

Mason Neck Citizens Association Monthly Board Meeting
January 3, 2024, at Cranford Methodist Church

Attendees

<i>MNCA Officers</i>		<i>Other Members of the Board of Directors</i>	
President	Nancy Wilochka	Peter Weyland	
Vice President	Marvin Miller	Scott Stroh	
Secretary	Jim Martin	Rick Hutson	
Treasurer	Bruce Scott	Arsenio Ayon	

President Nancy Wilochka called the meeting to order at 7:33 and presented the agenda. The following were discussed:

Minutes from October and November Meetings: A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the October and November 2023 Board meeting minutes. Jim noted that MNCA had received a letter from a Mason Neck resident enclosing a contribution of \$200.

Treasurer Report: Bruce reported that, including the just-received \$200 donation, MNCA has \$3946.65 in its account, with outstanding payments due to Jim and Hillary for candidates' night expenditures.

BLM/Meadowood Parking Lot: Nancy referenced a good "Mount Vernon On the Move" (MVOTM) article on the state of play with this issue. Jim passed to Marvin several legal documents received in the mail from BLM and the Department of Interior concerning the MNCA's appeal of the BLM decision to proceed with the large, paved parking lot. A November 27 document denies the MNCA's appeal for a stay of the decision to proceed, and a December 7 document is a motion to dismiss MNCA's appeal. Marvin thinks there are problems with the BLM's contentions, particularly that it is not clear BLM ever consulted with anyone in the Fairfax County government and the documents do not adequately address MNCA concerns about impact on the watershed. Nancy noted that the MVOTM article quoted BLM saying it would use Fairfax County best practices.

Gunston Rd. Fire Station: Nancy called attention to another MVOTM article about plans for the new fire station. The plan is still to site the new station next to the existing station, which will be torn down. There are unanswered questions about whether/where the existing crosswalk, Boy Scout trail, and stormwater retention pond will be relocated, as the new station site will block all three.

Internal Audit: Nancy noted this is still on our "to-Do" list. Attendees agreed Hillary had said she would take the lead on it.

Digitization of MNCA Files: Nancy noted that Peter had set up a GoogleDocs folder and put several documents in it, but there are many more historical documents that could be digitized. You can scan documents for free at Fairfax County libraries. Dick may have many in his files from his many years as MNCA Secretary.

Gunston Rd. Multi-Use Trail: Nancy asked whether anyone had heard anything more about this following the Board's submission of a letter supporting Fairfax County's request for federal funding for the trail. Peter agreed to check with his sources. Jim noted that Mount Vernon Supervisor Storck had told him at an event that he would like to see the path completed, but paths along Fort Hunt Rd and Newington Rd. are the County's first priorities.

Updates to Accomplishments List: Hillary provided the most recent version; Nancy suggested that Board members review and provide input.

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Annual Meeting/Additional Membership Meeting: The updated accomplishments list should be a focus of the annual meeting, to be held in May or June. Scott noted it will be important to nail down a date soon, as June is a very busy month for both his family and Gunston Hall. The Board discussed calling a separate membership meeting in the Spring, to which State Senator Surovell (now the Senate Majority Leader) and Rozia Henson, the newly elected Delegate who represents Mason Neck could be invited. The Board tentatively suggested April 23 for such a meeting. Other items for either the April or June meeting could be a discussion of the Living Shorelines issues and/or updates from Mason Neck State Park and Pohick Bay Regional Park.

Gunston Hall Updates: Gunston Hall has two capital projects in the works as part of its Master Plan and has a funding request before the state legislature for support of these projects. Gunston Hall also will play a major part in the Virginia celebrations of the United States' 250th anniversary of independence and has several other events planned. Scott offered to brief the Board in more detail at a future meeting.

Caisson Horses: The FY 2024 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) as passed into law preserved language favorable to our concerns, including regular briefings to the relevant congressional committees (the first on February 21) and a report on possible locations for a caisson horses' facility that is required to consider impact on local recreation access. Things still are moving in the right direction, but the Board will need to keep an eye on the issue, including checking with our contacts to see how the February 21 briefing goes.

ACTION ITEMS

- Letter for Nancy's signature thanking resident for donation: **Action: Jim**
- Review BLM/DOI legal to determine next steps: **Action: Marvin**
- Contact Fire Chief about new fire station/crosswalk/Boy Scout trail: **Action: Nancy**
- Internal Audit: Call Hillary about next steps: **Action: Nancy**
- Reach out to Dick about digitizing MNCA historical files: **Action: Jim**
- Reach out to local officials for update on multi-use trail: **Action: Peter**
- Circulate "**Brag Sheet**" of MNCA Accomplishments for Board Member Edits: **Action: Jim.**
- Determine Date/Speakers for April General Meeting: **Action: Nancy (+Marvin?)**

Next Board Meeting: Wednesday, February 7 at Cranford Methodist Church

Motion to adjourn: Passed at 8:26.

Mason Neck Citizens Association Monthly Board Meeting
February 7, 2024, at Cranford Methodist Church

Attendees

<i>MNCA Officers</i>		<i>Other Members of the Board of Directors</i>	
President	Nancy Wilochka	Peter Weyland	Annie Collins
Vice President	Marvin Miller	Dick Kennedy	
Secretary	Jim Martin	Rick Hutson	
Treasurer	Bruce Scott	Hillary Clawson	

President Nancy Wilochka called the meeting to order at 7:33 and presented the agenda. The following were discussed:

Nancy noted that Scott is out of town. Jim noted that Annie will be late. The Board welcomed Hillary back from her post-surgery absence.

Minutes from January Meeting: A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the January 2024 Board meeting minutes.

Treasurer Report: Bruce reported that MNCA has \$3746.65 in its account.

BLM/Meadowood Parking Lot Action and MNCA Appeal: Marvin updated the Board on the status: BLM made its decision to go ahead with the original parking lot design; MNCA appealed, with copy to Secretary of Interior. BLM filed motion to dismiss saying MNCA did not have standing and did not include a Statement of Reasons. Marvin filed a response in January saying BLM was wrong on both counts, as MNCA had cited reasons, had provided comments on the proposal, and clearly has standing as a representative of the community. H has not yet heard a BLM response.

Caisson Horses: Peter noted he had heard the Army has abandoned the idea of using either the Mustang Loop or the Hidden Pond areas at Meadowood SRMA. Others noted the Hidden Pond Area pasture is still being maintained. Nancy suggested the Board should send thank you letters to people who have been helpful on this issue, particularly Dale (Rumberger?), Ann Elise Sauer, and Lynn Taylor. Marvin suggested we wait on sending letters until it is 100% clear the Army has abandoned the idea. Jim noted that the first Army briefing to the Armed Forces Committees, required in the FY 2024 NDASA, is due no later than February 20, and we should try to get a read-out.

Digitization of MNCA Files: Nancy suggested we turn the Caisson Horses GoogleDocs folder into an MNCA folder (Board-only access). Dick noted he has folders with MNCA documents going back to 2011, which he is slowly going through. We will want to create folder (e.g., Minutes by year, correspondence by year, etc.). Hillary will forward copies of letters she sent during her tenure as President to Peter. Minutes should also continue to be posted on the website and should be sent to Peter for that purpose.

Updates to Accomplishments List: Jim noted that there are two different lists – one in bullet form and a second in narrative form. Although the two have similar content, they are useful for different purposes. Nancy noted that the website shows the bullets and notes the upcoming 2023 Annual Meeting those bullets should be updated to reflect recent achievements, such as the Caisson Horse issue, and the upcoming April 30 Annual meeting.

MNCA General Membership Meeting: The Board discussed topics for this proposed Annual 30 meeting. Possibilities include the Wetlands RPA issue (perhaps Dan Storck's new Environmental Committee), status of Old Colchester Road flooding/deteriorating railroad underpass, updates from our State Senator and Delegate on the current legislative session, and an update from Scott

Stroh on both Gunston Hall's plans and Virginia's plans for the United States 250th anniversary (Sesquicentennial).

Annual Elections Meeting: Dick noted that our Annual Elections Meeting usually is held in May or June to elect Board members. The Board then discussed the possibility of simply combining the proposed April 30 meeting with the Elections meeting and hold it in early May and agreed to pursue this option. Nancy will talk to Scott about availability at Gunston Hall.

- **UPDATE:** The Board subsequently voted in an email exchange February 12 that the proposed April 30 meeting double as the Annual meeting, as no dates were available at Gunston Hall for the Annual Meeting in May or June. In the same exchange, the Board also voted in favor of making a one-time exception to the MNCA bylaws requirement that the Elections meeting be held in May or June.

Gunston Hall Updates: Gunston Hall has two capital projects in the works as part of its Master Plan and has a funding request before the state legislature for support of these projects. Gunston Hall also will play a major part in the Virginia celebrations of the United States' 250th anniversary of independence and has several other events planned. Scott offered to brief the Board in more detail at a future meeting.

Equestrian Contact List: Nancy mentioned an incident when a horse was reported running loose at Gunston Rd. around midnight. She contacted the Fire Department. No one subsequently reported finding or losing a horse, but Nancy is trying to put together a list of stables/horse owners in the immediate area and relevant Fairfax County agencies to be prepared for any similar events the future.

ACTION ITEMS

- Reach out to Sen. Surovell/Del. Henson offices about General Meeting (**Marvin**)
- Reach out to Environmental Committee about its potential participation (**Peter**)
- Talk to Scott Stroh about: a) Gunston Hall/Sesquicentennial; b) possible May dates (**Nancy**).
- Decide what to put on postcards announcing Annual Meeting (**March Meeting**).
- Get update on Caisson Horse briefing to Congress (**Nancy/Bruce**)
- Update Bullet Points (**all**)
- Provide documents to Peter for MNCA Board GoogleDocs folder (**Dick, Hillary, Jim**)

Next Board Meeting: Wednesday, March 6 at Cranford Methodist Church

Motion to adjourn: Passed at 8:33.

Mason Neck Citizens Association Monthly Board Meeting
March 6, 2024, at Cranford Methodist Church

Attendees

<i>MNCA Officers</i>		<i>Other Members of the Board of Directors</i>	
President	Nancy Wilochka	Peter Weyland	
Vice President	Marvin Miller	Scott Stroh	
Secretary	Jim Martin	Rick Hutson	
Treasurer	Bruce Scott		

President Nancy Wilochka called the meeting to order at 7:34 and presented the agenda. The following were discussed:

Minutes from February Meeting: A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the February 2024 Board meeting minutes.

Treasurer Report: Bruce reported that MNCA has \$3616.64 in its account. Jim handed over a \$20 contribution for MNCA received through the mail.

MNCA General Membership Meeting: The Board agreed topics for a meeting will include an update on the Virginia State legislative session, wetlands, Gunston Hall update, and elections to the Board. Marvin said he will be in touch shortly with State Sen. Surovell and Delegate Henson to discuss their involvement. Peter has spoken to Larry Zaragoza, Chairman of the Fairfax County Environmental Quality Advisory Council and to Potomac Riverkeepers about possible participation in a discussion of wetlands and/or Potomac River issues. Marvin suggested an e-mail should go out to the MNCA Listserv announcing the meeting and soliciting new candidates for the Board. The Board agreed that the printed mailing for the event should include the above-mentioned agenda items as well as MNCA accomplishments and our website address. Jim noted that Lorton Post Office suggested MNCA should use flyers instead of postcards. Other members pointed out this had been discussed before and flyers were much more trouble than postcards.

Caisson Horses: Nancy reported that Rep. Beyer's staffer Noah told her the Secretary of the Army had blessed the idea of a search for an area other than Meadowood for the caisson horses. An interim report to Congress on the Army's efforts regarding the horses was due to Congress March 1, but Noah had not seen it yet.

Gunston Hall: Scott updated the Board on Gunston Hall's (GH) new Master Plan, which will include:

- a) Archaeological work in the "East Yard" (where the enslaved population lived). Work so far in the East Yard has uncovered rare cowrie shells, which were important in African and Caribbean societies. The eventual plans are for interpretive programming and a memorial for the enslaved population. The Research and design phase is underway now, with opening estimated for 2026. GH is hiring an interpretive Historian and trying to locate descendants of the original enslaved population, many of whom were sold in the 1840s. The current Director's residence, now in the East Yard, will be torn down and a new residence built elsewhere on the property.
- b) A new archaeology center and maintenance complex to be in the field near the current Visitors Center.
- c) A new Visitors Center, for which the concept study already has been done. The current Visitor Center would stay in place until the new one is complete. A request for funding to support the new Visitors Center, as well as the other elements of the Master Plan, is now under consideration by the Virginia Assembly. Depending upon that funding groundbreaking for the new Center could take place as early as 2026.

GH is also requesting an additional \$1 million funding from Virginia to support its \$3 million annual operating costs, only 28% of which are current covered by the state. This amount was not in the Governor's budget request to the General Assembly.

Scott is also involved in planning for Virginia's celebration of the 250th anniversary of American independence in 2026. Finally, GH plans to become more involved in the local community, including running after-school programs jointly with Gunston Elementary School and providing fresh fruits and vegetables to Lorton Community Action Center from GH's newly renovated gardens.

Digitizing and MNCA Document Storage: Rick noted that he has numerous boxes with old MNCA documents from his tenure as MNCA President; Scott agreed they could be stored at Gunston Hall. Board members suggesting that a High School or College summer intern might help with organizing digitizing MNCA's historical documents.

Meadowood Parking Lot: Marvin reported nothing had changed since the last meeting – he had received no answer from BLM or DOI to his latest submissions.

Cellphone Tower: Bruce noted the ongoing problems with cellphone coverage on Mason Neck and suggested MNCA advocate for a cellphone tower to be located on the Neck. Members discussed ways of determining where the cellphone towers that service us are currently located, who owns them and who could help with this problem. Scott said noted that GH could easily accommodate a tower on its land. Nancy noted a friend in another state whose property now hosts a cellphone tower. The Board agreed contacting Mount Vernon Supervisor Storck's office would be a good idea.

ACTION ITEMS

- Talk to Sen. Surovell and Del. Henson offices about their availability on April 30 to discuss the legislative session **(Marvin)**
- Talk to/Recruit possible speakers on wetlands/RP issue **(Peter)**
- Draft e-mail to send to MNCA membership about upcoming meeting and solicit expressions of interest in joining the Board. **(Jim)**
- Check with P.O. about postcards vs. flyers requirement. **(Jim)**
- Determine content on mailer (to include Board candidates, other speakers, website info, request for donations. **(Jim/Board)**
- Update Accomplishment bullets/meeting date on Website. **(Jim/Peter)**
- Mailers to printer **(Jim)**
- Get together on storage of Rick's MNCA file boxes. **(Rick/Scott)**
- Get digitized files to Peter to put in Googledocs. **(All)**
- **Research Cellphone Tower issues (All)**

Next Board Meeting: Wednesday, April 3 at Cranford Methodist Church

Motion to adjourn: Passed at 8:32.

Mason Neck Citizens Association Monthly Board Meeting
April 3, 2024, at Cranford Methodist Church

Attendees

<i>MNCA Officers</i>		<i>Other Members of the Board of Directors</i>	
President	Nancy Wilochka	Peter Weyland	
Vice President	Marvin Miller	Dick Kennedy	
Secretary	Jim Martin	Rick Hutson	
Treasurer	Bruce Scott	Hillary Clawson	

President Nancy Wilochka called the meeting to order at 7:31, presented the agenda, and welcomed guest John Rand, who live in Hallowing Point. The following were discussed:

Minutes from March Meeting: A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the March 2024 Board meeting minutes.

Treasurer Report: Bruce reported that MNCA has \$3616.64 in its account, with expenditures for mailing General Membership meeting announcements the next large, anticipated expense.

MNCA General Membership Meeting:

- **Speakers:** The Board agreed the three elected officials speaking will each have 7 minutes for remarks and 3 minutes for discussion. The wetlands panel discussion will be allotted 20 minutes:
- **Brag Sheet/MNCA Accomplishments:** The Board reviewed Jim's draft document, which included new language on the Caisson horses and MNCA's role in saving Mason Neck State Park. Members suggested we need a version that has bullet points rather than just narrative. The bullet point version should be used on-line and at EagleFest. Marvin said he would work on edits to the current document.
- **Draft letters to Elected representatives:** Marvin said the letters should not tell representatives what we may be seeking from them but rather simply thank them individually for their specific past assistance. He will draft letters to send.

Cellphone Towers: The Board agreed that Gunston Hall land, as previously proposed by Scott Stroh, is the best choice for a cell tower location. It was agreed that Nancy would discuss with Scott, whose Virginia Department of Education contacts may be able to introduce MNCA to the appropriate state agency to help.

Digitization: Jim reported he is working with Peter to post up-to-date minutes on the MNCA website.

BLM Meadowood Parking Lot: Marvin reported that BLM claimed MNCA had not commented on the parking lot proposal and could not prove a specific member had been injured, and so denied standing. Both assertions are incorrect, but we no longer have time to appeal.

Speeding on Gunston road: Two members mentioned recent incidents where drivers overtook them at unsafe high speeds on a part of Gunston road with double solid yellow lines. It was suggested that MNCA: a) send a message to the community expressing concern and asking people to be careful; and b) ask police to patrol more.

Fairfax County Fire Department Funding/Gunston Firehouse: Nancy noted recent reports that the updated Fairfax County budget makes cuts in some Fire Department services. Cuts to water tanker staffing are a particular concern given the lack of hydrants on Mason Neck. Nancy will draft a message to the community on behalf of the Board. Nancy said the project manager for the new Gunston road Firehouse had reached out to her and said work on the septic system for the new firehouse should being at end of April/start of May.

MNCA Postal Permit: Jim reported that the MNCA postal permit is up for renewal in May at a cost of over \$300. However, it appears that we can use a slightly different method, designed for groups who mail fewer than 2000 items per mailing. It would cost a very small additional amount per mailing, but we would not need to pay for the permit, thus saving money. The Board agreed this made sense if correct, and asked Jim to explore a little more before making a final decision.

EagleFest: Hillary, who is also President of the Friends of Mason Neck State Park (FMNSP), asked whether MNCA planned to be a sponsor for FMNSP's annual EagleFest and have an exhibition booth. After discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and approved for MNCA to be a sponsor, make a \$300 contribution, and have a booth. Visitors to EagleFest this year must take shuttlebuses from Gunston Hall or Pirates Cove (at Pohick May Regional Park), but exhibit staff can park at the event.

New member for Board: Guest John Rand introduced himself and expressed interest in joining the Board. He has lived in Hallowing Point since 2017, is on the Board of FMNSP and wants to help preserve Mason Neck's natural environment. A motion was made, seconded, and approved to add John to the Board's slate of candidates to be voted on at the General Meeting

ACTION ITEMS

- Make edits to proposed brag sheet/List of Accomplishments for use at General Membership Meeting **(Marvin)**
- Draft thank-you letters to Sen. Surovell, Del. Henson, and Supervisor Storck **(Marvin)**
- Contact VA Dept. of Education re: state agency with cellphone responsibilities **(Nancy/Scott)**
- Send e-mail to Mason Neck Listserv about unsafe speeding on Gunston Rd **(Nancy)**
- Reach out to Police Department about speeding **(Nancy)**
- Message to Mason Neck Listserv about Fire Department Funding **(Nancy)**
- Get General Membership Meeting announcements printed/mailed **(Jim)**
- Ask Lorton P.O. for additional P.O. Box key. **(Jim)**
- Finish posting minutes on website and update info on website (Jim/Peter)

Next Board Meeting: General Membership Meeting Tuesday, April 30 at Gunston Hall; Board meeting May 1 via ZOOM

Motion to adjourn: Passed at 9:01.

Mason Neck Citizens Association Monthly Board Meeting
May 1, 2024, on ZOOM

Attendees

<i>MNCA Officers</i>		<i>Other Members of the Board of Directors</i>	
President	Nancy Wilochka	Peter Weyland	Scott Stroh
Vice President	Marvin Miller	Dick Kennedy	Arsenio Ayon
Secretary	Jim Martin	Rick Hutson	John Rand
Treasurer	Bruce Scott	Hillary Clawson	

President Nancy Wilochka called the meeting to order at 7:37 and presented the agenda. The following were discussed:

Annual Meeting Review: Nancy thanked Board members for their work to ensure a successful annual meeting, with special thanks to Scott Stroh for hosting the meeting at Gunston Hall. She also expressed the sentiment that Scott should never be last on the annual meeting agenda. The meeting's agenda -- discussions of the recent Virginia state legislative sessions and of Virginia wetlands policy -- was very substantive and sometimes dry, and some speakers may have gone on too long. Board members agreed the meeting had been a success, and that having our elected local officials (particularly our State Senator who is also majority leader) speak was important, even if they went over time. Marvin noted that our new Delegate Rozia Henson was proud of his success in obtaining \$5 million for Gunston Hall in the Virginia state budget for next year. Rick noted that we received \$100 in donations and 10-12 new member sign-ups at the meeting.

Minutes from April Meeting: A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the April 2024 Board meeting minutes.

Treasurer Report: Bruce reported that MNCA has \$3472.62 in its account, not counting expenditures for the annual meeting. Board members with receipts for meeting-related expenses should get them to him.

A Mason Neck Day? Bruce suggested we organize such a day to thank express appreciation to members of the MN community. Board members noted this had been proposed in 2019 but never implemented for various reasons. Having such a day will take several months of planning. Nancy invited Board members to bring ideas for this to next month's meeting.

Cellphone Towers: Things are moving quickly on this issue. Nancy had spoken to Sen. Surovell, who in turn had spoken to three major mobile carriers. Scott reported he also had spoken to both Sen. Surovell and has received an e-mail from AT&T, which put him in touch with their cellphone tower contractor to try and schedule a meeting. The AT&T rep also had pointed out that Fairfax County is notoriously difficult for cellphone tower permitting. As a state agency, Gunston Hall (where Scott suggests a tower could be built) may be exempt from some county permitting standards, but Scott was not entirely certain how that might affect the process. Jim noted that when assisting a vehicle accident victim on Gunston Rd, he had to drive back to Hallowing Point neighborhood to have cellphone coverage to call 911, so cellphone coverage is a real safety issue. It was agreed Nancy would follow up with Supervisor Storck's office and Scott with the Virginia State Department of General Services on permitting issues.

EagleFest: The Board earlier had agreed to staff a booth at EagleFest, sponsored by the Friends of Mason Neck State Park (FMNSP). Scott said Gunston Hall will provide and set up a canopy and table for MNCA. Nancy will bring display materials we used last year, and Hillary has handouts on MNCA we have used in the past. Board members will staff the booth from 10 AM – 4 PM; MNCA volunteers can drive into the park rather than taking the shuttle bus that other EagleFest visitors must use.

Mason Neck Person of the Year Award: It was suggested that MNCA present its Mason Neck Person of the Year Award at the EagleFest. Sen. Surovell (if he has not previously received the award) and Delegate Henson (if Surovell has) were both suggested as possible recipients. Security at the park may be required if there is a formal presentation. Jim will research past recipients, Scott will subsequently reach out to the desired recipient, and Hillary will check with FMNSP on security requirements.

Postage Issue: Jim reported that it will be cheaper to drop our annual postage permit, but we may also need to change the size of the postcards we sent out. He will research further.

“Vacation” of Property on Mason Neck: A developer has requested permission from the County to “Vacate” James Place (a planned road off Belmont Blvd that has never actually been built) and combine eleven separate ½-acre lots into four larger ones for residential housing, with entrances on Gunston Rd, Belmont Blvd and Madison Rd. A hearing is set for May 21. It was agreed the Board would take no position on the issue without learning more about the proposal. Arsenio agreed he would do research and report back.

Bylaws: Jim noted that the Bylaws seemed out of date (e.g., still show a dues requirements) and may need revisions. Nancy suggested everyone review the Bylaws in advance of the next Board meeting to have a proper discussion. Any revisions will need to be approved by the Annual Meeting.

Internal Audit: A motion was made, seconded, and approved that Bruce, Hillary, and John do a review (AKA “internal audit”) of MNCA’s revenues and expenditures.

Beautifying traffic islands at Rte. 1/Gunston Rd intersection: Bruce noted that he had received an e-mail from someone asking about cleaning up the overgrown traffic islands. Marvin and Peter agreed to take weed whackers to the islands.

ACTION ITEMS

- Contact Supervisor Storck’s office (**Nancy**) and Virginia General Services Dept (**Scott**) re: cellphone tower permitting requirements
- Research past recipients of Mason Neck Award (**Jim**)
- Notify proposed MN Award recipient (**Marvin**)
- Research James Place Vacation Issue (**Arsenio**)
- Research postcard size requirements for bulk mailings (**Jim**)
- Internal Audit (**Bruce, Hillary, and John**)
- Weed whack Rte. 1/Gunston Rd. Traffic islands (**Marvin/Peter**)
- Brainstorm ideas for a Mason Neck Day (**All**)
- Review Bylaws for revision needs (**All**)

Next Board Meeting: June 5 at Cranford Methodist Church

Motion to adjourn: Passed at 8:41.

Mason Neck Citizens Association Monthly Board Meeting
June 5, 2024, at Cranford Methodist Church

Attendees

<i>MNCA Officers</i>		<i>Other Members of the Board of Directors</i>	
President	Nancy Wilochka	Peter Weyland	John Rand
Vice President	Marvin Miller	Dick Kennedy	
Secretary	Jim Martin	Rick Hutson	
Treasurer		Hillary Clawson	

President Nancy Wilochka called the meeting to order at 7:32 and presented the agenda. The following were discussed:

Minutes from May Meeting: A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the May 2024 Board meeting minutes.

Treasurer Report: On behalf of Bruce, Nancy reported that MNCA has \$3389.08 in its account, not counting outstanding invoices from the annual meeting.

Cellphone Towers: Scott noted he had met with a rep from the company that builds AT&T cellphone towers and is waiting on further developments.

A Mason Neck Day? This almost happened in 2019 but got stuck in the details. Hillary has the file from that effort and the Board will review it as part of considering the possibility of a future event. Members suggested places to hold such an event include Gunston Hall, Pohick Bay or Meadowood.

EagleFest: The event went well, and Senator Surovell was pleased with his Mason Neck Person of the Year Award. Nancy thanked Board volunteers who staffed our booth.

Bylaws: This Board agreed to defer discussion of bylaws revisions to its next meeting

Central Green Restroom bloc opened: Nancy attended the opening of this facility, located on Lorton Road, and part of the Laurel Hill Park.

Gunston Road Fire Station: Nancy reported that work on the new septic field for the Station is expected to begin soon.

Foregoing July Board Meeting: A motion was made, seconded, and approved to not hold a July Board meeting.

Next Board Meeting: Wednesday, August 7 at Cranford Methodist Church

Motion to adjourn: Passed at 7:58.

NO MEETING IN JULY

Mason Neck Citizens Association Monthly Board Meeting
August 7, 2024, at Cranford Methodist Church

Attendees

<i>MNCA Officers</i>		<i>Other Members of the Board of Directors</i>	
President	Nancy Wilochka	Peter Weyland	
Vice President		Dick Kennedy	
Secretary	Jim Martin	Hillary Clawson	
Treasurer	Bruce	John Rand	

President Nancy Wilochka called the meeting to order at 7:37 and presented the agenda. The following were discussed:

Minutes from June Meeting: A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the June 2024 Board meeting minutes. [NOTE: There was no July meeting]

Treasurer's Report: Bruce reported that MNCA has \$3389.08 in its account, not counting and outstanding invoices from the annual meeting or other requirements. Jim noted he had an outstanding receipt from our annual Virginia corporate registration.

Cellphone Towers: Nancy reported that the Board continues to make good progress on this issue, and we are hopeful of a successful outcome.

Caisson Horses: Nancy said she got a call from Noah in Congressman Beyer's office. Noah told her that Rep. Beyer had just had a call with Gen. Breidenkamp, who confirmed that Meadowood is off the table as a potential site for the Caisson Horses and he will issue a formal statement to that intent, which he will share with Noah. The General also is seeking to release publicly a recent Army report on the Caisson Horses. Nancy also noted that the army issued an \$8.5 million Request for Proposals that closed on July 29 for a Caisson Horse site. Other Board members suggested that a site in Laurel Hills may be back on the table and noted that some, but not all the Caisson Horse equipment earlier placed at the Meadowood Hidden Pond site had been removed.

A Mason Neck Day? The Board agreed to defer this issue to a future meeting.

Bylaws: This Board agreed to defer discussion of bylaws revisions a future meeting

Gunston Road Fire Station: Nancy reported that she had engaged Christina Morin from Supervisor Storck's office after hearing from the Firehouse construction project manager that they intended to move the Gunston Rd crosswalk currently located in front of the Firehouse. The current crosswalk connects Pohick Bay Park trails with Meadowood trails and the Potomac Heritage Trail. Morin was aware of the problem and the community's concerns, and said she was open to another site visit along with the MNCA Board.

- A motion was made that the MNCA Board advocate for a new firehouse plan that preserves the crosswalk and its links to Meadowood, Pohick Bay, and the Potomac Heritage trail for hikers, bikers and equestrians. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Candidates Night: Nancy reported that Scott said Gunston Hall could be available for this event on Tuesday, September 10 or 17, or any Tuesday in October. Board members suggested the September dates were too early. Tuesday, October 8 is the Board's first preference, followed by October 1. Nancy will ask VP Marvin to reach out to the candidates about their availability for those dates. Recognizing that probably only the House of Representatives candidates would appear, the Board also considered who else to invite to speak, including potentially Supervisor Storck and State Senator Surovell.

Next Board Meeting: Wednesday, September 4 at Cranford Methodist Church.

Motion to adjourn: Passed at 8:21.

Mason Neck Citizens Association Monthly Board Meeting
Wednesday, September 4, 2024, at Cranford Methodist Church

Attendees

<i>MNCA Officers</i>		<i>Other Members of the Board of Directors</i>	
President	Nancy Wilochka	Peter Weyland	Annie Collins
Vice President	Marvin Miller	Scott Stroh	Rick Hutson
Secretary	Jim Martin	Hillary Clawson	
Treasurer	Bruce Scott	John Rand	

President Nancy Wilochka called the meeting to order at 7:40 and presented the agenda. The following were discussed:

Minutes from August Meeting: A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the August 2024 Board meeting minutes.

Treasurer's Report: Bruce reported that MNCA has \$3389.08 in its account, not counting and outstanding invoices from the annual meeting or other requirements. Marvin Miller donated the plaque for the Mason Neck event. Jim noted he had an outstanding receipt from our annual Virginia corporate registration.

Candidates Night: This event will be held Tuesday, October 8 at Gunston Hall. Marvin reported that Cong. Beyer cannot make it and Sen. Kaine/his opponent will not attend either. He suggested that instead the event just be held/billed as a social event, to which our local elected officials, as well as representatives from Meadowood, Pohick Bay, and Mason Neck State Park be invited. Scott also could talk about Gunston Hall developments. There was some discussion of what to name the events, whether to have alcohol, etc.

- **Motion:** Hold a Mason Neck October social event, with local government officials and other friends of the Mason Neck community. Motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Cellphone Towers: The Board continues to work on this issue.

New Gunston Road Firehouse: No updates.

Board Policy on Public Statements: The Board agreed that policy in the past generally has been to circulate potential public comments (to new media, etc.) to Board members ahead of time for comments/consensus before making such statements, and that this policy should be continued and strengthened.

Gunston E.S. Traffic Problems: Hillary noted continuing problems at the school during morning pupil drop-off and afternoon pick-up. Cars waiting in line back up into the main travel lane, including blocking the intersection to Old Colchester Rd. Cars transiting Gunston Rd. often pull into the opposite lane to bypass the line of cars, causing a potentially dangerous situation. Marvin suggested that the Board request that the police and school board address the situation by stationing a police officer at the school to direct traffic from 8 – 8:45 Am each morning and 3 – 3:45 PM each afternoon.

- **Motion:** That the Board issue a resolution calling on the police and school board to take this action. The resolution will be sent to the Fairfax County Police and School Board with a cover letter and communicated to the Mason Neck community after it has been sent.
 - The motion was made, seconded, and approved.

Gunston Rd. Utility Poles Hazard: Mason Neck resident Kem Clawson presented his finding about the hazards these poles present, often resulting in car crashes. There are 19 utility poles along the section of Gunston Rd. between High Point Road (Mason Neck State Park) and Hallowing Point. Of those poles, nine are less than the regulation-required limit of six feet from the edge of the road; three poles are less than four feet from the road's edge. The lack of shoulders on Gunston Rd. further complicates the situation. Although power is often cut to Mason

Neck residents when cars hit these poles, it is really a *safety* issue rather than a *power* issue, and as such should be raised with the Department of Transportation and Board of Supervisors rather than just with Virginia Power:

- **Motion:** To draft a resolution calling for the relocation of these utility poles and send the resolution to the Department of Transportation and Board of Supervisors.
 - Motion was made, seconded, and approved.

Next Board Meeting: Wednesday, October 2 at Cranford Methodist Church.

Motion to adjourn: Passed at 8:58.

Mason Neck Citizens Association Monthly Board Meeting
Wednesday, October 2, 2024, at Cranford Methodist Church

Attendees

<i>MNCA Officers</i>		<i>Other Members of the Board of Directors</i>	
President	Nancy Wilochka	Peter Weyland	Annie Collins
Vice President	Marvin Miller	Scott Stroh	Rick Hutson
Secretary	Jim Martin	Hillary Clawson	Dick Kennedy
Treasurer	Bruce Scott	John Rand	

President Nancy Wilochka called the meeting to order at 7:33 and presented the agenda. The following were discussed:

Minutes from September Meeting: A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the September 2024 Board meeting minutes with two edits.

Treasurer's Report: On Bruce's behalf, Nancy reported that MNCA has \$3439 in its account, not counting any outstanding invoices from the annual meeting or other requirements. Jim noted he would provide receipts for the candidates night mailing.

Candidates Night: Nancy reported that the plan discussed at the previous meeting to make this a social event with alcoholic beverages available was prohibitively difficult/expensive, so MNCA will revert to the normal Candidates Night format, with speeches from local officials and candidates. Hillary will arrange refreshments; there will be tables for those refreshments and a separate table for candidate literature. Board members should put up the signs announcing the event. Jim noted that the postcard size will change to meet new post office requirements; he will add a QR code for donations to MNCA. The event will be held Tuesday, October 8 at Gunston Hall.

- **Proposed order of speakers:** Marvin said the order of speakers would be local officials first, followed by candidates. He had already notified the speakers. Other members noted the e-mail complaint by a Mason Neck resident that a candidate's time was pushed all the way to the end in a previous Candidates Night, and many people left before the candidates spoke. Those members suggested that the candidates speak first, followed by the local officials, instead of the other way around. Still other members said the format seemed to have worked well in the past, that it important to have the support of our local officials, and that Mason Neck residents are generally willing to stay until the end to hear everyone out. The social part of the event could be cut from 30 to 20 minutes to provide more speaker time.
 - A **motion** was made to keep the order as Marvin proposed for this year but consider changing it for next year. The motion was seconded and approved.

Cellphone Towers: The Board continues to work on this issue.

New Gunston Road Firehouse: No updates.

Gunston E.S. Traffic Problems: The resolution suggested at the previous meeting has been drafted. It was discussed briefly and will be circulated for further board comment. Hillary noted that she had spoken with the head of the police station in Lorton about both the traffic issue and the utility pole problems on Gunston Rd, but he told her the station is already short staffed and has no one to help at these issues. John said he thought the situation seemed improved since the last Board meeting; Annie said that traffic can back up on Old Colchester Rd all the way to the trailheads.

Gunston Firehouse Ambulance Issue: The Board had received an e-mail from a Mason Neck resident warning that our firehouse's ambulance was going to be taken away. Peter, who had been asked to investigate, reported that the Fairfax County Police Chief had recommended to the County Executive that four "Advanced Life Support" (ALS) ambulances (Gunston, Clifton, Great Falls and possibly Cross Point) could be taken out of service as a cost-saving measure, which would leave Gunston Firehouse with only one basic life support ambulance. ALS support, if

required, would need to come from Lorton or further away, adding a minimum of 10-13 minutes to response time. Peter urged that we develop a resolution opposing the proposed removal and urge the South County Federation to do the same. Marvin added that the Mason Neck community is an aging community, with likely more need of ALS services than areas with a younger demographic. Nancy urged that we develop more facts to put in such a resolution.

BLM Plans for Vegetation Management at Meadowood: BLM is proposing a vegetation management program at Meadowood that would include controlled burns, pruning, and spraying to control invasive species and other problematic vegetation. Nancy had read the environment assessment of the proposal and discussed it with a Meadowood resident and does not see any issues. BLM has proposed two virtual meetings on Tuesday, October 8th (same day as MNCA Candidates Night); Nancy will try to attend one of the meeting.

Next Board Meeting: Wednesday, November 6th, at Cranford Methodist Church (subsequently changed to November 13th).

Motion to adjourn: Passed at 8:44.

Mason Neck Citizens Association Monthly Board Meeting
Wednesday, November 13, 2024, at Cranford Methodist Church

Attendees

<i>MNCA Officers</i>		<i>Other Members of the Board of Directors</i>	
President	Nancy Wilochka	Peter Weyland	Annie Collins
Vice President	Marvin Miller	Scott Stroh	Rick Hutson
Secretary	Jim Martin	Hillary Clawson	Dick Kennedy
Treasurer	Bruce Scott	John Rand	Arsenio Ayon

[NOTE: names in bold = attended.]

President Nancy Wilochka called the meeting to order at 7:33 and presented the agenda. She had attended the South County Federation meeting the previous night and would have some updates to share from that meeting as well. The following were discussed:

Minutes from October Meeting: A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the October 2024 Board meeting minutes with one change (a reference to a motion was deleted).

Treasurer's Report: Bruce reported that MNCA has \$3380 in its account, including one recent \$50 donation and not counting remaining outstanding invoices from the Candidates Night meeting or other requirements. Jim will provide receipts for the candidates night mailing.

OLD BUSINESS

Candidates Night Recap: Nancy said feedback was that it went well, although attendance was somewhat lower than we would have liked: approximately 45 people attended. Marvin said candidates appreciated the opportunity to meet with the community.

Cellphone Towers: No update – Scott was not able to attend.

New Gunston Road Firehouse: No updates.

Gunston E.S. Traffic Problems: The draft resolution from the previous meeting has been tabled because Mount Vernon School Board rep. Mateo Dunne told Hillary's husband Kem at Candidates' Night that he knows how to fix the problem. Whether or not he did anything, Board members reported that the traffic situation seems much better.

- Action: Jim volunteered to check with Mateo Dunne about what, if anything, has been done.

Gunston Firehouse Ambulance Issue: Nancy reported that Mount Vernon Supervisor Storck told the South County Federation there is no actual proposal for cuts on the Supervisors' table, so he could not comment on the statements from local residents that the Gunston Firehouse Advanced Life Support ambulance might be removed as part of budget cuts. He confirmed that all Fairfax County Government department have been asked how they would handle hypothetical 10% budget cuts. Accordingly, Nancy did not think we could take a position at this point. Marvin suggested we send a letter to relevant officials (Supervisor Storck, BOS Chair McKay, the County Executive, Had of Fire Department) noting that we understand this budget exercise is underway, and that any potential cuts to ambulance services should take into account the demographics of Mason Neck community – a relatively remote, spread-out community with many elderly people aging in place. Marvin offered to draft such a letter; Board stressed the importance of phrasing it diplomatically.

- A **motion** was made, seconded and approved for Marvin to draft a letter along the lines discussed.

BLM Plans for Vegetation Management at Meadowood: Nancy had intended to attend one of the virtual meetings on this issue but was unable to because of illness. The Board agreed this was not a major concern, but we would ask BLM to inform us ahead of time of any plans to burn or spray vegetation

Gunston Road Utility Poles/Plans to bury power lines: Members reported that Virginia Power trucks are out on Gunston Rd working on burying the power lines. Verizon Fios lines already are buried, so only the cables for Cox internet and to power the streetlamps will stay up on the utility poles. This does not solve the problem of utility poles being too close to the road, but it does mean power will not go out if a car hits one of the poles.

NEW BUSINESS

Review of Community meeting on multi-use trail: Nancy reported that she attended this on-line meeting to discuss the extension of the Gunston Rd. multi-use trail from where it currently ends at Pohick Bay Golf Course up to Julia Taft Way (almost to Route 1). The county is still seeking funding for the \$10 million cost for this approximately 1.5-mile segment. There was some discussion about bike riders that already use the road instead of the existing trail sections, and whether bikes could be compelled to use the trail when and if the new segment is completed. The Board agreed no action is required at this time, but it will continue to monitor the issue.

Reaccreditation Process for Gunston Hall/MNCA Support: Gunston Hall is undergoing a s reaccreditation process with the American Alliance of Museums, which it must do every ten years. Scott has asked Nancy to meet with the Reaccreditation team as a representative of a local community organization, and she will do so.

Next Board Meeting: Wednesday, December 4th at location TBD: Board holiday dinner, with spouses invited.

Motion to adjourn: Passed at 8:14.

NO MEETING IN DECEMBER