

AFCA April 2021 Minutes
May 19, 2021
7:00 pm (via Zoom)

Esther Bowring (President) called the meeting to order.

Yard Sale

Esther Bowring announced this will be organized for the fall (publicized in September and held in October).

September Meeting

Esther proposed we change the September meeting from the 15th (which is Yom Kippur) to the 14th. This would be a conflict with the CivFed meeting but will accommodate those who could not attend on Yom Kippur. To be publicized in the Arlington Forester.

Treasurer Report (Jeff Horwitz)

The AFCA FY2021 budget includes an allocation of \$700 to give to three local PTAs (\$200 each to Barrett, Barcroft, and Kenmore) and to Culpepper Gardens (\$100).

Traffic Circles - 2nd Street North (in Northside Section)

There are dead plants in the circle at Henderson. Char Mahoney requested AFCA allocation of \$100 to purchase new plants. Approved. Esther will check with Char to confirm who will be responsible for planting/maintenance to ensure the new plants do not die.

Tree Planting

Esther received an email from the County regarding four new trees to be planted at N. Columbus St. and 2nd Road North.

Nominations Committee (Janet Irwin, Arthur Schwartz)

No additional interest expressed after solicitation of nominations in the Arlington Forester. The slate is the existing slate:

President - Esther Bowring

VPs - Tom Smialowicz (Greenbrier), Joel Yudken (Northside), Sean Lyons (Southside)

Secretaries - Char Mahoney, Natalie Roisman

Treasurer - Jeff Horwitz

Richard Epstein moved to approve the slate. Seconded by Janice Hull. The slate was approved by acclamation.

Thank you to the Nominations Committee co-chairs for their work.

VP Reports

Esther wants to make sure she has access to post AFCA info on the Southside list serv. No info to report in any of the sections.

Long Branch and Gulf Branch Nature Centers

Esther presented a draft letter to be sent by AFCA to the County Board in support of additional funding for the two nature centers. There was significant discussion, including:

- Numerous attendees noted that their families have made substantial use of these amenities.
- Natalie Roisman proposed the addition of a sentence reflecting the specific Arlington Forest connection (i.e., that Arlington Foresters utilize the nature centers and Long Branch in particular, given its proximity to Arlington Forest).
- Jeff Horwitz asked how the amount of money compares to other budget items AFCA may/may not want to support and whether this is appropriate for a standalone letter.
- Richard Epstein noted that Arlington Forest might have sought similar report for amenities in our own neighborhood, such as the Lubber Run Amphitheater.
- Those in attendance ultimately supported sending the letter in support of the County funding the nature centers in the amount of \$1.5 million.

Civic Federation (Janice Hull - may want to get official report from Sal?)

Most recent presentation was by the School Board.

CivFed will have a committee on racial equity. There is a connection to the Missing Middle study.

Oak Tree Demise (Aftab “Shaw” Hussain, Urban Forester for Arlington County)

Numerous white oak family trees (includes chestnut oaks) are dying. Neighboring jurisdictions in Virginia and Maryland are facing the same issue. In the last 10-15 years, we have had a lot of years with a very hard drought; in other years, we have had strong, heavy rains. Both of these are contributing factors. Pollution, lack of growing space, and other factors can also put enormous pressure on trees. Insects will only attack when a tree is already compromised. What can we do? If we see a young tree dying, water it. Provide proper trimming and space. Nurture it by avoiding mowing in the area (can damage the growing trunk). It is too early to talk about an infestation. The County recommends hiring a private arborist and does not have any County program to advise on specific trees.

Per Hutch Brown: To sum up: 1. Urban trees are under stress anyway due to compaction, lack of space, equipment damage, and other factors. 2. We are seeing rising levels of drought and heavy rains in the last 10-15 years, increasing stress on trees. 3. Stressed trees tend to die back/drop leaves early or even die. 4. Stressed trees are more susceptible to beetle attack, including ambrosia beetles, but that is a secondary factor. Hope that helps!

Task Force for N. Carlin Springs Road (Christopher George)

Developed a survey that was in Bluemont newsletter. Currently in data collection phase. Wants to know if he should keep survey open so Arlington Foresters can provide feedback regarding what they would like to see along N. Carlin Springs Road. Meeting minutes and site walks are available on the Bluemont Civic Association website (bluemontcivic.org), as well as link to the survey.

<https://www.bluemontcivic.org/northcarlinsprings.php>

bca-n-carlin-springs-road-task-force@googlegroups.com

cwgthefirst@gmail.com

Neighborhood Conservation Plan (Liz Kauffman)

AFCA draft plan is complete, but staff now working on overall Neighborhood Conservation Program. Some potential issues are changing the name to a neighborhood *improvement* plan, as well as a greater focus on equity. They will run our draft by relevant County departments and give us recommendations or information on things we omitted or that conflict with County policies. Likely will be returned to us by September/October. We are not required to accept the revisions. So long as they are modest, we can vote as soon as we receive it. Then approved by entire Neighborhood Advisory Committee and then sent to County.

Lubber Run Amphitheater

Series will run July 9-August 15. The County is considering having some additional shows in September. They will need volunteers to help with seating (COVID spacing).

Resumption of In-Person Meetings

Could we do this in September? Esther may look into reserving a room at the new LRCC. We do need to continue an online function as well. Jeff Horwitz will investigate method(s) that would work best for this. Sean Lyons noted that we may need additional equipment.