

BMCA General Meeting Minutes

Draft

Date/Time: Monday, February 22, 2016 / 7:01-8:57 PM

Location: Church of the Brethren

Minutes: *(Note: not necessarily in chronological order as presented during the meeting)*

1. **Welcome and introductions (7:01):** Phil Klingelhofer, Boulevard Manor Civic Association (BMCA) President, welcomed the members and guests in attendance, including welcoming four new members to BMCA.

2. **Guest Speaker– Carla de la Pava, Arlington County Treasurer**
 - a. Ms de la Pava has served as County Treasurer, an elected position, since July 2014, when she was appointed on the retirement of her predecessor, Frank O’Leary, then won a full term in November of that year. Treasurer is one of five Constitutional Officers in Arlington.
 - b. Arlington’s Treasurer handles all of the cash – sends out bills, collects them, invests money, and disburses money. The Treasurer has zero say on the amount of money it collects.
 - c. Currently, Arlington has a 0.27% delinquency rate, the lowest in the Commonwealth. It has a 99.98% *collection* rate, the highest in the state.
 - d. To get to our 0.27% delinquency rate, the Treasurer looks at the reasons for potential delinquency and tries to address them separately. There are three basic categories:
 - i. Accidental – For taxpayers who misplace their bill or forget when it is due, the Treasurer’s office tries to make sure they don’t incur a penalty by forgetting to pay. They have set up the CAPP system, an online bill pay site, and if that doesn’t work, place calls to those who haven’t paid five days before the due date. Ms de la Pava even got the County Board to lower the penalty for the first 30 days’ delinquency from 10% to 5%.
 - ii. Inability – If someone does not have the cash flow to pay their tax bill on time, the Treasurer’s office will arrange a short-term loan for the taxpayer through a local bank. The bank charges 10% up front (the amount of the penalty that would be owed for a delinquent bill) and then lends the entire amount, which is paid to the County. The Treasurer’s office subsidizes the interest.
 - iii. Refusal – Some taxpayers try to skip out on their bills. These fall into the “collection” rate. The County uses all means necessary to collect taxes that are owed.

3. **Guest Speaker -- Kathy von Bredow, RLA, Arlington County Parks and Recreation**
 - a. Ms von Bredow brought details of the Neighborhood Conservation Project for Boulevard Manor that is slated for approval this spring. She sought confirmation from the Community that Community agrees with the priorities within the plan.

- b. The budget for the entire project is \$785,000. That will be the sum appropriated through the NCP approval process. If the cost of all components of the project exceeds the budget, lower priority items will not be completed.
 - c. The priority list is:
 - i. Remove invasive species from Bluemont Park from an area delimited by the end of the South parking lot, following the trail that connects the park to N. 1st street, then along N. Manchester, to include the wooded area between N. 1st Street and Rte. 50. Then, back behind the homes on N. 1st that abut the park, extending to and along N. Carlin Springs Rd, then following Four Mile Run creek back to the South Parking lot. This will be a 5-year plan.
 - ii. After the second year of invasive removal, plant new native species in their place and water the new plants for one year.
 - iii. Build a new sidewalk (5 or 6 feet wide) connecting the bike path near the South Parking lot to N. Manchester. This may require removing a utility pole.
 - iv. Install wood fencing around the disc golf course to separate natural areas from golf course.
 - v. Build nature paths with signage in natural areas.
 - vi. Conduct an archaeological assessment of the Reeves Farm Milk House and purchase interpretive signs for placement around the Milk House or on the path leading to it.
 - vii. Mulch nature paths through the woods.
 - d. The association voted unanimously to agree that the first three were the top priorities and that the priority order of the remaining items reflected the community's views.
 - e. Lyndell Core, our former neighbor and the person in charge of Parks in our sector, stated that DES (the construction arm of the County Government) will be repairing the damage caused by the snow dumping in the South Parking lot.
 - f. Ms von Bredow advised us that the County will be attempting a demonstration native woodland plants garden in the valley across from the 1st Street path to Bluemont Park near Manchester to show what can be done in an urban setting.
 - g. THE COMMUNITY WILL HOLD A MEETING ON MAY 2 TO GIVE FINAL APPROVAL TO THE NCP PROPOSAL.
4. **Joan Horwitt and Sandra Kalscheur of Reevesland Learning Center** reported on recent developments
- a. RLC is celebrating five years of encouraging healthy eating and locally-grown food.
 - b. RLC has been partnering with the Career Center in Arlington. Together, they have designed compost bins that they are selling for \$65 each. The bins are constructed of wood and wire mesh, so they keep compost in and pests out while permitting maximum air flow.
 - c. RLC will be hosting a composting workshop in March.
 - d. RLC will be helping Ashlawn students plant peas and potatoes on a date between March 12 and 15.

- e. RLC is celebrating five years of community-supported Lawns2Lettuce4Lunch. This summer's fiesta salad will be served at Ashlawn on June 1. RLC will be handing out seeds at the Easter Egg Hunt on March 26.
- 5. **Paul Svercl** updated the neighborhood on Washington Gas' plans to replace natural gas service lines in part of our neighborhood. See BMCA's website for more details. Individuals affected will receive direct notification from Washington Gas.
- 6. **Sandra Spear of Reeves Farm Conservation Society** reported on recent developments regarding the Reeves Farm property.
 - a. RFCS obtained its official recognition from the IRS as a public charity on February 5. That recognition is retroactive to RFCS's date of incorporation in September 2015.
 - b. RFCS plans to restore the Reeves Farmhouse and Milk House as historic buildings and has received authorization to do so under the Virginia Rehabilitation Code from Arlington's Chief Building Official.
 - c. The next steps are working out an ownership arrangement with the County that will be mutually acceptable and assuring that RFCS can fit adequate parking on the site to handle its proposed programming.
- 7. **Treasurer's Report (Rob Pilot)**: The BMCA Treasurer (Rob Pilot) provided a written and oral Treasurer's report (with copies available for all present, see Attachment (A) to these minutes).
 - a. The balance as of October 19, 2015 was \$6,515.03.
 - b. The Treasurer will investigate purchasing insurance for BMCA.
 - c. The members present unanimously approved the budget.
- 8. **Report of the President**: Phil Klingelhofer reported that:
 - a. He sent a letter to the County Board supporting continued funding of Neighborhood Conservation Projects at the current \$12 million every two year level.
 - b. He has met with DES officials to explore less costly (and therefore immediately achievable) means of increasing pedestrian safety in our neighborhood. They have discussed painting parking strips on roads to encourage slower speeds as well as replacing Yield signs with Stop signs.
- 9. **Nominating Committee elected**: The membership unanimously elected Tony Ermovick, Sandy Horwitt and Claudia Maloney to serve as the BMCA nominating committee for 2016.
- 10. **Standing Committee Reports**:
 - a. **Arlington Civic Federation (Paul Svercl)**: Reported that we have empty slots for representatives to the Civic Federation, which meets once a month.
 - b. **Hospitality (Claudia Maloney)**: BMCA would hold its annual Easter Egg Hunt on March 26 at 10:30 a.m. Last year, approximately 100 children participated.
 - c. **Membership (Matt Smith)**: 103 members as of the 22nd. That is a bit down from prior years. We received \$180 in donations, including \$50 for the Easter Egg Hunt.
 - d. **Safety (Chuck Norton)**: Advised neighbors to examine the utility poles near their homes for damage. Our poles are old and can present a hazard. Persistent bugging of Dominion Virginia Power might get a hazardous pole replaced.
 - e. **Conservation and Beautification (Josh Handler)**:

- i. Josh reported that volunteers would be needed again this spring to clean up trash and attack invasive species at Powhatan Springs Park.
- ii. He will be checking on the health of trees planted at Ashlawn
- iii. A small group of volunteers planted trees and saplings along Rte 50 shoulder at Nottingham. The area immediately to the east of that planting area may be too hazardous for volunteers to tackle. That said, VDOT will be addressing the Rte 50 shoulder from the intersection with N. Manchester to 200 feet west of that intersection, so we can see where that leaves us.

f. Parks (Phil Klingelhofer):

- i. He asked those who have yet to do so to complete the County's Snow Survey.
- ii. He updated the community on County plans to improve the baseball field near the tennis courts. DES will be holding a meeting on that on March 2.

11. **Conclusion.** Meeting adjourned at 8:57 PM.

Next BMCA General Meeting: TBA

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Spear, BMCA Secretary

Attachments:

A. BMCA Treasurer's Report of February 22, 2016