

**2019-2020 MCC Governing Board
Special Called Meeting**

March 25, 2020

MINUTES

Board Members Present: Julie Waters, Board Chair; Elizabeth John, Vice Chair; Raj Mehra, Treasurer; Terri Markwart, Secretary; Alicia Plerhoples; Maria Foderaro-Guertin; Megan Markwart; Xavier Jimenez; Carla Post; Suzanne Le Menestrel

Board Members Absent: Carole Herrick

Staff Present: George Sachs, Executive Director; Sabrina Anwah; Holly Novak; Ashok Karra

Guests: Albert – local resident who is a Boy Scout

CONVENE MEETING

The following motion is required by legal counsel of the Fairfax County attorney - to be approved in order to duly convene this meeting electronically:

Motion for Electronic Meeting

Chair: I move that the Fairfax County McLean Community Center Governing Board (Board) meet electronically pursuant to Va. Code § 2.2-3708.2(A)(3) to address and discuss the emergency caused by novel coronavirus (COVID-19), and to take appropriate action to implement mitigation operations, specifically, closures of its facilities, the cancellation of McLean Day, and modification of in-person voting election procedures for the Board's May election.

An emergency meeting is permitted because on March 12, 2020, Governor Ralph Northam declared a state of emergency with regard to the public health threat created by the potential spread of COVID-19 and its anticipated effects. This declaration directs local governments to render appropriate assistance to alleviate any conditions resulting from the situation, and to implement recovery and mitigation operations and activities so as to return impacted areas to pre-event conditions as much as possible. On March 17, 2020, the Governor entered a second Executive Order to implement measures of social distancing by requiring restaurants, fitness centers, and theatres restrict capacity to 10 patrons or less to inhibit spread of the virus. The Governor has also recommended limiting other gatherings to 10 individuals or less. The Board is responsible for determining the operating conditions of the McLean Community Center, the Alden Theatre, the Old Firehouse Center, the McLean Project for the Arts, McLean Day, and the Board's election in May.

In addition, the nature of the emergency and COVID-19 make it impracticable and unsafe to physically assemble a quorum of the Board.

The MOTION is so moved. Seconded by Mr. Mehra. **Approved unanimously.**

Chair Waters proceeded to convene a Special Called Meeting of the 2019-2020 Governing Board of the McLean Community Center on March 25, 2020 at 2:03 p.m. using Zoom to enable Board members, staff and members of the public to participate in an online virtual meeting.

ADOPT AGENDA The Agenda for the meeting was adopted as written.

PUBLIC COMMENT Mr. Albert stated he was participating only to listen and learn. He asked if he would be allowed to take notes; Chair Waters said yes, he could do so. Mr. Albert did not express any further public comments.

UPDATE ON ABSENTEE VOTING (BY MAIL ONLY.)

Synopsis of activities accomplished so far in the 2020 Governing Board election:

Candidate Orientation meeting on Saturday, March 14 went smoothly; it was substantive and well done. All candidates attended except for one adult (Melanie Sletten – her personal choice to avoid public contact) and one youth (Tyler Jensen – who notified us in advance about his out-of-town travel). The youth candidates really enjoyed meeting one another and continued interacting after the meeting. Some questions have come in as candidates are underway in their campaign efforts. Incoming questions are being shared with the ENC, and responses addressed back to the candidates by ENC Chair Plerhopes. Given the COVID-19 public health restrictions, candidates have been instructed to ONLY do online campaigning (social media; phone calls; e-mails). There is to be absolutely no interaction with the public by face-to-face, going door-to-door, or meeting with any groups – NO in-person contact of any kind.

Absentee Ballot packages mailed out as of March 25, 2020: 6 ADULT 91 YOUTH

Absentee voting is still taking place; staff is receiving and responding to all daily incoming requests for absentee ballots. Once MCC buildings are allowed to re-open to the public, a ballot box will be positioned in MCC lobby for people to drop-off their absentee ballot return envelopes. OFC will NOT be a location for ballot box drop-off this year; all absentee voting, and future in-person voting activity, will take place at MCC.

Opinions expressed: One candidate has expressed concern that some folks are hesitant to get their own mail because the virus can remain on surfaces for up to five days. But unfortunately, there is no workaround because we can't do electronic voting; absentee voting by mail is the only option.

Clarification by staff: Staff will exercise caution in receiving mail and opening the absentee ballots as they come in - wearing plastic gloves. We will continue the current absentee voting process by mail until the situation changes, up until 5/13/20.

MCLEAN DAY – May 16, 2020

Remarks by Chair Waters: Obviously, we need to discuss McLean Day, but we're not going to come to any decisions today about what McLean Day will look like. **The decision that must be made now is whether or not to go ahead with major commitments such as the contract to the rides vendor (which is pending to be signed imminently).** They want a formal vote from the Board if we decide not to go ahead with McLean Day at Lewinsville Park. It's safe to say that McLean Day, as originally planned... this COVID-19 emergency isn't going to be over by then [May 16]. Moreover, since schools have been closed for the rest of the year, if MCC is able to have an event at all, it certainly isn't going to be anything like the large carnival rides.

DISCUSSION ABOUT RIDE CONTRACT

Clarification by Mr. Sachs: So that everyone understands, I want to be very forthcoming in showing why and how decisions are being made. In looking ahead at what the federal government, state governments and local governments are stating, as well as what the Fairfax County Health Department and the CDC are putting out regarding large gatherings – there are strict protocol guidelines. I don't think McLean Day can fall within the protocols that are being discussed. It's the type of large-scale mass event that doesn't allow for managing any kind of appropriate access for that amount of people. Between now and May 16, there probably won't be any change to the guidance that would allow for such mass gatherings. Therefore, I don't think we can go forward with our regular McLean Day activities at Lewinsville Park.

Implications: This entails many cancellations that MCC must postpone or cancel (such as the carnival rides; tents; golf carts; food trucks) and related supplies for the large-scale event. Moreover, all vendors and sponsors who have already signed up will have to be refunded. It is what it is; this is what's going on in the world right now. NRPA, Parks Authority and Virginia

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Parks & Recreation Society are having to make similar cancellation decisions about large-gathering events. **The recommendation is that McLean Day (large-scale event in Lewinsville Park) will not take place. No contract for rides has been signed.**

We will continue effective messaging to the public and to the media. Decisions are predicated on the county's emergency closure declarations. There is no timeline of when everything will be back to normal. As of 5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 27, the county is closing all government facilities to general public. It is not a determination of "how long", or "when"... but rather '...until further notice.'

DISCUSSION OF VOTING

Predicated on Fairfax County's decision about re-opening all government facilities to the public, we hope there will be a possible option of allowing the public back into MCC facility on a limited basis before the actual McLean Day date of May 16, 2020. If that were to happen, we could hold McLean Day here at MCC - with in-person voting only.

Proposal:

As we would normally do at McLean Day, even if it pours rain... we must still have our voting at "McLean Day" (as specified in the MOU). It may be that there is nothing else here on-site except for the voting booth: on Saturday, May 16, 2020, from 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., which is publicly advertised to vote for the MCC Governing Board. I'm proposing we set it up here in MCC lobby, with the League of Women Voters staffing the voting area and handling the ballot-counting afterward. The candidates could have tables out on the sidewalk in front of MCC (pop-up tents) as a space to do their own campaigning. We would market to the community that this is how we will be offering in-person voting. This method would avoid any scenario of a true 'mass gathering' of 100 or more people. In a controlled environment, people could space themselves at safe distances and still go through the in-person voting process. This is the recommended plan, going forward – as to how we can still accomplish that part of the "McLean Day" in-person voting operation.

Summary by Chair Waters: Thanks, George; that totally all makes sense. Do you want a formal vote from the Board regarding the rides contract?

Clarification by Mr. Sachs: Yes – an acknowledgement by the Board that this is the preferred decision at this point. Mr. Sachs has spoken with Supervisor Foust and he fully understands the direction of decision-making about McLean Day in Lewinsville Park. The public is concerned; he agreed that MCC is correct to exercise due caution. It's not just MCC, but other similar decision-making going on county-wide.

Question: Was there any discussion about possibly re-scheduling McLean Day to sometime in the Fall? Is that too much of a financial risk? Or do we have to just cancel it altogether?

Clarification by staff: The difficulty is the location (Lewinsville Park) –by changing the date, four complicating issues present:

1. Fairfax Co. Park Authority is heavily-programmed on that site with scheduled sports fields and league play. It would require major coordination with the Park Authority to try to shoehorn a large-scale McLean Day event on some weekend in the Fall (thereby displacing scheduled athletic activities).

2. Availability of rides and contractors on a different future date: their availability on a future date is not known; it would have to be looked into. We don't have an answer on this yet.

3. Moreover, MCC has events already scheduled on every weekend in the Fall season – so where could we put it?

4. We do understand the interest. **But we still don't know what else MCC may be required to postpone or push out to the future. We don't have those answers yet. The COVID-19 virus restrictions could also impact upcoming Fall 2020 programming decisions.**

Clarification by Chair Waters: Because of the fact that there may not be a vaccine yet, and this virus could come back in the Fall when cold weather returns – it's a little early to start planning something. But we will continue thinking ahead as we go along.

ACTION ITEM: The MCC Governing Board may need to meet one more time via Zoom before May 16 to decide what we are going to do. But for now, what Mr. Sachs has articulated is the best case scenario to hopefully still offer in-person voting on May 16, 2020.

Ms. T. Markwart requested to have a vote on a MOTION to show support for Mr. Sachs' decision; a MOTION was made and seconded.

MOTION: That MCC Governing Board supports the proposal to NOT host McLean Day for May 16, 2020, as currently scheduled at Lewinsville Park, due to the COVID-19 outbreak and the state of emergency in Virginia.
Unanimously approved.

ACTION ITEM: Chair Waters directed that Mr. Sachs and Ms. Plerhopes please follow-through with the League of Women Voters about the Board's decision today regarding cancelling McLean Day in Lewinsville Park; and to confirm that LWV is still available on Saturday, May 16, to staff alternate arrangements for how and where MCC will be conducting in-person voting, as per their contract agreement (which remains in effect).

Mr. Sachs confirmed that LWV contract is still in effect and they will continue to follow-through with their contracted service. We will advise LWV how and where in-person voting will be conducted.

If MCC building is able to re-open to the public on-or-before May 16, 2020...

election outcome = both absentee votes + in-person votes

- Absentee voting will continue - once the building is open, people may come in to pick-up a ballot and cast their vote, as well as by mail.
- Absentee voting (by mail + walk-in) ends at 5:00 p.m. on May 13.
- May 13 – 15: No further absentee voting because all incoming Affidavits must be verified during this 3-day period.
- On May 16, 2020 – hold McLean Day at MCC (10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)
LWV setup inside MCC in normal table configuration like voting tent at Lewinsville Park.
Candidate tables on outside sidewalk at MCC (if no inclement weather). LWV will remain at MCC that evening to do the vote-counting, as per their contract.
PIO MESSAGING: To the public and candidates about new arrangement at MCC (NOT at Lewinsville Park).

If MCC building is NOT open to the public and still remains CLOSED on-or-before May 16, 2020...

election outcome = absentee votes ONLY.

- Absentee voting continues by mail only through May 13, 2020. Incoming Absentee ballots must be received by mail up through 5:00 p.m. on May 13, 2020.
- May 13 – 16: No further absentee voting because all incoming Affidavits must be verified during this 3-day period.
- May 16, 2020 – even if MCC is not open to the public, LWV will come to MCC building to do the vote-counting of all absentee ballots received, as per their contract.

OTHER ISSUES RELATED TO STATE OF EMERGENCY; CLOSURES

Comment by Chair Waters: I just want to make sure everyone is updated on other matters related to the emergency closures, one of those being that MCC staff is amazing – gathering some supplies (masks and gloves) to donate to the Fairfax Co. Health Department! Also, many MCC employees are at home, continuing their workload by teleworking; and they are being paid. Chair Waters asked Mr. Sachs to give a quick update on other issues related to the COVID-19 emergency.

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PHASED EVENTUAL RE-OPENING:

The distinction between being “open to the public” and programming actually resuming (providing program services) will be subject to ongoing federal, state and local guidance. It will be gradual... not a sudden re-opening of everything full-scale at MCC. We will also be cognizant of public perception and comfort level in willingness to resume interpersonal interactions and public participation. Because there are restrictions, we don’t know yet about group gatherings. If a limit of 10 people is still in place, we can’t offer a class, activity or program.

ENHANCED SANITATION:

We are taking a proactive approach about providing hand sanitizing stations, notices about handwashing (awareness). We are looking at additional supplies and awareness of sanitation options when people are allowed back in MCC building.

STAFFING:

While MCC staff are not fire/rescue, hospital workers or police (considered “essential”), there is a large load of advance planning and complex administrative functions which the staff is continuing to accomplish. We are engaged in vital communication with our community regarding existing and future programming involving refunds... postponement of events... concerns about future programs such as summer camps... and questions about Fall programming. Staff is keeping really busy at this time!

Mr. Sachs encouraged staff to telework if possible (that’s what the county recommended). Many staff are able to telework, with occasional visits to the office to pick up mail or supplies. Teleworking has been going on since March 13. No one on staff is being laid-off; there is no loss of income for anyone at this point in time. Staff indeed has much more workload now: timely communication to the public; processing cancellations; refunds; addressing questions from the public; alternative tasking and revised advance work. We are following county HR guidelines regarding documenting leave taken by those who are impacted by the public health concerns. There are special “Leave” codes in the payroll system which have been communicated to the staff.

Accountability: Teleworking option is being tracked by Comptroller Karra. All those who are teleworking are providing advance notice of their telework schedule to their supervisors.

FACILITIES:

Planned capital projects (CFC project list) are also being accomplished: scheduled electrical work is now being completed. It’s really the perfect time (with no public present) to get these things done at MCC facility! Lights (interior stairwell and exterior ramp); all exterior lighting is being replaced. Electrical outlets in the lobby are now installed. It’s been delightful to see all these projects happening.

Question: As workers are coming into the MCC facility, are they wearing masks and observing all cautions and virus safeguard protocols? We don’t want anyone to be in jeopardy.

Yes, - they are. All contract personnel coming on-site are well aware and following all social distancing and cleaning protocols. They are wearing PPE’s. There are so few people here [inside MCC] that social distancing is not really an issue; but those cautions are being well-practiced.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: **A list of programs and events that have been cancelled was provided in advance of this meeting.*

Financial impact is continuing to be tabulated by Comptroller Karra. As programs are being cancelled, refunds are being issued automatically (the public does not need to request a refund). **From March 13 - 25, on all programs, we have a rough tally of \$34K in lost revenue. That doesn’t include the impact of cancellations that we are now projecting for April/May.** An additional factor is MPA - which is also having to make adjustments. Lori Carbonneau notified Mr. Sachs that MPA has cancelled art classes and are postponing an exhibit to the Fall. The Spring fundraising soiree will be moved to September. It is difficult for MPA because they are a non-profit relying on income from classes and the fundraising events. *Comptroller Karra is tracking everything on thorough spreadsheets – for a comprehensive report once we get through this unusual period.*

STATUS OF SUMMER CAMPS & PROGRAMS:

No clear determination yet. Those decisions will be made next month after we have more information. Mr. Sachs is not ready to send the alarm to the public that MCC is not going to have any summer programs. There is so much going on at the federal, state and local level. We need more time to make such decisions: What MCC will be able to offer... and when we will offer it. We will know better later on.

ACTION ITEM: By mid-April, Mr. Sachs and Program Staff hope to be able to come back to the Board (perhaps in a Zoom online meeting format) with a proposal about MCC's summer program offerings (camps; trips) and give the plan for where we are at that point in time, as to whether we are able to do it – or not.

For now, MCC staff is focusing on getting April/May settled. We are already receiving some cancellations and phone inquiries about summer camps (refund requests). Some families are already deciding to make other plans.

Timeline: Spring season of MCC programming will be CANCELLED (mid-April through first week of June).

Further out in June/July, including July 4th: STILL PENDING - we need more definite information from all our sources. Stay tuned on those concerns and decisions, going forward...

STAFF'S CREATIVE INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT FAIRFAX COUNTY HEALTH DEPT.:

Chair Waters was very complimentary of amazing MCC staffing during this extraordinary time!

Alden Theatre staff inventoried supplies in the Scene Shop and identified excess quantity of sanitary masks and gloves. It was more than what they normally use during the performance season, so they approached Mr. Sachs about what to do. He contacted Fairfax County Health Dept. to ask if they could use these supplies. The county was very happy to receive these supplies and sent someone to pick them up from MCC today! She thanked MCC for the effort and thinking about re-purposing these masks and gloves to the Fairfax County Health Department.

Question: Did you post about that on our social media? That's a good idea as a highlight to post. Yesterday, DC Central Kitchen donated all their masks – it's fantastic and a great effort. It got a huge amount of social media traffic and helped DC Central Kitchen to receive more donations (because they are feeding people in hard-hit areas). I think it's something you should consider.

Absolutely – thanks for this suggestion. We will follow up with Ms. Anwah and Kyle Corwin to see what we can put up in our social media context, to let the public know how MCC is trying to help out.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Waters anticipates needing to schedule another Board meeting next month.

She thanked everyone for participating in this new way today. It's nice to see you all! She hopes everyone is staying healthy and sane - enjoying the challenge of trying to home-school your kids! No one anticipated that the end of the 2019-2020 Governing Board year would look like this.

Ms. Le Menestrel gave special affirmation to Youth members Megan Markwart and Xavier Jimenez, which was echoed by all board members: We are sorry that your senior year has ended this way. Hang in there. Yes – we are all so sorry. It will be a good story someday; and will be quite memorable in your life. It's historic.

Ms. Terri Markwart offered some helpful suggestions of excellent online resources for parents to be able to educate their children and develop a daily routine appropriate to each grade level.

There being no further business, Chair Waters adjourned the meeting at 2:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted – Holly Novak Executive Assistant to the Governing Board