

Bluemont Citizens Association Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, June 5, 2019

Attendees: Cynthia Morris, Peter Weeks, Kim Hurst, Henry Plaster, Susan Harrell, Don Harrell, Tom Rust, Leigh Macklin, Mike Hawkins, John Sullivan

Call to order 7:07

Approval of Minutes: Peter made one change to the May minutes: Senator Wexton is NOT coming to Bluemont, it is her assistant who is coming.

Treasurer's Report: Tim Hall was not present, and sent in his report (see attached). Important points included the following:

- The Spring Fling came in under budget.
- We brought in \$740 from newsletter ads.
- Eight scholarships were awarded, totaling \$7,750.
- Our bank account contains \$137,854.99.

Standing Committees

E.E. Lake (Henry Plaster)

- o There is a possibility that we will have to go to a higher rate with Dominion Electric due to the high usage at the Lake Store. Since our usage is going down this spring, he hopes we will be able to stay at our current level. The county did extensive caulking around the doors to try to block the gaps. And this winter the thermostat was broken, so it was stuck on 70 degrees; hence our extra-large bills.
- o Henry is going to bring up the roadside gutter problem with VDOT, and will try to raise the level of urgency

2018-19 Bluemont Fair (Cynthia Morris)

- o The poster is nearly ready, we are sorting out the logistics.
- o Leigh will ask Sheri what the status is regarding fans in the Barn for the fair.

Heritage Committee (Henry Plaster):

- o The boundary line adjustment is still in progress for the Snickersville Academy; it is taking a long time. There will be another meeting of the Heritage committee before the end of the month.

- o At the meeting on May 20, there was a motion made by Tim Hall regarding updating and fencing the pathway (aka “The Old Mountain Road”), that the FOB will accept the expenditure up to \$9,200 IF the BCA will approve a \$5000 grant towards the project. The pathway will be 5’ wide, with 2’ shoulders, with pavers for 90 feet to the bridge, and a fence on the Nigel Hughes side. The accepted estimate is from a local company called Craven, who will do fence and roadway for \$9200. Mark Z and/or the Friends of Bluemont will be signing the contract.
- o Cynthia asked isn’t the Heritage Committee now part of the BCA? Peter answered that there are two separate accounts, and there always will be since the FOB is a 501(c)3 organization.
- o Henry introduced a motion that the BCA will grant 50%, of the cost of the pavers and the fence to the Academy, up to \$5000. The Heritage Committee/FOB will pick up the other half. John Sullivan seconded the motion. The vote passed unanimously.
- o Peter said he hopes to have our Fall Social at the Snickersville Academy, if we move it a bit earlier in the season.

Community Organizations/Events

Bluemont Community Center/Parks & Rec (Leigh Macklin):

- o Leigh thanked us for providing Lorenzo the Great for all the kids at the Community Center—everyone was so grateful, it was very popular, and they all loved it.
- o The Community Center is sponsoring a trip to Hershey Park, for \$30 you get a park ticket and a spot on the bus, round trip. There are several spots still available for anyone interested.

Snickersville Turnpike Association (Henry Plaster):

- o The paving of Foggy Bottom is complete. The road is lovely but the shoulders are extremely steep. Peter and Henry will be bringing this problem up when they meet with VDOT.
- o Susan Harrell asked if there will be any sort of barrier along Foggy Bottom, where the creek is right next to the road. Peter and Henry will add this to their list to discuss with VDOT.

The Comprehensive Plan (Peter Weeks):

- o Peter is Vice-Chair of the Loudoun Historic Villages Alliance, working with the other villages to try to ensure that the language in the Comp Plan protects the rural west. The Comp Plan extends to 2040.

- o The language is very important, since it guides county policies.
- o A huge increase of residential housing that was in the Comp Plan for our Rural Policy Area was dismissed/not accepted. A far fewer number of houses were accepted. In exchange, the transition area absorbed some acreage that used to be designated as the “rural west.” Kim added that this area is still east of Rt. 15.
- o Next week, the subject will be Loudoun’s Historic Villages. The Alliance has already given the Supervisors their preferred wording, and the Supervisors are accepting that language into the plan. He is happy that there are people working for this.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors (Peter Weeks):

- o Peter is still working to build a coalition with the various local churches and organizations.
- o We are already helping one family here in Bluemont to reconstruct their home.

Bluemont Speaker’s Series (Peter Weeks):

- o Jennifer Moore, President of the Mosby Heritage Assoc, presented here at the BCC to around 30-35 people. It was a great evening.
- o The next speaker will be Henry Plaster, on Thursday June 19 at 7 pm, here at the BCC. Henry will talk about Bluemont history as framed by his family story. It will be videotaped for our archives and the Plaster museum. This will be our final speaker for 2019.

Farmer’s Market (Peter Weeks):

- o There were 27 visitors to the Plaster Museum during the market.
- o The market was a great success. Vendors sold out of product. There were hundreds of people over the four hours.
- o Leigh asked how people knew about the market. John said the sign being there all week probably helped. Peter said Jen’s email list helped.
- o The turnpike traffic was slow and controlled during the event.
- o Henry asked about the Humane Society bus, Cynthia said that they will hopefully be coming to the Fair as well.
- o The face painter did a great job with the kids.

- o The musician will be a regular feature. Peter said everyone wanted coffee, so this Sunday we will have a coffee vendor.
- o There will be a BBQ vendor coming, and possibly flowers.

Spring Fling (Peter Weeks):

- o Approx. 190 people attended, the biggest Fling ever. We ran out of beer for the last 45 minutes. Next year we will ask for more from Dirt Farm.

Scholarships:

- o Peter mentioned that he wants to require that students perform community service within the village of Bluemont to be eligible for scholarships. Anna Billman will be adding this to the scholarship application this year.

New Business:

- o Peter and Henry are holding a meeting on Monday with some principals at VDOT, regarding traffic calming:
- o The flashing speed sign has certainly helped. We will be asking for traffic calming similar to what they have in Aldie and Upperville, on the stretch of the Turnpike from Epling to the Church/BCC. They will be looking at three raised crosswalks: at the Post Office, from the Church to the BCC, and from the Eplings parking lot to Lake Store. John pointed out that Upperville has nicely narrowed streets, planted in a lovely way. Peter said that is expensive, but they hope that VDOT might suggest that. Susan asked if there can also be a crosswalk at the General Store.
- o Susan asked who is responsible for the gravel in the parking area across from the General Store. Most people who live on the Turnpike own to the middle of the road. But VDOT has a right-of-way for 15' from the center of the road. It is VDOT's responsibility to maintain the shoulders/edge, but an area like this might be open to interpretation.
- o Tom suggested they bring up the shoulder problem in general, especially in the area in front of the store, at the meeting. He would like the BCA to spend money on our road shoulders, especially there at the General Store.
- o Peter asked if Tom would be willing to research getting a truckload or two of gravel, with a quote from Epling to spread it, to improve the edges of the Turnpike in the village, especially in the area near the General Store. Tom agreed to look into that and report back to Peter.
- o John asked if we can add a spot on Clayton Hall for a calming crosswalk too. Suggests starting the request at four crosswalks.

Memorial plaques at the BCC (Kim Hurst):

- o We are hoping to find something that is more permanent than the tree signs that are currently around the BCC.
- o Kim and Henry worked with Kerry Bzdyk to determine how many trees are on the grounds that could be dedicated. Seven are already dedicated to people whose names are known. Five trees may be available—three are known to have no dedications, two have questions regarding whether they have dedications or not.
- o They are thinking of using brass plates on cement blocks for the memorials, or perhaps on stakes, but they need to be stronger to better withstand the passage of time. No stone or wood.
- o Tom said that Emma Mann (Walter Mann's wife) had a plaque with a Japanese cherry tree, but that tree was replaced by a dogwood. Bob McDowell planted a pin oak on the grounds, and now it is a big lovely specimen here in front of the BCC.
- o Henry asked if there is an action now for the BCA to take regarding these plaques? Peter told Kim to come back to us in August with a proposal regarding what we'll need to provide to do this job properly.

There will be no meeting in July; the next meeting of the BCA will be Wednesday, August 7th at the Bluemont Community Center.

The meeting adjourned at 8:14.

Minutes compiled by Cynthia Morris.