



George Washington Birthday Celebration Committee (GWBC)

Monday, Oct 20, 2025

7:00 PM

Lloyd House

220 N. Washington Street

Minutes

Attendance: Sue Johnson, Michele Longo, Peter Duggan, Jake Sweely, Jeanne Jacob (via Zoom), Lauren Augustine (via Zoom), Casey Clark, Edgar Bates, Colin Eilts, Carol Myers, Steve Konya, Jacque Martin, Sandra Welch, Hunter Ihrman (via Zoom)

Excused: Patrick Wilson, Tyler Vanice, Kristin Eastlick;

- 1) The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm.
- 2) Motion to approve Sept. 15, 2025 minutes made by Edgar Bates to approved, second by Carol Myers. Approved by committee.
- 3) Chair's Report: Sue Johnson shared updates regarding the 2026 Parade: Parade date, theme, and Grand Marshals have been announced to the public via press release, GWBC newsletter, and social media. Alexandria Town Cryer, Parade Announcers, and previous years' judges have all confirmed their attendance. We have \$7500 in confirmed sponsorships since last meeting: George Washington Chapter of SAR \$5k as a Gold Sponsor; Patrick Wilson and Friendship Veterans Fire Association as \$1k Bronze Sponsors, and Scot and Vickie Bryant as a \$500 Supporting Sponsor. Hotel AKA Alexandria and The Zebra Press had previously become Gold Sponsors. On tonight's agenda for committee consideration is the 2026 Parade Route and George Washington Birthday Month Proclamation to be approved by the City Council.
- 4) Marketing and Public Relations Report: Provided in Chair's Report.
- 5) VA250, Alexandria250, and other community reports: No changes reported.
- 6) Unfinished Business
 - i) Marching band/performance group update:
 - (1) Several local marching bands have been informed of the availability of \$1,000 stipends for five College, Military School, and High School marching bands, and the availability of financial incentives was posted in the October GWBC newsletter. To date, there have been no inquiries from eligible marching bands.
 - (2) Jeanne Jacob will be drafting an email that will be sent to several VA, MD & DC Public High Schools to let them know about these incentives.
 - (3) Carol Myers identified links to military bands lists. Peter Duggan agreed to assist with processing requests for military bands.
 - ii) 2026 fundraising
 - (1) Mayor's Reception for Sponsors: Mayor Gaskins has agreed to a Saturday Tea for Sponsors (under fifty people) on Saturday Jan 17, 2-4 pm, at Lloyd House with an alternate date of Feb 7, 2-4 pm.
 - (2) Sponsorship package and outreach: Sponsorship package is complete and on website; Sue is reaching out to past Parade sponsors.

- (3) Duvall House event: Saturday, November 15, 5:30-7:30. Is being marketed in local media and invitations will be emailed. GWBCC members offering to volunteer at event are Peter Duggan, Jake Sweely, Carol Myers, Lauren Augustine and possibly Jacque Martin.
- (4) Port City Brewery Trivia Night: Thursday, November 20. Jacque Martin stated that Port City Brewery will announce the trivia night in early November. Port City web site (newsletter) will include QR Code for donations. GWBCC volunteers for this event will be Sue Johnson, Peter Duggan, Steve Konya, Lauren Augustine, Jake Sweely and Jacque Martin.
- (5) Old Town Business Donation Drive: Sue Johnson will start preparing flyers for Old Town business donations. Plan is to start visiting Old Town businesses in early November. GWBCC volunteers for distributing flyers are Peter Duggan, Casey Clark, Jake Sweely and Steve Konya.

iii) 2026 parade route. Per previous meeting discussion on shortening the parade route to save on police costs (2 blocks): Michelle Longo researched pros and cons, and it was determined that cost savings are minimal as new signage will need to be printed. Committee agreed to maintain the current parade route until the Market Square construction (next year) when parade route will change, and new signage will need to be printed.

7) New Business

- a) Modification of parade dignitary division. Transportation Director Bob Garbacz' retirement necessitates modifications to the Parade Dignitary Division. Sue Johnson researched Scottish Walk and Saint Patrick's Day parades on how they manage parade dignitaries. The GWBCC will use a hybrid approach in 2026: City dignitaries walk with a banner in front, with each dignitary wearing a sash. Four to five cars were available for dignitaries and their family members that will not or cannot walk and need to ride. Grand Marshals and Sponsors at Silver level and above will continue to be offered parade vehicles. Before retiring, Bob provided a list of drivers with classic cars that were in previous GWB parades for the committee to contact.
- b) Preparations for adverse weather:
 - i) Potential snow/rain date for 250th Anniversary parade requires a three-week notice for Alexandria Police Department (APD) to rearrange street security. 2026 Patrick's Day Parade is Saturday March 7th. Market Square Street construction to start in spring. Potential dates are Saturday March 14th or Saturday March 21st. Need to confirm Market Square construction start date, and City would need to approve. Michele will be liaison to City Special Events Committee.
 - ii) Potential modifications to cancellation criteria: The parade will still be rain or shine, with possible temperature parameters if weather forecast is not favorable as Parade Day approaches.
- c) Opening of parade registration: Plan to roll out in early November.
- d) Parade Rules & Procedures: Have been updated by Sue Johnson, Carol Myers and Michele Longo with no substantive changes.
- e) George Washington Birthday Month Proclamation: Sue Johnson distributed draft Proclamation to the committee. Carol Myers made motion to approve the Proclamation. Edgar Bates 2nd the motion. Committee approved the motion.
- f) Post-Thanksgiving meeting dates. Nov 17 (Lloyd House) Dec 1 (virtual), Dec 15 (Lloyd House), Jan 5 (virtual), Jan 19 (Lloyd House), and Feb 2 (virtual)

8) Meeting Adjourned at 8:19 pm.

Next meeting: Monday November 17 at 7 pm.