**Minutes: Bluemont Executive Committee**

Via Zoom and at the Hickory Room of the Lubber Run Community Center

July 26, 2023; 7:00 PM

1. The President established that a **quorum** was present.
2. Executive Committee members unanimously voted to **approve the minutes** of the June Executive Committee meeting, without changes
3. BCA member Kate Mattos volunteered to serve as the **fourth BCA Alternative Delegate to the Arlington County Civic Federation**. The Executive Committee unanimously voted to select Kate to fill this vacant position.
4. **Reports from Executive Committee members and Civic Federation Delegates and Alternate Delegates**

The **President** reported that the July 4th bell ringing had been a great success with around 75 people attending.

The President reported that in response to his correspondence, Virginia State Senator Favola had set up a zoom meeting with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), Arlington County officials, and BCA to discuss neighbors’ concerns regarding increased noise following the changes to the sound walls along I-66. The zoom call will be on August 7th at 2:00 PM. The President said he would make sure that the neighbor leading on this issue, Daniel Peyton, would be able to attend the meeting. He noted that Mr. Peyton has also agreed to serve as BCA’s representative to the airport noise group. The Executive Committee discussed how to ensure affected neighbors are informed about this meeting.

The President reported that the Silver Diner had named a neighborhood liaison.

The President reported on the County zoom meeting regarding what to do about the overpopulation of deer. He noted that the county is seeking public comment on proposals to call the deer by shooting, bow and arrow, sterilization, or fencing off natural land being harmed by the overpopulation of deer.

On behalf of the **Treasurer,** the President gave the Treasurer's report, which was that the civic association debit card had been compromised with over $1400 stolen to pay for travel in San Francisco. The bank is investigating. BCA has requested that the funds be restored. The debit card has been replaced. BCA had received $60 in dues, leaving a current balance of $683.

The President asked Executive Committee members to say something about what they would like to see the civic association do over the next year.

**Alternate Civic Association Delegate** Kate Mattos would like to see the civic association attract more members, including by having more community activities like the bell-ringings. She noted that BCA needs to find ways to involve more people in more activities. She recommended BCA measure the results of the events to see which events bring in new members, and analyze when, where and how BCA gets new members.

**First Vice President** Matt Harrison recommended a membership drive, and that BCA follow applications for building of Missing Middle Housing. He said that presentations at BCA meetings provide a lot of valuable information to people and could be a draw for new members.

**Second Vice President** Carla Conover recommended that BCA coordinate with the PTA’s of local schools, which provide information about a lot of other meetings by groups in their neighborhood. She noted that it is difficult for members to remember to renew their dues every year and recommended providing the option for people to pay for three years at a time.

**Alternate Civic Federation Delegate** Chris Kuhman recommended trying to increase membership. He recommended allowing members to pay online, and putting a QR code on signs and flyers that link to the BCA website.

The **Secretary** described past efforts of BCA and the Treasurer to allow BCA to accept dues payments online, including that the one bank willing to accept the BCA account did not provide Zelle. Other Committee members recommended trying Mainstreet Bank, the Arlington Credit Union, or Venmo.

**BCA Civic Federation Delegate** Allen Norton asked whether BCA had a map showing the distribution of active members. He noted the need to recruit members and to ask people to help with BCA efforts.

**Parks Liaison** Hugh Robinson discussed the County’s continued slow response to his queries related to whether BCA should seek to have the land at the intersection of 9th and Harrison be designated as a park. Regarding the application of Bluemont resident David Juras to continue the community garden at the corner of 9th St and Harrison, Mr. Robinson said the Parks and Recreation was still waiting for a response from the County office of risk management and the County attorney before proceeding. Mr. Robinson said people started planting in the garden, but somebody reported it to the County who told the people to cease gardening. The County spread the mulch the County had previously left at the site. The land is owned by the County, which has a contractor cutting the grass. Mr. Robinson said he was going to put the issue of whether BCA should seek to have the land designated as a park on hold. If BCA feels strongly enough to go to the County Board about making the land a park, he would do the work.

**BCA Civic Federation Delegate** David Hughes noted that construction of Missing Middle Housing could be an issue that generates a lot of interest in the community. Although not Missing Middle Housing, he described neighbor concerns about a very large single-family house that people living near the site had no idea was going to be built. He noted that when construction is done by-right, such as with Missing Middle Housing, the developer does not have to announce their intentions or their project before construction begins, so people have no idea what is happening.

5. **New Business**

* 1. **Proposal to set up a committee to monitor the EHO (Missing Middle Housing) permit applications**

The Executive Committee unanimously approved the proposal to establish a BCA Committee to follow permit applications to build EHO housing. The members of the EHO Committee are Kate Mattos (chair), Chris Kuhman, Matt Harrison and Allen Norton.

b. **Proposed Meeting Dates**

The President proposed the following schedule for General Membership and Executive Board meetings:

9/27

10/25

11/29 (Thanksgiving this year is on the 23rd.)

12/27

1/31/24

2/28/24

3/27/24

4/24/24

5/29/24

6/26/24

The Executive Committee agreed to ask the General Membership whether a meeting on 12/13 would work, but approved the rest of the proposed schedule.

c**. BCA dues**

The Executive Committee agreed to discuss the issue further at the August meeting. The **President** noted that the General Membership would need to approve any changes to the bylaws to raise dues.

d. **New Resident Flier**

The President said the New Resident Flier he had previously circulated to the Executive Committee was now available for download from the BCA website. He said he would circulate the flier via BCA e-news update, and request that when a new neighbor moves in, BCA members give them the flier.

e. **Future Meeting Topics**

The League of Women Voters will make a 20-minute presentation at the September 27 General Membership meeting. Mount Olivet Methodist Church will make a short presentation at a General Membership meeting regarding their plans for development of what is now a church parking lot at the corner of 16th Street, N and Glebe Road. The President plans to invite the police to the October 25 General Membership meeting, and BCA would use the September meeting to ask members what questions and concerns they would like BCA to send the police in advance of a meeting with the General Membership. Other topics discussed were: asking the County Manager speak; a County Board member; NOVA Parks coming to discuss widening of the W&OD Trail; and the Arlington Group promoting planting of native plants, perhaps with the extension agent and the neighborhood volunteers who maintain the gardens at Bon Air Park.

f. **October Neighborhood-Wide Newsletter**

Topics for the October newsletter discussed include:

The BCA’s EHO permit application committee, and sharing information from County Zoning officials about who neighbors can contact if they have concerns about single family housing being built on neighboring property.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm

Minutes prepared by Secretary Laura Kirkconnell