

City of Alexandria, Virginia
Alexandria Beautification Commission
P.O. Box 178
Alexandria, Virginia 22313

Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 14, 2019
7:30 PM
Durant Arts Center
1605 Cameron Street

Attendees: Kathryn Chiasson (Chair), Joseph Crowell, Mary Enschede (Secretary), Monica Murphy, Mellenie Runion, Denise Tennant (Vice Chair), Geoff Montross, Kevin Dunne, Richard Dorrier, Christina Mazukevich

Excused Absences: Cathleen Curtin, Donald Kent

Unexcused Absences: Eleanor Quigley

City Staff: Oscar Mendoza

The meeting was called to order at 7:33pm

1) **Approval of February 12, 2019 Meeting Minutes** – A motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. Tennant and seconded by Mr. Crowell. The Commission unanimously approved the minutes.

2) **Membership Updates** – None

3) **Commission Business** -

A) Review bylaws and vote on next steps:

Mr. Crowell highlighted the following changes made by the Bylaws Subcommittee-

1. Article III, Section 3. The “special meeting” old language required us to meet to call for a special meeting. Changed it to have the “chair call a special meeting with at least three business days’ notice.
2. Article III, Section 5. Cancellation of meetings – The Commission had no cancellation meeting policy. 1st sentence stays the same but in the second sentence we included language stating that if the city announces any closures, we will follow them.
3. Article IV, Subsection B. Vice Chair. Added “under vice chair’ each shall have the duties delegated by the chair.

4. Article IV, Subsection C. Secretary - Added the last duty of the secretary. Ensure that the website is updated regularly.
5. Article IV, Section 2. Election of Officers - Once elected, the officers take their position on Jan 1st.
6. Article IV, Section 3. Term Limits - Changed the max term limit to any 4 years.
 - a. Commission discusses whether the terms need to be consecutive. Ms. Tennant shared that the Commission needs to develop leadership and suggests raising it to 5 years.
 - b. Ms. Chiasson also proposes the idea of having chair subcommittees.

A motion to get rid of term limits was made by Mr. Dunne. Ms. Enschede seconded. No one approved.

A motion to disband the Bylaws Subcommittee, pursuant to the adopted bylaws was made by Mr. Crowell. Seconded by Ms. Tennant. All approved.

- c. Discussion about the date of the Commission's monthly meeting, 2nd Thursday of 7:30pm

A motion to strike the date and time in the bylaws for the monthly meeting (Article III; Section 1) was made by Mr. Dunne. Seconded by Ms. Tennant. All approved. The bylaws will be amended to read, "The Commission shall hold a regular monthly meeting."

A motion to vote on the bylaws was made by Ms. Chiasson. Seconded by Mr. Montross. All approved the bylaws.

A motion to make a final copy of the bylaws to be created and signed by those in attendance at the March meeting, as well as all members who were unable to attend the March meeting, was made by Mr. Crowell. Seconded by Mr. Montross. All approved.

Action item: Ms. Chiasson will send dates for new monthly meeting dates.

Overview of Key Changes to Approved Draft of the Alexandria Beautification Commission Bylaws:

- The "DRAFT" statements were removed.
- Article III. Section 1. Regular Meetings was amended to read "The Commission shall hold a regular monthly meeting." as was discussed, moved, seconded, and voted on.
- Because the Commission has 13 members at the time of adoption, there are 13 lines for signatures.
- The date of adoption was added to headers and in the final paragraph.
- The names of Ms. Chiasson and Ms. Enschede were inserted as the approving signature and attest.

B) Subcommittee Updates

i) Awards (meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month at 7pm):

- (1) **2019 ABC Awards scheduled for Tuesday, October 1 at 7:30.** A live online nomination form will be available April 1st. Mr. Mendoza will see if there is any room for changes to the online form. Last day for nominations will be Memorial Day, May 27th. Voting tour will take place on June 1st.
- (2) **Voting Tour** – Discussion on voting tour logistics. Two options were presented:
 - 1) Continue to get a quorum then vote, as done in the past; or 2) get full subcommittee plus anyone who is interested in attending.
 - (a) Ms. Tennant proposed that there be a quorum of subcommittee members plus any additional members of the Commission so at least six people attend the voting tour for this year out of our 13.

A motion to approve the subcommittee quorum and voting tour logistics was made by Mr. Crowell. Seconded by Ms. Runion. All approved.

- (3) Ms. Murphy: Joan Honeyman is designing the reconstruction of the historic Ramsay House garden, Alexandria Visitor Center on King Street. The project is going to be completed this spring which means it might be available for nomination. Ms. Honeyman asked if that would be conflict of interest if she speaks at the Awards Ceremony. If the Garden Club of Alexandria nominates the garden as a beatification nominee, it's possible that there may be a conflict of interest if they are voting and speaking. Ms. Honeyman is just speaking but no one in their organization is part of the voting. It could be a possible public nomination. Perhaps the property shouldn't be nominated until it has gone through the entire plating cycle. Can't tell what has grown or will grow. Ms. Murphy opens it up to the Commission for further discussion.
 - (a) Ms. Tennant proposed that if Ms. Honeyman is nominated then we would recognize the Garden Club, however, ultimately suggests that we wait a year to nominate the property.

Action item: Ms. Murphy will send out the map and distribute the criteria and previous award winners to everyone.

ii) Outreach (meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 7pm):

- (1) Spearhead our efforts for Earth Day on April 27; need to have an activity to get a table to coordinate people to be there. The outreach could amplify efforts of existing volunteers.

iii) Sustainable Landscaping (meets on the second Thursday of each month at 6:30pm):

- (1) Ms. Murphy shared that Mr. Dorrier took pics of all the DASH stops. Further discussion led the subcommittee to scrap the dash bus stops and focus their efforts on the gateways and medians. There will not be any real changes to the medians in the next year or so.
 - (2) Possible extension of the Quaker Lane (end is the gateway) and King St. (in front of TC Williams) This area is not affected by storm water. Mr. Mendoza will revisit the traffic data for such areas. Mr. Crowell shared that regarding the Washington St. medians, there is not any information from the City Manager's Office; No private party is taking it over.
- iv) **Vacant Lots (meets on the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:00pm):**
- (1) Ms. Tennant shared that fundraising is continues. Less than \$5k away from the goal. The restaurant, Evening Star, is involved and said if anyone donates \$25 that individual will be entered in a raffle to win a \$100 Evening Star certificate. Park will most likely be installed this fall -- hope to finish fundraising by June 20th.
 - (2) The subcommittee is looking for new ideas for a new project. Any space that needs beautification. Making it useful with a basketball court or public art piece. The subcommittee has a planned fundraiser for May if the subcommittee doesn't come close to the goal. Please check GoFundMe. The subcommittee is focused on Mount Vernon Ave. and Route 1.
- 4) New Commission Business- None**
- 5) Staff Report – Mr. Mendoza will send an email.**
- 6) Agenda Items for Thursday, April 11th, 2019 Meeting**
- a) Ensure everyone has access to SharePoint; contact IT.
 - b) All meeting dates going forward will now go at the bottom of the agenda, along with any other big dates/ activities.
 - c) Ms. Chiasson will send dates for new monthly meeting dates.
 - d) Ms. Murphy will send out the map and distribute the criteria and previous award winners to everyone.
- 7) Public Comment/ Discussion – None.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:02pm