



George Washington Birthday Celebration Committee (GWBC)

Monday, September 21, 2026
7:00 PM
Lloyd House, 220 N. Washington Street

Minutes

Attendance: Sue Johnson, Michele Longo, Tyler Vanice, Jake Sweely, Lauren Augustine (Zoom), Edgar Bates, Carol Myers, Jeanne Jacob (Zoom), Patrick Wilson, Sandra Welch

Excused: Peter Duggan, Will Hannifan, Paul Friedman, Sebastian Feitl

Unexcused: Casey Clark

Guests: Tom Roth (SAR), Mike Gotard (1st Virginia Regiment), Chip Gnam (1st Virginia Regiment)

1. **Call to Order** - The meeting was called to order at 7:11 p.m.
2. **Approval of Minutes** - Approval of August 17, 2026 minutes delayed due to lack of quorum.
3. **Chair's Report**—Sue invited guests to introduce themselves and then shared her updates. Based on conversations with the Mayor and City Manager, the parade will be held on Saturday, February 13, likely with a 10:30 a.m. start time to allow parade participants and spectators to visit Alexandria shops, cafés and restaurants throughout the rest of the day. Final confirmation of the start time by the City is anticipated before Sept. 28. This earlier start time will require an adjustment of times for the Post-Parade Reception and Awards Ceremony and the Wreath Laying Ceremony.

In order to further reduce City staffing costs, the City Manager has requested all parades to review and shorten routes. Michele will work with the Scottish Walk parade team to reduce the parade area. This includes potentially turning onto Cameron Street instead of Queen Street and reducing the size of the assembly area.

Chip shared the 1st Virginia Regiment's plans as the Grand Marshal. Their goal is to honor the men of the original 1st Virginia as best they can. They are selecting long-term members to sit on the parade stand as their representatives. Their parade presence will be larger as well, as they will bring as much infrastructure as they can—soldiers, civilians, artillery, horses, etc.—and will consider what other regiments could be invited as Special Guests. They could also fire their cannon if the police allows.

4. **Marketing and Public Relations Report**—Sue reminded Committee members to like and comment on posts posted on GWBC social media. The first video has been released and more are coming. The parade kick-off announcement will occur at the end of the month.
5. **VA250, Alexandria250, and other community reports**—No new items to share.
6. **Unfinished Business**

- a) Parade kickoff announcement—This is currently scheduled for September 28, once the start time has been set.
- b) 2027 Sponsorships and Fundraising—The City is committing at least \$35,000 to costs of police and city staff. Sue has begun reaching out to past parade sponsors. Sandra is fundraising to cover the cost of the Washington Commanders Marching Band and has raised \$3000 so far. The George Washington Legacy Foundation and Friendship Veterans Fire Engine Association are each committing \$1000.
- c) 2027 Parade Participant outreach—Once the parade start time is set, Sue will submit the application for the “Racing Presidents” from the Nationals.

7. New Business

- a) 2027 “Birthday Bash” promotion for Alexandria merchants—In order to improve our outreach to and support of the business community, Michele is planning to organize a business promotion for Presidents’ Day Weekend around the concept of a “birthday bash.” With the assistance of existing Old Town business contacts, Old Town businesses will be invited to sign up to participate in a way of their choosing (discount, give-away, “activation”) around the birthday theme. Details are still TBD and coordination with the Cherry Challenge is necessary.

8. Adjournment - The meeting ended at 8:44 p.m.

Upcoming Events

Next GWBCC Meeting: 7:00 p.m., October 19 at Lloyd House

Duvall House Fundraiser: 5:30 – 7:30 p.m., Saturday, November 7