

**2022-2023 MCC Governing Board
Elections & Nominations Committee
May 8, 2023 – 6:30 p.m.**

MINUTES

Committee Members Present:	<i>in-person:</i> Shivani Saboo, Chair; Sarah Tran; Ari Ghasemian
Committee Members Absent:	Kristina Groennings
Other Board Members Present:	Rasheq Rahman; Barbara Zamora-Appel
MCC Staff Present:	Betsy May-Salazar, Executive Director; Holly Novak, Executive Assistant
Guests:	None.

CONVENE MEETING

ENC Chair Shivani Saboo convened a meeting of Elections & Nominations Committee of the Governing Board of MCC on May 8, 2023, at 6:35 p.m. She announced that the meeting was being audio recorded. No changes were requested to the Agenda; it was adopted by acclamation.

PROGRESS TO-DATE: ABSENTEE BALLOTS SENT OUT

Phone, e-mail and walk-in requests: 424 adult ballots have been mailed/given out; 35 youth ballots.

Online requests through MCC website: 528 adult ballots; 240 youth ballots mailed out.

TOTAL: 952 adult ballots; 275 youth ballots distributed out (as of Friday, May 5).

May 10 transition point: in-person only from May 10 through 17 (approved by ENC on 4/24)

Beginning May 10, we will no longer mail Absentee ballots to households because we cannot guarantee delivery to intended recipients in time for the deadline closing of Absentee Voting on May 17. Communicating this early cut-off will allay any confusion and maximize opportunity for uninhibited access and participation in the election. The following notice is now posted on MCC website to alert the public. Starting on May 10, we will use the following standard language to respond to any phone or e-mail inquiries:

Please Note: Wednesday, May 10 is the last day absentee ballots will be mailed out to district residents to ensure they are delivered and can be returned to MCC by the deadline of 5 p.m. on Wednesday, May 17.

Remaining options: District residents can still come into the center during operating hours to vote by absentee ballot up until the 5 p.m. May 17 deadline; or residents can vote in person at the McLean Day festival at Lewinsville Park on Saturday, May 20, from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The online form to request ballots will be REMOVED from MCC website on May 10.

ISSUES ARISING DURING CAMPAIGNING

Every year, situations or questions may arise as candidates conduct their personal campaigns. It's a new experience and the processes are somewhat different than a typical public election. Chair Saboo has not heard of any issues – no calls or e-mails have been brought to her attention. There was one instance of 'spoofing' of Barbara Zamora-Appel's e-mail address by an unknown person. All board members were notified immediately to look out for that erroneous message and not click on the link.

MCLEAN DAY – BOARD PARTICIPATION & LOGISTICS INFORMATION TO CANDIDATES

***board members helping throughout the day in Candidate Tent row:** Chair Saboo reminded everyone to please use Sign-up Genius to indicate your availability to assist on McLean Day so we can plan accordingly.

***DRAFT e-mail to all candidates:** A sample one-pager of advance information about McLean Day was reviewed.

To be sent to all candidates, it clarified about the hours required for their presence at McLean Day and flexibility about having family members or friends fill-in at their candidate tent when needed.

***regarding candidate tent placements:** In the case of some youth or adults running together as a ‘slate’ consensus was that even if running together as a ‘slate,’ that does not mean their Candidate Tents must be situated next to each other. All respective tent placements are O.K. as determined by the random drawing at 4/26 board meeting.

***handing out candy at Candidate Tents:** It is difficult to enforce so we didn’t spell anything out explicitly. The assumption is - little things such as flower seeds, candy, slap bracelets are O.K but not pizza or something elaborate! We will monitor but don’t anticipate any problems.

***advisory about no roaming or pamphleting needs clarification** It says “no roaming or pamphleting”... All campaigning must be within their individual tent. Candidates may not intercept people walking down the lane because that pathway is a major ingress into the park; they cannot block it. Candidates may choose to be visible *outside* the main entrance (on Chain Bridge Road) although that works against our emphasis on being in Candidate Tent area.

We don’t want roving supporters harassing McLean Day participants elsewhere in the park. We will adjust the language to emphasize that ALL campaign activity must take place within the Candidate Tent area.

***adjust load-in time to 7:30 – 9:30 a.m.** There was a suggestion about load-in times to clarify when board members and staff will arrive – to be on-hand if they have any questions. Ms. Novak said the SignUp Genius starts at 7:30 a.m. – and we will advise the load-in time to be 7:30 a.m. Board member presence is necessary because an incident of negativity happened last year that required security involvement. That early timing is when people are interacting and is when Board member calming presence is the most needed. Hopefully this year there has not been such negativity and we won’t see any of that bad behavior.

ELECTION RESULTS ON MAY 20 EVENING

1. Notifying all candidates of the results: Chair Saboo will personally phone the winners and losers on the night of May 20. Signs showing the names of winners will be posted on MCC entrance doors. All board members will be notified of the results by e-mail.
2. Informal sign announcing winners posted on MCC entrance doors on May 20. Vice-Chair Rahman pointed out another concern - that individual candidates may want to let the public know. We should have standard language to say these are ‘provisional’ results and it will be formally announced to the media next week.
3. Press inquiries: It will be a Monday (5/22) activity to write a press release to be issued by MCC PIO office. Sabrina Anwah follows a standard sequence for advisor notices to the media. Ari Ghasemian clarified that the MOU clearly states that board members should not reach out to the press.
4. Informing Supervisor Foust: An official letter will be written and delivered to Supervisor Foust on Monday, 5/22 to announce the winners of the MCC Governing Board election. This letter serves as documentation for Supervisor Foust’s recommendation of these individuals to Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. The MOU requires full results of the election to be reported to the Board of Supervisors in their first meeting following the election (i.e. their May meeting). The names of winners will be submitted to BOS for their affirmation; until then, these individuals are still considered ‘preliminary.’ Nothing is “official” until June 7, which is when the pledge ceremony takes place at MCC to swear-in the new 2023-2024 Governing Board.
5. Orientation & presence at May 24 board meeting: May 24 evening is a welcome and orientation meeting with Executive Director May-Salazar for the new people (they are newly-elected, but not ‘official’). They are encouraged to stay to observe May 24 Board meeting.
6. Delivery of ballots + election materials to Supervisor Foust: The revision of the MOU states that all ballots are sent to Dranesville district Supervisor; our policy delegated that function to the ENC Chair. MCC staff member Holly Novak is tasked with that responsibility. Usually in mid-June, she requests some volunteer help

from board members to organize election materials in 5th floor storage to be delivered to Supervisor Foust's office. There are several archival boxes up there from prior years (2017 and earlier) that will also be delivered to Supervisor Foust's office.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT YEAR'S ELECTION CYCLE

Based on experience of this 2023 election cycle, the following suggestions were recommended as improvements:

1. **KEEP the option for online Absentee ballots requests.** The results show that many people requested ballots through the online link - especially a huge majority of youth. *We need to make a note to ADD this into the document next year, to show that it is incorporated as an approved method to participate in the election.

ACTION ITEM: Make a note for the 2023-2024 Governing Board to update the ENC Policies & Procedures to say that we do offer an online ballot request form.

2. **Consider which event(s) make the most sense to allow candidates to have a presence for campaigning.**

The two events this year (SpringFest; SIA Potluck) did not have much participation from the public in interacting with

the candidates. Consider Parking Lot Sale as a good option; we have started this discussion among MCC staff for next year. That event is more of a situation where people stop and mingle for conversation.

3. **Evaluate whether the postcard about becoming a candidate is necessary.** No one mentioned the postcard as a reason why they chose to run. Reconsider for next year whether it is worth sending out again.

4. **Have a pamphlet available throughout the year explaining board roles; timelines; "evergreen" information (not specific dates) – at events.** An example was developed and used in 2018 and continued it until 2021 (when it was discontinued): a 3"x5" general interest card about the board opportunity. Whenever MCC has a display table for any event, have this interest card available (a continuous message).

5. **Highlight the opportunity at our two annual public hearings (budget; programs) when more people are present** - to encourage people to consider running for the MCC Governing Board. January-February-March is when the information about the MCC Governing Board election is highlighted.

6. **Put evergreen general info. pamphlet online and in all MCC materials distributed to the public.** Such as The Alden playbill and Program guide.

7. **Note board service opportunity on meeting agendas (in appropriate months):** For example, in the March annual Public Hearing about Programs (where a lot of people attend), put it on the Agenda – have it visible so the public is made aware. At January board meeting, verbally mention that candidate packets are now available and you can seek ten signatures to run for the board. At February board meeting, put it on the agenda to remind people to vote in the Governing Board election.

The board will revisit this topic again after McLean Day, to note what things worked and what didn't. Next year's ENC will have the benefit of these insights and constructive recommendations in their forward planning.

OLD /NEW BUSINESS

Chair Saboo opened the floor for any other topics to address this evening. Nothing else was mentioned as a further topic for discussion.

ADJOURNMENT There being no further business, Chair Saboo adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m.
Respectfully Submitted, Holly Novak - Executive Assistant