

**2024-2025 MCC Governing Board  
Regular Meeting  
May 21, 2025 – 6:30 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

**Board Members ALL Present:**     in-person: Kristina Groennings; Katie Gorka; Gloria Marrero Chambers; Sonya Thott; Ron Keesing; Doug Jeffery; Kathleen Cooney Porter; Anna Bartosiewicz; Aaron Stark; Peter Pin; Michael Monroe

**MCC Staff Present:**                Betsy May-Salazar, Executive Director; Holly Novak, Executive Assistant; Matthew Hockensmith, Comptroller; Mike Fisher, General Programs Director; Sarah Schallern Treff, Performing Arts Director; Sabrina Anwah, PIO; Jonathan Melendez, Deputy Director; Dave Craig, Webmaster & Graphic Designer; Kyle Corwin, Social Media Manager; Mary Beth Woody, Administrative Assistant; Jennifer Garrett, Technical Director; Elizabeth Katz, Patron Services Manager

**Guests:**                                Nancy Sausser (MPA); Venita Wang; Liz Lawson; Inna Karas; Cole Mallard; Kathleen Gillette Mallard

**CONVENE MEETING**

On May 21, 2025 at 6:35 p.m. Chair Kristina Groennings convened a Regular Meeting of the Governing Board of McLean Community Center. It was announced the meeting was being audio-recorded for purpose of Minutes. No changes to the agenda were requested; it was adopted by acclamation.

**APPROVE MINUTES**

Minutes of April 23, 2025 Regular Meeting were reviewed. No changes were requested; accepted as written.

**MOTION:** To approve Minutes of April 23, 2025 Regular Meeting.

**Approved by a vote of eleven:** Katie Gorka; Gloria Marrero Chambers; Aaron Stark; Kristina Groennings; Michael Monroe; Sonya Thott; Kathleen Cooney Porter; Ron Keesing; Anna Bartosiewicz; Michael Monroe; Peter Pin – all voting “AYE.”

**Moment of Silence:** Katie Gorka requested a moment of silence to honor the life of Congressman Gerry Connolly, who passed away earlier that morning. Congressman Connolly gave major service to the community. Connolly served Fairfax County for over 40 years, including roles as Providence District Supervisor, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, and U.S. Representative for the 11th Congressional District since 2008. He was a ranking member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and served on the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. His local legacy includes the development of the Mosaic District and the Gerry Connolly Cross County Trail.

**CHAIR’S REPORT**

*\*remarks by Board Chair Kristina Groennings*

In the election of the 2024-2025 Governing Board, we congratulate **Ron Keesing, Anna Bartosiewicz, Liz Lawson, Venita Wang and Katie Myshrall** on their well-deserved win! Sincere thanks to all the candidates who ran and offered to serve—your dedication to the community is truly appreciated. Heartfelt thanks to the MCC staff, ENC, and Governing Board members for their time and hard work throughout the process. A special shout-out to Holly Novak for her inspiring work with teens on voting and accountability—what a wonderful way to introduce youth to civic engagement! Thank you to everyone who made McLean Day such a magical event! The weather was perfect, everything ran smoothly, and the joy was felt throughout the community. Huge thanks to the MCC staff for making it all happen. Finally, deep appreciation to Jennifer Garrett, Technical Director at The Alden, for leading an outstanding Macdonald Competition. Your behind-the-scenes magic made this year’s musical event truly memorable

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

*\*remarks by Executive Director Betsy May-Salazar*

**MCLEAN DAY HIGHLIGHTS:** Thank you to all the board members who helped with voting and connecting with the community throughout the event. McLean Day continues to be a beloved tradition that showcases MCC's value to the public. The atmosphere was joyful and welcoming.

**Estimated attendance:** 18,000: 9,500 on Saturday; 8,500 on Friday (similar to two years ago).

**Event Snapshot:** 90 exhibitors, 9 sponsors, 7 food trucks, 3 shuttle routes, 1 beer & wine garden, Governing Board voting tent & candidate booths, robust stage programming, carnival rides, petting zoo, climbing wall, jugglers, costumed characters, and more.

**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Recognition:** We were honored with special 50th Anniversary Resolutions from the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and the Commonwealth of Virginia. The audience was large and it was an energetic way to kick-off the day. A memorable moment occurred as current and former Board members stood onstage during the presentation, joined by Supervisor Jimmy Bierman, Delegate Rip Sullivan, and Senator Jennifer Boysko. A photo op at the 50th display captured the celebration.

**Environmental stewardship:** MCC continues to lead in sustainability. At McLean Day, our Zero Waste initiative successfully diverted 1,208 pounds from the landfill through coordinated sorting and composting efforts.

**Action:** A full report on waste diversion will be shared at a later date.

**Friday Night Rides:** This teen-focused event saw great improvements this year with enhanced staffing, better security, MCC information booth, and expanded activities. It's a growing success with plans already underway for further refinement next year.

### **Financials:**

**Carnival ride revenue:** \$24,000 (above the \$40K threshold required for MCC to earn a percentage of ticket sales)

**Sponsorships:** \$15,000 – a key growth area. Thanks to Comptroller Matt Hockensmith for compiling the data.

*A video of McLean Day was shown -- special thanks to Kyle Corwin for producing it!*

**TRANSITION TO NEW BOARD:** Focus now is welcoming our new Governing Board members, wrapping up the board year. Focus areas now include closing FY25, launching FY26, and beginning FY27 budget development. We will share FY27 draft budget with Finance committee in August and with full board in September. Strategic Plan tactics for FY26 will be presented at the July Board meeting.

### **UPCOMING SUMMER EVENTS:**

**June 14:** *Jason Robert Brown & Friends* – A special night with the three-time Tony Award-winning composer.

**June 17:** *Perspectives Series* – Juneteenth event featuring Tara Roberts, National Geographic Explorer and author of *Written in the Waters*.

**June 19:** Kick-off of the *Summer Concert Series* (Thursday nights at 7 p.m. with crafts and ice cream). We hope to boost the attendance throughout this summer.

**June 28:** Independence Day Fireworks Celebration at Langley High School.

**Summer Camps:** Launching mid-June. Camp McLean at Churchill Road Elementary, Speciality Camps at MCC, and OFC Trip Camps leaving from MFC

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### **CAPITAL PROJECTS:**

#### **OFC Renovation:**

The project is nearly complete with final walkthroughs scheduled. One additional piece became an issue last week: front garage doors leaking, and in need of repair or replacement. Pending review of final costs, we hope to propose Phase II improvements (kitchen cabinets, reception desk, game room flooring) before closing out the project.

#### **MCC Energy Upgrades:**

Lighting replacements is underway; HVAC control system installation begins next. Staff are coordinating access for smooth progress. They are working in tandem with staff as we provide respective space and rooms for them to access.

**Roof Repair:** *Question: In the big storms we had recently, did the roof patches hold up?*

Recent storms caused minor leaks. While flooding was reduced, we are assessing the integrity of the repairs and will follow up with the contractor as needed.

## **2025 ELECTION RESULTS**

*\*remarks by ENC Chair Katie Gorka*

Gratitude was expressed to Holly Novak for her outstanding work managing a complex and dynamic election process. Congratulations to our newly-elected adult board members: Ron Keesing and Anna Bartosiewicz, and Liz Lawson and youth members: Venita Wang (McLean H.S.) and Katie Myshrall (Langley H.S.). This year marks the second highest voter turnout in recent MCC election history, demonstrating good interest from the community. It was great to have so many youth candidates!

## **Call for Officers – Executive Committee of 2025-2026 Governing Board**

ENC Chair Katie Gorka outlined the nomination process for Executive Committee positions. All board members, including newly elected members, may self-nominate or nominate others for officer roles.

**Nomination Process:** Potential candidates must submit a written statement to the ENC Chair by tonight's meeting, expressing their intent to run or interest in running. Statements should include personal qualifications and reasons why they are interested in the position.

**Election Timeline:** Voting for Executive Committee roles will take place at the first meeting of the 2025–2026 Governing Board on **June 11**.

**Eligibility:** While it is suggested that candidates have at least one year of MCC Board experience, newly elected members are also eligible to submit their names. If there are no nominees for a Board office, the Elections chair will canvas all Board Members for nominees.

The following statements of interest were expressed aloud from the Nominees for Officer Positions:

### **CHAIR**

**Anna Bartosiewicz** – As I come into my fourth year serving on the McLean Community Center Governing board, I would like to be considered for the position of Board Chair. I have worked with the Programs and Outreach committee for several consecutive years and currently serve as the Vice Chair of the Board. Over the three years I have spent on the Board, I have come to appreciate the vital role the Board Chair plays in forging a strong relationship between their fellow board members and the Executive Director. As chair I would hope to build on the tradition of mutual respect and collaboration established by my predecessors. As the Community Center continues to pursue its goals laid out in its Strategic Plan, I believe I can leverage my background in management consulting and facilitation to foster a robust sense of collaboration between the Board and the Center. My profound respect for both our community and our Community Center means I will endeavor to serve both faithfully if elected as Chair of the Board.

**Doug Jeffery** – I, Doug Jeffery, would like to formally express my interest in running to be chair of the board. Over the last year, I have thoroughly enjoyed working with Betsy and the exceptional MCC staff. The important role the MCC serves in the community is clear and inspiring, and I would like to expand my role in serving alongside you. I am a 2nd year board member who has served as Chair of the Capital Facilities Committee and participated in the Finance Committee. Outside of the MCC, in my 18 years working at a large financial services company, I have had the opportunity to launch various successful programs in our capital markets and borrower support areas. To achieve this, it has required vision, leadership, and the ability to listen to various stakeholders and help develop consensus. I believe all of these would serve me well in this role. I believe the MCC has great potential to continue to build on its previous success and to grow and evolve with the community it serves. I would strive to keep the MCC a great place to work and visit with your family and friends. If I am lucky enough to serve in this role, I pledge to the board, its staff, and broader McLean to listen to the input of the community, and to be reasonable, balanced, and earnest in my efforts while serving as Chair. Thank you for your consideration. It would be an honor to serve as your Chair.

### **VICE-CHAIR**

**Michael Monroe** – I would like to submit my name for Vice-Chair. I have served on the Executive Committee this past year as Secretary so I got to see the inner workings of that – approving the Minutes and all the great work that Holly and the whole team does. I've served on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee and Elections Committee. As Vice-Chairperson, my primary objective would be to lead by example, participating in numerous community events and being a back-up to the

Chair, if the Chair is unavailable. No matter who the Chair is, I will support the whole board – and represent everyone. It would be a great honor to serve in this role and represent the whole community. Thank you.

## **SECRETARY**

**Ron Keesing** – Thank you very much for considering me for the role of Secretary. I am happy to work as part of the Executive Committee and look forward to having the opportunity to work as part of that team. I'm entering now a full 3-year term after my first 1-year term. During this past year, I served on Programs & Outreach Committee as well as on the Capital Facilities Committee. That gave me a good view of the inner workings of how the board works in those roles. I'm excited to help facilitate the communications, the Minutes-taking, and so on. I will say that you should not vote for me on the basis of my handwriting; but who knows - the point of AI-based transcription of our meetings could occur at some point in the future!

**TREASURER** No current nominee for Treasurer

Discussion: MOU limits Officer consecutive terms to two – Kathleen Cooney Porter has already served two terms. Question was raised if individuals could hold two positions simultaneously. Board members were asked to consider running for Treasurer and the Elections chair will canvas all Board Members for nominees. Board will reevaluate options if no nominations are received.

## **50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE**    *\*remarks by 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee Chair Anna Bartosiewicz*

The May 7 meeting began with an engaging overview of MCC's 50th Anniversary events, scheduled from January through October 2025. Discussions included:

- **McLean Day 50th Highlights:**  
Plans for photo backdrop signage, giveaways, and commemorative T-shirts to celebrate the milestone.
- **October Community Celebration:**  
Early logistics and food planning were reviewed for the capstone event.
- **Public Art Projects:**  
Executive Director Betsy May-Salazar shared updates on two exciting installations now in progress: a typographical mosaic sculpture and a mural on the OFC exterior wall—both designed to visually honor MCC's 50-year legacy.
- **Marketing & Outreach:**  
PIO Sabrina Anwah provided updates on marketing, outreach and social media efforts and the inclusion of anniversary details in the Fall and Winter/Spring program guides.

**ACTION:** All are encouraged to contribute to the ongoing **"My MCC Memories"** campaign by submitting photos and personal stories via the MCC website. This feature will help highlight community voices throughout the 50th year.

## **MARKETING OUTREACH OVERVIEW: The ABC's OF MCC MARKETING**

*\*remarks by Sabrina Anwah, PIO, David Craig, Kyle Corwin and Mary Beth Woody*

The PIO team presented a creative and comprehensive breakdown of MCC's marketing efforts, themed as "The ABCs of MCC Marketing." Highlights included:

**A = All:** Marketing is a center-wide effort. Every department contributes, and everyone has a role to play. The PIO team welcomed Mary Beth Woody, MCC's new Administrative Assistant, who has been instrumental in streamlining internal processes—handling invoicing, email distribution, expense tracking, media archive management, and much more. Her presence has been a game-changer for the team's efficiency.

**B = Brand:** MCC's visual identity and branding have come a long way. David Craig, who has served MCC for seven years, shared how he manages branding for MCC, The Alden, and the Old Firehouse Center (OFC). His responsibilities include designing advertising materials, maintaining brand consistency, website design, and producing Program Guides and promotional content. David has redesigned the Program Guide to make it more environmentally friendly and led the rollout of MCC's 50th Anniversary branding. His efforts have earned multiple awards, including a prestigious LERN International Award.

**C = Community Collaborations:** MCC partners with local organizations for shared marketing initiatives, including the McLean Project for the Arts, Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA), McLean 5K, and Safe Community Coalition. These partnerships allow MCC to reach broader audiences and create shared value.

D = Direct Mail & Digital Marketing: MCC's Program Guide, mailed three times annually, remains the most effective tool for community outreach. Digital marketing includes targeted Google ads, email newsletters, geofencing campaigns via O'Rourke Media, and enhanced SEO from the recently redesigned website.

E = Email Marketing: With over 6,000 subscribers, MCC's weekly email newsletter—edited by Kyle Corwin—maintains an impressive 60% open rate, far exceeding industry standards. The Alden also distributes a monthly newsletter with strong readership.

F = Finance: MCC has a \$50,000 general marketing budget and \$65,000 for commercial printing. Individual program areas also have marketing budgets. Most campaigns stay within or under budget.

G = Governing Board: PIO supports board initiatives, elections, and strategic communications.

H = Households: Marketing reaches 19,329 households in the MCC tax district.

I = Interaction: Each department manages its own ad budget but collaborates with the PIO for campaigns.

J = Jobs: The office leads recruitment advertising; recently hired Deputy Director Melendez.

K = Knowledge: Sabrina participates in Fairfax County's PIO Committee, collaborating on public affairs and emergency response.

L = Lists & Loyalty: Outreach to civic groups, PTAs, and faith-based leaders.

M = Media Relations: Strong ties with local press and news organizations; media coverage is shared with the Board.

N = MCC in the News: MCC maintains an online archive of news stories and features.

O = Old Firehouse: Marketing supports high-demand youth programs and sold-out events.

P = Program Guide: Still the #1 information source for residents.

Q = Quality: High-quality programs help market themselves via word-of-mouth.

R = ROI: With over 5,600 tickets sold at The Alden and nearly all classes filled, the return on investment is strong.

S = Special Events: Limited paid ads; most support comes from digital and Program Guide placements.

T = The Alden: Advertises via local arts media, radio, direct mail, and online platforms.

U = Updates: Website is used to broadcast emergencies and early closings.

V = Video: Kyle Corwin produces vibrant video content for social and web.

W = Women: Women are a key audience for programs, based on registration data.

X = Excellence: Marketing reflects MCC's strategic plan to showcase excellence.

Y = YouTube: MCC's video content is hosted on the Fairfax County YouTube channel.

Z = Zeal: Despite limited resources, the PIO team tackles every challenge with passion and creativity—and they ask the same enthusiastic support from board members and the community.

#### **Discussion included:**

- **AI in Marketing:** Board Member Ron Keesing offered consulting support to explore how AI might be integrated into MCC's marketing strategy. Sabrina confirmed that AI is already being used informally, and the county is currently developing formal guidance.
- **Advertising Decisions:** Ad placement is evaluated by effectiveness. For example, an ad near the Capital One bus stop was discontinued because few people referenced seeing it. Instead, advertising is focused where measurable engagement occurs.
- **QR Codes:** Board members suggested using unique QR codes on ads in specific locations to better track engagement. The team is considering this for future campaigns.
- **McLean Day Wristbands:** A creative suggestion was made to issue pre-registration wristbands for attendees—both as a memento and a crowd management tool. It could help track attendance and enhance security.
- Board members recognized Sabrina Anwah for her 25 years of service and leadership as she plans to retire in October.

#### **YOUTH AMBASSADORS - UPDATE**      *\*remarks by Aaron Stark, Sonya Thott*

The Youth Ambassadors held their final meeting of the year on May 7 and presented a thoughtful recap to the board. This year marked a pivotal point in the evolution of the Youth Ambassador Program, with new leadership, stronger community engagement, and a clear sense of mission.

- **Tutoring Program:** After a bumpy start trying to host tutoring sessions at MCC, the team pivoted and successfully launched a partnership with Cooper Middle School. This showed flexibility and resilience and resulted in a popular and impactful service initiative.

- **Park Clean-Ups:** Two events were held, including one before McLean Day, which helped beautify community spaces. This is now being institutionalized as an **annual Earth Day event**.
- **Volunteer-Focused Model:** Rather than simply planning social events, Aaron and Sonya steered the group toward meaningful community service, aligning with MCC's broader civic mission.

Aaron Stark and Sonya Thott shared that while participation was enthusiastic from a core group, attendance among some members was inconsistent. They recommend a smaller group or earlier onboarding to help build stronger connections and clearer expectations. Venita Wang and Katie Myshrall, both newly elected to the Governing Board, were encouraged to build on this year's momentum and support continuity of youth-driven initiatives.

Mike Fisher praised the leadership team, noting that: "Aaron and Sonya chose substance over flash. They weren't here to throw parties—they were here to give young people a real voice and a way to serve. And they succeeded."

He also applauded the development of **youth-led civic engagement** and praised their work ethic in identifying what didn't work, pivoting quickly, and finding success. The program is now firmly rooted in **service, leadership, and collaboration**—principles that are sure to carry forward with Venita and Katie at the helm next year. The board and MCC staff offered a round of applause and appreciation to all involved.

## OLD /NEW BUSINESS

Chair Groennings opened the floor for any matters of old or new business. Nothing else was mentioned as a further topic for discussion this evening.

## MCLEAN PROJECT FOR THE ARTS - UPDATE

*\*remarks by Nancy Sausser, MPA Artistic Director and Curator*

**Spring Exhibitions:** MPA's current Spring Solo Exhibits feature three diverse artists selected from approximately 250 open-call applicants from the DMV region. The work includes painting/collage, video/sound, and large-scale wall sculpture. The exhibition runs through June 14. Recent programming included a successful artist talk, and the next "Tea and Talk" event is scheduled for June 4 at 11 a.m.

**Summer & Fall Programming:** No summer exhibitions are planned due to summer camps being held in the gallery space. Spring classes are ongoing, and summer camps are filling quickly.

**Fall 2025:** MPA will participate in a region-wide initiative highlighting women artists across 10 venues in the DMV. MPA's exhibit will focus on sculpture and be part of a broader publicized campaign, including a book publication.

**ArtFest:** The ArtFest 2025 Call for Artists is currently open, with the early bird deadline on June 1. It is a juried event. MPA staff will walk the new MCP layout and figure out how the new space is going to work to feature the artists.

**ArtReach Educational Program:** ArtReach continues strong, serving groups like SPARC Solutions, McLean High School's Special Education program, Kingsley Commons, and The Mather Senior Center. One SPARC participant has become an informal docent, highlighting the program's success in engagement and education.

**Berlage Arts & Education Center:** MPA thanked MCC and the community for support of the new Berlage Arts & Education Center in downtown McLean. The design is finalized, a contractor is secured, and the permitting phase is nearly complete—construction is expected to begin soon.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

**In-person comments:** Chair Groennings invited the public to introduce themselves and give verbal remarks if they wished. Governing Board members will not be responding in-the-moment. The staff may follow-up with a written response if appropriate. The individual must first state aloud their residential address to verify if they are a Small District 1A-Dranesville resident. Each person was allotted three minutes to speak.

**Small District 1A- Dranesville resident:** Appreciation for excellent programming offered at MCC; however voicing concern about month-long focus on LGTBQ+ Pride.

The Chair asked if anyone else present wished to make a verbal comment at this time? **No one did so.**

**Written comments:** Individuals submitting written comments to be shown in these Minutes were pre-verified as residing in Small District 1A-Dranesville.

**No written comments were submitted in advance of this meeting, nor during the meeting.**

Chair Groennings read the following statement to conclude the Public Comment segment:

We thank members of the public for contributing their feedback this evening. The MCC Governing Board takes your suggestions very seriously. You are always welcome to attend our meetings. All MCC Governing Board meetings are open to the public. You can view the board schedule on MCC's website.

We have very strict county regulations and stringent oversight of our work in all areas. We work hard to meet these needs in being responsible to our taxpayers.

We are committed to transparency and making the process open to the public.

We welcome you back to future events at the McLean Community Center to see the value of your tax dollars at work.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Groennings stated that all business matters were now concluded. She thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 7:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Holly Novak - Executive Assistant