

## Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December 2, 2010

Approved February 24, 2011

The November/December 2010 Meeting of the Board of the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations was called to order by President Tania Hossain at 7:30 p.m. at the Marco Polo Restaurant in Vienna.

Present: Leonard Bumbaca, Esther Ferington, Joe Gibson (guest from McLean Citizens Association), Bill Hanks, Don Hinman, Tania Hossain, Jeff Parnes, Gail Parker, Flint Webb, and Ed Wyse.

### **Organizational Topics**—*Tania Hossain*

**Chair of the Human Services Committee**—A candidate has been chosen to fill this vacant position but cannot attend meetings until January and will be introduced then.

**Approval of Board Meeting Minutes**—The board approved the minutes of the October 28, 2010, board meeting.

**Meeting Locations in 2011**—The Packard Center renovations will last well into 2011. The Federation will have to meet in alternate locations until renovation is completed.

### **Old Business**

#### **Reapportionment of Supervisor Districts**—*Tania Hossain*

From among three volunteers, a selection committee of current and past Federation presidents chose Rob Jackson, President of the McLean Citizens Association, to be the Federation's representative to the Advisory Citizen Committee that will work with the county staff January through March 2011 to propose reapportionment of supervisor districts.

### **New and Miscellaneous Business**

#### **Recruiting and Sustainment of Membership**—*Tania Hossain*

This discussion was the primary focus of the meeting, as board members brainstormed and discussed what the Federation needs to do to recruit and retain members. Key discussion points are summarized here.

1. Send member organization's representatives short, informal e-mail messages reminding them of meetings. (This would be in addition to the more formal monthly messages that currently broadcast the agenda and *The Bulletin*.)
2. Our web site enumerates benefits of membership, but what do we say verbally when engaging prospective members?
3. Meet in locations around the county. The temporary absence of the Packard Center has us doing this presently. Suggested meeting locations are the Montebello Condo Association in Huntington (proposed by Gail), the McLean Citizens Association (proposed by Joe), and the Fairfax County Governmental Center.
4. Is there a recruiting/retention role for district council representatives? Difficulties are that two districts do not have councils and in some other districts the councils are minimally active.
5. Newspaper coverage of Federation events has been minimal. While this may be partly due to the decline of the newspaper industry, what can we do to gain more press coverage?
6. Can we use social media to publicize what we are doing and to communicate two-way?
7. Hold an open house for new and prospective members to explain what we do and to recruit for members of our committees. The picnic is a possible venue for the open house.
8. Hold more "hands-on" programs featuring how-to information for homeowners associations (HOA) and civic associations. Show them what services they can provide to their members.

Address topics such as legal/liability issues, creating location identification, living in harmony, succession planning, and dealing with professional managers.

9. This prior proposal generated discussion over the different needs of HOA and civic associations and whether programs aimed at HOA needs would benefit civic association members. Do we have the capacity to present dual programs for the two audiences?
10. HOA workshops could be held on Saturdays or at district council meetings. Don opined the CAI would be resource to draw upon; he could coordinate. Michelle Thompson on the county staff is another great resource. We should in advance provide her specific questions—tailored to our members' needs—to address.
11. One of our messages to potential members is that the Federation informs its members of the bigger picture: what is happening at the county level, what is happening elsewhere in the county that may be of interest; and how other associations are tackling common problems. We can link associations who have questions with our appropriate committees and with other associations that have already successfully addressed the area of concern.
12. Ask associations what they want from the Federation. How can we help you?
13. A venue with more space than Braddock Hall is needed for our membership meetings, especially if attendance increases.
14. Sponsor debates on issues of interest.
15. Increased interest in the Citizen of the Year award and banquet would aid recruiting. Last year's low attendance was attributed by various participants to a late change of banquet date, a lack of press coverage, and a perceived partial boycott by members of the opposition political party to the guest speaker. While it is impossible to determine how much each of these factors may have contributed to low turnout, we should seek to avoid or mitigate these factors in 2011.
16. As a program topic, have vibrant associations describe why they are successful.
17. Improve communications with the Federation's representatives to boards and commissions.
18. The Federation's web site's "contact us" page would be more useful if the categories were evident at the top of the page with links to jump to individual categories. (Currently the page is quite long and requires the reader to scroll down; some readers have not gone beyond the first screen view and do not know what lies below.) Jeff said he would modify the page accordingly.
19. Flint suggested listing the Federation's representatives to environmental organizations on the environmental committee's part of the web site in addition to on the "contact us" page. Jeff, the webmaster, asked Flint to send him a description of how Flint would like this to appear.

#### **HOA Issues for Federation Consideration**

In the course of the membership discussion, two HOA related issues were identified that the Federation might address.

1. Many homeowners are unaware of HOA's liability risks. The fiscal impact on homeowners could be significant and unexpected when HOA's are sued or when HOA infrastructure, such as streets and storm water management facilities, need capital improvements.
2. Due to liability risk, a minimum size limit for HOA formation seems appropriate. It was alleged at the meeting that HOA have been created in the county whose size is as small as four homes.

#### **Identifying and Mapping Associations—Don Hinman**

Don described working with the county's GIS staff to depict the geographic coverage of associations in the county. He was beginning with his own district and passed around a map overlay showing association land areas in Lee District. To supplement the map overlay, Don seeks to gather information on subdivision and association names, organization type (HOA or civic association), and membership in the district council and Federation. Don will ask other districts' representatives to assist with gathering this information within their districts.

**Board & Committee Reports**—There were no board or committee reports.

**District Council Reports**—There were no district council reports

**Adjournment**—The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

**Next Meetings**

The next membership meeting is scheduled December 16, 2010, at 7:30 p.m., at the Sully District Community Room in the Sully Governmental Center, 4900 Stonecroft Boulevard, Chantilly.

The next board meeting is scheduled January 27, 2011 at 7:30 p.m. at Braddock Hall, 9002 Burke Lake Road, Burke.

Minutes prepared by Ed Wyse, Recording Secretary