

**McLean Community Center  
2018-2019 Governing Board**

**Regular Meeting  
July 25, 2018**

**MINUTES**

**Board Members Present:** Paul Kohlenberger, Board Chair; Desi Woltman, Board Vice Chair; Julie Waters, Secretary; Elizabeth John, Treasurer; Carole Herrick; Lauren Herzberg; Kat Kehoe; Megan Markwart; Terri Markwart; Raj Mehra; Alicia Plerhoples

**Board Members Absent:** None

**Staff Members Present:** George Sachs, Executive Director; Ashok Karra, Comptroller; Holly Novak, Executive Assistant to the Governing Board

**Guests:** Merrily Pierce, MCA

**CONVENE MEETING**

Mr. Kohlenberger convened the regular meeting of the 2018-2019 Governing Board of the McLean Community Center (MCC) on July 25, 2018 at 7:32 p.m.

**ADOPT AGENDA**

The meeting agenda was approved unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Honorary naming of rooms in renovated Community Center:**

Mrs. Merrily Pierce gave remarks stating that the McLean Citizens Association is the primary benefactor of MCC. As such, MCA strongly endorses naming the new Community Center rooms for Page Shelp and Mary Ann Hampton. This is not gender-oriented perspective; rather, it is merit-based: both women were “firsts” and really set the standard for the McLean Community Center.

MCA also proposes relocating the existing Charlotte T. Corner honorary name plaque away from the basement area, to be placed in more prominent display. Charlotte Corner was the first principal and teacher at Franklin Sherman School when McLean was nothing more than a country store and trolley stop. At the turn of last century, there was a Virginia state proposal that schools should become community centers. Charlotte Corner was enthusiastic about the idea that Franklin Sherman should become a community center.

Mr. Kohlenberger reiterated that McLean had a historical center, as Mrs. Pierce highlighted. The Board will take this recommendation under advisement and appreciates the public comment.

### **APPROVE MINUTES OF THE FINAL MEETING OF 2017-2018 MCC GOVERNING BOARD**

The Minutes of the Final Meeting of the 2018 Board on June 6, 2018 were approved unanimously.

### **APPROVE MINUTES OF THE FIRST MEETING OF 2018-2019 MCC GOVERNING BOARD**

The Minutes of the First Meeting of the 2019 Board on June 6, 2018 were approved unanimously.

### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

The County has approved further delay of the final delivery date for the renovation. It will be well into the fall until MCC operations are moved back in the building. There has been a change of management at the general contractor.

The Executive Committee met and discussed committee management, Board management, expectations, and general questions as the new governing year begins. There is some back-and-forth commentary reported in the Minutes of June 27 that can be reviewed by everyone.

Room Naming Proposal – after some discussion with staff, the proposal was developed. Page Shelp served for 25 years in the Executive Director position. Mary Ann Hampton was Page Shelp's first hire and continues serving today in a volunteer capacity. Both are deserving of recognition

#### Extensive discussion about the decision process for honorary naming of rooms:

*Question: Was it ever discussed whether MCC could identify potential naming rights that would provide donation monies?*  
No. It has been discussed in the past because there were cost expansions a few years back. However, as in the case of the gift for the courtyard, it has long been MCC practice to use the wall plaque for recognizing such donors. Maffitt was an early Presbyterian preacher who started the first school in McLean. Tom Steadman was the first Board member; he gave a lot to the Center. Bob Alden spear-headed performing arts. The consensus at the time was that this is a community center and should not be a 'corporate' presence. However, the Board didn't completely eliminate the option of people giving monetary gifts in the future for the purpose of designating a named room. Maybe in ten years if tax assessments are down, then the Governing Board may revisit the matter.

*Clarification from staff* – current precedent is the benefactor wall: The Friends of McLean Community Center has a plaque showing names of people who have contributed. *Opinions expressed:* DuVal Art Studio was a tribute and sometimes such special circumstances align. Perhaps people might choose to give \$10,000 today and receive a permanent marker. The existing permanent Wall of Recognition does allow the Board flexibility to specify a donation amount in order to have one's name placed on the wall.

#### *Question: What was the process for coming up with Shelp and Hampton names for honorary room plaques?*

First was the fact of timeliness on the renovation: a fast decision about such signage was needed because of imminent construction deadlines. This raised an interesting situation that some renovated interior spaces now are ideally-suited to have additional name plaques that hadn't been anticipated. The second criteria driving this decision was thinking about these individuals' particular contributions to the center and to the community as a whole; and that those contributions were truly extraordinary and unparalleled. For example, Page Shelp was the first visionary of the operational side of the community center (programs); she represents a "founder." In the past, there has been great emphasis on recognizing people who were strong on the Center... and 'players' in the McLean community.

*Question: Was any research done about these peoples' social background?*

*Opinions expressed:* The point is to make sure that the individuals don't have any skeletons in the closet or negative things in their background that wouldn't be appropriate for a prominently-named room. This is relevant in today's culture. Is there anything egregious? It's a legitimate question to ask. As a governing Board, we need to look at this. There is no motion that the Board must do a background check. Yet, in thinking about moving forward on named room plaques, consider a hypothetical of what if one of these individuals were members of the KKK or something? MCC Board has the duty to protect the community. But what is the moral guideline? An alternate perspective is that it would seem insulting to require a background check on these dearly-loved people (Shelp; Hampton). More to the point, during their respective careers, these women had to pass a thorough background check in order to be employed by Fairfax County.

*Summary of discussion:* Basically, the Board will continue in the same direction as followed in the past: allowing an honorary dedicated room to be named in recognition of a key contributor to McLean Community Center.

*Question: Similarly, does the Election & Nominations Committee do a background check on all candidates as part of the annual election process?* No. But this is a good point. People come and vote on all candidates as presented. As of now, (without any such policy) the Board will accept anyone as a candidate regardless of what their stances are.

*Opinions expressed:* However, that is not the same as permanently placing an honorary name plaque on a building. There are social ramifications... and financial ramifications. If the Board were to propose a name where there was some problem, the reputational damage would be against the Community Center. The Board has a legitimate interest in avoiding scandal.

These people (Shelp; Hampton) have lived in McLean for years and it would be well known if they had a scandal. Mr. Sachs had the pleasure of working for Page Shelp. It was a valuable learning experience to have a good friendship and professional guidance through her leadership ability. Mr. Sachs also worked alongside Mary Ann Hampton - who impacted positively every aspect of this Community Center: operations; publicity; acting as Executive Director; Deputy Director; Director of Youth -- literally doing it all!

*More opinions expressed:* Considering an example of being responsible for naming of buildings at a major university – in all cases, they do thorough vetting of the person being honored. The university officials' oversight duty is to go through the motions to make sure that nothing is going to come back and bite. It's a good topic to raise; a quick vetting check would be wise. It is not about these two people specifically (Shelp; Hampton); it's about process and due diligence.

Another Board member commented that blow-ups regarding university buildings being named after a problematic individual have always occurred where someone gave a ton of money. The university is at fault because they deferred in favor of accepting the large monetary gift. MCC's situation is different: in honoring someone for their contributions to the community, the relevant 'process check' is to solicit feedback from the people in the community. That is more valuable than a paper background check. MCC Board members are elected because we are in touch with the community and represent them. Thus, the Board receives direct input from citizens who know these named individuals personally. Though it was pointed out that today, many people don't know who Page Shelp and Mary Ann Hampton are... and may wonder why they are being singled-out for recognition.

**It is unclear at this point how the Board wants to address this matter. Mr. Kohlenberger asked if it is being suggested to table this Room Naming proposal and go back and do a review first?**

*Opinion expressed:* Yes. Good governance requires a brief background check.

*Question:* Have the two individuals been informed that their names will be placed on rooms in the Community Center?

These individuals have not yet been told that an honorary name plaque will be displayed in the building. One Board member cautioned that she knew a prominent politician who didn't want their name on anything. Therefore, if the Board does not contact the honorees ahead-of-time, it is making a huge assumption that Shelp and Hampton would agree to having their names placed on the building permanently.

**MOTION: The Governing Board approves the proposal for naming new rooms – pending and subject to: due diligence by staff, and acceptance by the individuals to have their names on the signage. Approved unanimously.**

*Opinions expressed:* The Friends of McLean Community Center [this group is a multi-faceted contributor - kitchen; gallery; balcony] would like some recognition as the original creators of McLean Community Center.

*Question:* Don't they have a special place on the donor wall? There have been many ideas to have plaques.

*Question:* The question remains... are there standing rules for honorary naming of rooms?

*Opinions expressed:* If the Board wants to rename the McLean Room at some point in the future, should there be a standing rule that a vetting process will be done at that time? How does this precedent become a policy – so that a vetting process discussion would become a necessary part of every honorary name plaque consideration by the Board in future decision-making.

The naming of buildings and rooms happens very rarely. MCC does have a reasonably consistent practice; however, the recommendation here is that a vetting process should become an official policy.

**The Executive Committee will examine this topic next month.**

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Sachs gave each Board member their personal copy of the Annual Pledge that was signed by all, and everyone will abide by.

New signs at McLean Central Park (replacing deteriorated previous directional signs):

A recent media article complimented the new outdoor signage as being clean, clear and easy to follow.

The renovation project is proceeding, but with some difficulties. Substantial Completion of the project has not yet been confirmed (end of September is most likely). The original superintendent on the job is no longer on the project (he is leaving the contractor company). Another person is coming in and trying to catch-up on all loose ends of supervising the sub-contractors. This new person focuses exclusively on the MCC building as his only project. Mr. McGovern, Mr. Karra and Mr. Sachs check on the progress weekly. It is proceeding... and small issues and problems are being addressed promptly. The recent rain has been an excellent test demonstration of water leaks throughout the building (there are many!) Leaks are being identified and resolved.

Mr. Sachs thanked everyone for participating in the Annual Planning Session on July 18. Mr. Kohlenberger added his appreciation for everyone's contributions to a productive annual planning focus.

As a gesture of good faith, when MPA summer camp's air conditioning system recently went down, MCC provided temporary room space (this continued for two weeks of camp). It wasn't overwhelming for MCC operations to accommodate this request. Now the A/C is fixed and MPA is back to their regular occupancy. There were no rental rates or fees involved.

Ms. Schallern received an e-mail compliment from one of the summer concert artists that MCC staff provided an incredible amount of support and were so kind: golf cart; snacks; support team; insect repellent spray. MCC's excellent logistical assistance was very much appreciated by the musical group.

Personnel transition: Mrs. Peggy Moore, an assistant in Special Events, accepted a new position in the Fairfax County Department of Family Services. This MCC vacancy will be filled as soon as possible after the public announcement for the open position is posted.

Summer Concert series began July 1. The July 22<sup>nd</sup> concert had to be cancelled due to heavy rain. MCC staff must drive-in from many directions and everyone needed a timely decision as to whether to cancel the performance. McLean Central Park grounds were saturated; but then the weather cleared, the sun came out at 6:00 p.m., and people were confused. Some attendees complained that there should have been a staff member on-site advising people of the cancellation. There is a percentage contingency fee paid to the band if the performance is cancelled. A priority message on Twitter should be sent immediately to announce cancellation of any event. MCC has a Twitter account that is used for this purpose.

4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks were well-attended. However, one set of finale fireworks didn't go off until 11:04 p.m. Those things happen. Next year's planning is looking at Langley High School to determine if there is an adequate radius to ignite the fireworks. The Board complimented Ms. Waters on doing a great job announcing to the crowd; she represented the MCC Board confidently.

Upcoming events: The Block Party at the Old Firehouse is coming up on August 11. This excellent community event offers a charity component – Bikes to Africa. Interesting displays will be inside (perhaps the old antique truck will be there), as a good draw for kids. The talent show is fun. Fall Garage Sale – September 15 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.; McLean 5K Fun Run will be on October 6 from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. MCC Board members are encouraged to attend these events. Proceeds from McLean 5K will be designated for the McLean Citizens Foundation: in McLean... for McLean... by McLean. Century 21 has been the lead sponsor since this event began. MCC will be the event manager for the 5K Fun Run.

Camp McLean, Teen Center are doing great! Camp ends on August 3; weekly trips continue through August 10. *Clarification from staff:* This year's fees are appropriate. MCC rates remain lower than local competition (Spring Hill; Reston; Falls Church), and there is still growth potential. A comparison study will be done to evaluate MCC rates in relation to other local summer programs. If there is hindrance or resistance due to price, it will become clear in a couple of years.

MCC offers an excellent ratio of staff to campers. The day trip programs use luxury buses for enjoyable transportation. People appreciate the quality of MCC programs. They can't say enough good about our staff and how well their children are treated! This is the priority MCC wants to maintain. Mr. Karra accompanied 22 kids on a day trip to Ocean City, MD and had a good experience. It is recommended that all staff should go on a day trip – they need chaperones. Ratio was 6 adults to 22 kids – age 11 to 13 + one high school-age girl. The staff is amazing – they know every child personally and always keep an eye on them. It is very consoling

that there is a lot of security for the kids. Everything was well taken care of on the entire trip. Parents like the easy drop-off and pick-up. Everything is well planned.

Financial stewardship –FY2018 actuals are closed out and the numbers are reconciled. Planning forward is underway for FY2020.

Mr. Sachs kindly mentioned that the new Executive Assistant is helping to do advance work and keeping everything on track for timely materials and support to the Board. Her work is much appreciated.

### **MPA: MOU for ArtFest**

Nothing has changed. There are no problems with MPA abiding by this MOU for ArtFest. Last year the MOU was finalized very late; this year the document is timely. The back page is a mock-up of the projected probable costs of ArtFest. Bottom line: total sponsorship can't exceed \$20,000. Total cash cannot exceed \$17,000 (established by Board motion).

*Question – Were we happy with the degree of visibility that MCC received at ArtFest last year? Is MCC being properly attributed in their web site?* Mr. McGovern, Mr. Kohlenberger and Mr. Sachs will attend a meeting about MPA ArtFest soon. The Board requests that the PIO office keep track to ensure that MCC receives appropriate visibility in upcoming marketing materials... signage... etc. Ms. Carbonneau (MPA) understands the agreement and is giving complete attention to details. Some things last year weren't fulfilled. She corrected them last year and brought forward the same items in this current MOU agreement.

*Question: The fact that MCC is providing services to them, is this only for the ArtFest? Is there a broader MOU for MPA?* The Governing Board in 2012 made a motion to provide this sponsorship funding to MPA for ArtFest specifically at the amount of \$20,000, with a distinction of in-kind and cash contributions. Cash is from the MCC budget (for invoiced rental tents) – it does not exceed \$17,000. The in-kind donation is supplying tents, traffic cones, etc.

*Question: Are there other ways beyond the ArtFest event in which MPA also gives recognition to MCC?*

*Opinions expressed:* Not really. The relationship is congenial and involves sharing of space... classes and programs. There are programmatic benefits in exchange for the space that MPA occupies. However, the public doesn't perceive that these entities are different (Dolley Madison Library vs. MCC vs. MPA). MCC's focus: O.K. as long as everything is done right and done well. People typically attribute MCC events to the Fairfax County Park Authority; in other words, there is a general 'perception' problem anyway. MCC markets itself as well as possible... and thoroughly fulfills its purpose of giving back to the citizens of McLean.

It might be fruitful to examine MPA's overall outreach to donors to monitor whether MCC is receiving deserved exposure. ArtFest was started in 2006. In 2010 and 2011, the Board asked the county attorney to advise about the contours of this arrangement. The outcome was that MCC cannot give cash to another organization; however, in-kind donation is fine. MCC must receive programmatic benefit (to protect everyone) – what we are getting; what they are getting. This MOU is most helpful if it is not nebulous.

*Opinions expressed:* The donation distinction is a very important point because MCC receives money from the county support the mission of MCC. MPA is a private non-profit. MCC Board has no authority to take money from the public and give it to a private non-profit. Therefore, a detailed MOU for ArtFest must be executed so that MCC receives documented value for in-kind donations invested. Everyone's interests are being served,

all parties are being treated fairly... and it's legit. MPA will provide a tent for MCC visibility. Several Board members participate on the ArtFest event committee; they can attest that MCC is getting a good deal from MPA. As a hugely popular one-day event from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. in McLean Central Park, there are many advantages: it's adjacent to MCC campus; it serves MCC's visual arts mission; it dovetails nicely. It is well-attended: about 3,000 people come and go throughout the day.

*Question: Does anyone have any reservations about moving forward on the MOU for MPA ArtFest?*

Mr. Kohlenberger will abstain from voting because he has other relationships with MPA.

**MOTION: To approve this year's MOU to support MPA ArtFest.**

*Discussion: Is this identical to last year's agreement? Yes.*

**The motion was Approved unanimously except for one abstention: Mr. Kohlenberger.**

However, it was pointed out that Mr. Kohlenberger doesn't need to abstain on any motion because he actually doesn't 'vote' as the chair of MCC Board. The chair's role is only to vote on matters as a tie-breaker.

#### COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULES

**Communications and Programs on First Mondays – starting at 6:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m. for Program Committee = August 6 will be first meeting.** Ms. Anwah from the PIO office and program staff will attend.

**Elections & Nominations Committee meets on July 30;** then they will decide on future meeting dates.

**Finance first meeting will be August 22 at 6:30 p.m.** (2.5 hours) to review the budget.

**Capital Facilities Committee – Monday, August 20 at 6:30 p.m.** The goal is to come up with a regular meeting schedule and hopefully piggy-back with Finance Committee meetings.

Mr. Kohlenberger reminded the Committee chairs to please update the Executive Assistant about all future meeting dates (and agenda items) so that she can develop a master schedule to distribute to everyone.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Kohlenberger adjourned the meeting at 8:52 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Holly Novak  
Executive Assistant to the Governing Board