through the VA250 calendar. After expenses, the event raised \$3500.

3. February 11 Mount Vernon-GWBCC Cherry Challenge Event: Please spread the word to help sell tickets! Patrick will set up a paid advertising push on Facebook behind this event. The volunteers for the night are Patrick, Jacque, and Kristen.
- d) Parade Day logistics
 - i. Dignitary acceptances—All invitations have gone out and replies are coming in. Bob noted we need additional drivers.
 - ii. Grand Marshal schedule: Attendance at the parade is confirmed, but not other events.
 - iii. Parade registration: 46 registrations so far, with one more anticipated. The hope is to release the March of Order early next week. Jeanne noted that Burke and Herberts mascot is unavailable this year, but would like to participate next year. Jet's Pizza will have their mascot ride on a pick-up truck and distribute coupons and is in the process of registering (they agreed to pay since they will have a vehicle). Marching bands have either not responded or responded in the negative due the time of year. Other mascots will walk from other businesses for free. The Sportsman's Club may register, but not until Thursday, as a unit.
 - iv. Parade volunteers: Sue reviewed the list of volunteers for the day. She will be arranging a conference call with the judges (a new team) prior to the date as well as with parade stand volunteers.
 - v. Parade day events
 1. Wreath-laying ceremony: Everything is in place.
 2. Post-parade reception: The invitation-only reception will take place at Hotel AKA Alexandria, 4:30-6:30 p.m. Michele offered to drive Brian from the reception to the Birthnight Dinner.
 3. George Washington Birthnight Dinner: 6-9 p.m., four-course seated dinner with Dr. Peter Henriques speaking during the dinner.
 - e) Other George Washington Birthday Celebration Events
 - i. Cherry Challenge: Almost 500 votes so far, which is great! Kristen will know results by Feb. 12, so signage can be made and winning restaurants invited.
 - ii. George Washington's Alexandria tours: May need to rename the tour to differentiate it from one leaving from the Visitor's Center. Sue will follow up with Visit Alexandria after the parade about options.
 - iii. Hunt for Washington: Hunt for Washington is underway. While the clue sheets haven't been replaced, responses are coming in using last year's set of clues.
 - iv. Friendship Firehouse Breakfast: Jeanne needs the names for the breakfast table by Feb. 8. GWBCC has a table for ten.
 - v. Masonic events: Tyler reviewed the plans for this year's events at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial.
 - f) 2025 George Washington Birthday Celebration Proclamation – February 11 City Council vote & subsequent posting
5. For the Good of the Cause: The committee discussed how to make a decision regarding weather and cancellations.
 6. The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Next meeting: March 3, 2025 at 220 N. Washington Street