



George Washington Birthday Celebration Committee

Minutes

George Washington Birthday Celebration Committee
City of Alexandria, Virginia
7:00 p.m.
Monday, January 11, 2021

This meeting was conducted online via ZOOM due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic

In Attendance: Bates, Bennett, Eastlick, Jacob, Jones, Johnson, Marvin, Moore, Myers, Reardon, Vanice (chair), Warren

Excused: Garbacz

Unexcused: Beard, Clarke, Stephen MacLeod

City Staff: Michele Longo and Nicole Quinn (Office of Historic Alexandria)

Guests: Marshall Smith, Sally Graham

CALL TO ORDER

Vanice called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

The virtual meeting notice was read by Nicole Quinn.

Vanice invited our newest Committee member, Jeanne Jacob, the Friendship Firehouse representative, to introduce herself.

Motion was made by Vanice to accept the minutes as amended, seconded by Johnson and approved unanimously.

Vanice announced that the Alexandria City Council will read Proclamation on February 9; we can all register to attend virtually. Vanice spoke with Shumard's widow –she has some GWBCC informational material that she would like to return, and will provide access to Shumard's laptop to access relevant committee information.

The Committee noted that there were 10 events listed for next month's celebration of GW's birthday; Vanice noted that we are including an event being hosted by Mt. Vernon, and Mt. Vernon has cross-listed our events. This is an important step in building good rapport between our respective organizations. The Chair sent out press releases on the event. Cherry Challenge press release forthcoming as well – Eastlick is working it. The Hilton event will be publicized once the registration link is up.

Johnson sought clarification of OHA actions to publicize the GWBCC activities, in order to avoid duplication of outreach. Longo will provide list of publications/newspapers touched by the City in coordination with her public affairs colleague. Johnson noted that Zebra usually does full page on GW Birthday events; she is also going to send individual items as calendar items to Zebra, Patch, and others. Vanice asked for a volunteer to do a letter to the editor, in support of the GW birthday events; Bates volunteered to draft the letter, and will also provide copies of the prior years' letters that he had written.

Vanice asked Jacob to report on the fundraising efforts over the last few weeks. Jacob briefed the committee's efforts to identify potential sponsors and the draft sponsorship level proposal, which ranged from exclusive sponsorship at the President George Washington level (\$10K) to Alexandrian level (\$250-\$499). Myers moved to accept the sponsorship level proposal as is – motion seconded by Johnson, and approved unanimously. These approved levels will now be able to be published on the website.

Johnson provided an update on the Hilton program, noting that it was now just the presentation and Q&A; trivia night remains a potential fundraising activity later in the year. Sponsorship would also include publicity at beginning, during break between presentation and Q&A, and then at the end of the program. Jacob noted that the fundraising team and Eastlick did a dry run to make sure that the publicity and Q&A would go smoothly. We will have one or two more dry runs. We can handle up to 100 participants. Johnson identified 5 or 6 George Washington clubs/societies across the country to contact to distribute the GW 4 Acts programming. Bennett asked for clarification of whether this was a live webinar. Bennett and Smith then had a significant discussion of the potential for a live webinar interview of period uniformed re-enactors in the Ft. Ward skirmish. They will take this offline and return back to the Committee with a proposal.

Bennett indicated that she still had no response from Old Presbyterian Meeting House to in-person wreath laying proposal, so unclear that it will be possible to do the activity. Bates then clarified that the SAR will be doing the wreath laying ceremony on the parade day, and it will not be in person per Alexandria's COVID restrictions. The events list will need to be revised to reflect the virtual live streaming. Bennett and Bates discussed their respective organization's roles in this event, and agreed to take it offline, and report back to Vanice – Vanice requested details ASAP as material has to be finalized.

Jacob sought additional suggestions for potential sponsorship for the GW events, requesting details be sent to her or the other members of the fundraising committee – Vanice, Johnson, Warren. Johnson updated details on the GW in Alexandria Tours. Danny Smith prefers not to give tours until he is able to be vaccinated, but will come as Hezekiah at the beginning of the tour. She and Sean had met and concluded that the Hunt for Alexandria tour needed to be

entirely virtual, with forms able to be downloaded and printed. Johnson shared that Chris Jones has volunteered to train to be a tour guide. Vanice encouraged committee members to participate in these activities

Vanice will discuss with Gretchen how to connect the donation link on the webpage to the committee account. Eastlick and Vanice to discuss further how to update the website.

Eastlick updated that all of the photos/images associated with different GW events since 2017 are available, and have been shared with the social media committee. She also indicated that she has updated some of the events with final details as well on the website. She will be distributing to the Committee material for us to use to recruit restaurants to participate in the Cherry Challenge – she encouraged us to approach our favorite regulars. Reardon and Vanice are volunteers for restaurant recruitment.

In response to the Chair's call for any unfinished or new business, Bates raised the issue of outstanding debt owed to Marshall Smith for the Ft Ward event's gunpowder. The Committee clarified that it is obligated to pay \$4400 debt to cover the costs of gunpowder. There was some discussion of the history of this debt, and a recap of prior GWBCC discussion on the changing of the City's role in paying these types of expenses. Conversation continued on the issue of the city's funding of events (along with a discussion of what the city *does* fund currently in terms of police, fire, EMT, set up, and clean up in the context of the parade). Vanice shared that the City continues to provide that funding, but that they have cut back on what they previously funded over time.

While there was no formal vote taken, the meeting wrapped up with the Chair asking for patience as the fundraising committee continued their work to raise funds for past and future efforts. Reardon and Jacob thanked Vanice for his leadership.

Vanice reminded the Committee that the next meeting is on February 1. Jacob moved and Myers seconded the motion to adjourn at 8:39pm.

Respectfully submitted by

Jennifer Warren, secretary to the Committee &

Nicole Quinn, OHA, staff-liaison to the Committee