

MINUTES  
ARMY NATIONAL CEMETERIES ADVISORY COMMISSION  
FY2012 SPRING MEETING  
MARCH 8, 2012  
ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY, ARLINGTON, VA

*Italicized words are **[\*\*will be\*\*]** hyperlinked to supporting documents*

**1. DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICER'S REMARKS.** LTC Renea Yates, Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Army National Cemeteries Advisory Commission (Commission), opened the Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 Spring Meeting, introducing herself as the DFO and MAJ Stephanie Ahern as the Alternate DFO. LTC Yates stated for the record that the Commission operates under authority of 5<sup>th</sup> U.S. Code Appendix 2 and 41 Code of Federal Regulation 102-3.50(d). LTC Yates explained that the Commission is an Advisory Commission subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). The Army National Cemeteries Program (ANCP), on behalf of the Department of the Army, is the sponsor of the Commission established by the Secretary of Defense (SecDef). The ANCP is the Agency that receives the benefit of the Commission's advice and recommendations; provides the DFO, nominated by the Executive Director and appointed by the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army (SecArmy); and provides administrative support to the Commission.

LTC Yates noted that the meeting was open to the public. She also reminded the public attending this open meeting and briefings that the public was not allowed to present questions from the floor or speak to any issue under discussion by the Commission. She noted that any member of the public was eligible to file a written statement with the Commission in accordance with the published Federal Register notice as posted in the binder at the entrance of the meeting room. LTC Yates also told the Commission that the proceedings were being recorded, and that this summarized transcript of the meeting would be prepared.

**2. CO-CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS.** The Commission Co-Chair, HON Max Cleland, called the meeting to order at 9:05am. After welcoming everyone and thanking each for taking time out of their busy schedules to attend the Army National Cemeteries Advisory Commission FY2012 Spring Meeting, he reminded everyone that the Commission has an extremely important mission to assist in the strategic management of Arlington National Cemetery (ANC). HON Cleland then asked the DFO to provide administrative remarks and take roll.

**3. ADMINISTRATIVE REMARKS.** The DFO informed the Commission that the Secretary of Defense approved the three subcommittees that the Commission proposed, which will address the SecArmy's three focus areas. The Subcommittees:

a. Honor: Extending the life of active burial gravesites, veteran eligibility criteria and master planning. Members include Mr James Peake (chair), Mr Russell Davis, Mr Chet Edwards, Mr Thomas Kelley and Mrs Janet Manion.

b. Remember: Efforts to preserve and care for the Tomb of the Unknowns. Members include Mr Russell Davis (chair), Mr Thomas Kelley, Mr James Kimsey and Mr James Peake.

c. Explore: Efforts to preserve historic essence of ANC and develop an interactive means to share its unique history with the Nation and the world, including the ANC Section 60 Mementos study. Members include Mr Chet Edwards (chair), Mr James Kimsey and Mrs Janet Manion.

LTC Yates noted the meeting binders in front of each member and available to the public, which included: an *agenda*; slides for today's *ANCP Campaign Plan* brief; each subcommittee's Terms of Reference (*Honor, Remember, Explore*); the *2001 Federal Register* final rule on Federal Advisory Committee Management; the *Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA)*; and the approved *ANCAC Business Rules*.

LTC Yates noted that as DFO, she would answer all of members' questions about the Commission's responsibilities, functions and governing rules. She is also available to answer any questions or provide additional information after the meeting on FACA or the Commission for any who may require it.

**4. ROLL CALL.** For the record, a quorum of the Commission was present. A list of attendees is appended to these minutes.

**5. REPORT REQUIREMENTS AND OLD BUSINESS.** The DFO noted that by the 11 October 2010 Commission Charter, the Commission shall visit ANC and the U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery no less than once annually. The commission completed a formal visit to ANC on December 1, 2011. In accordance with the Charter, a report was provided to the SecArmy within 60 days of the visit. She reminded the Commission that any report of a visit, other than the annual visit, shall be submitted to the SecArmy within 60 days after the Commission's visit. Additionally, the old business item from the December meeting included a recommendation to establish subcommittees. A formal request was rendered for the authority to establish subcommittees to enhance the Commission's work. These subcommittees were approved by the Secretary of Defense and the specific Terms of Reference for each was directed by the SecArmy on February 27, 2012. The minutes for the December 1, 2011 Inaugural meeting were reviewed by all Commission members and the final version approved by the Co-Chair on February 6, 2012.

**6. ANCP TECHNOLOGY EFFORTS AND INITIATIVES.** MAJ Nick Miller, ANCP Chief Information Officer, provided the Commission a brief on ongoing technology efforts and initiatives underway by the ANCP. MAJ Miller provided an overview of the Army's efforts at ANC since June 2010 to use technology to allow families and visitors to better honor, remember and explore the cemetery and those Service Members and family members buried here. He described the recent past: in June 2010, ANC still used card files as burial records, multiple paper maps to manage cemetery operations, one fax machine to accept all documentation and telephones without voice mail to accept calls

from family members and visitors. He explained how the Executive Director's vision from the beginning—experiencing Arlington on a smart phone—helped inform many of the technology advances that ANC is already using and will soon release.

MAJ Miller discussed how ANC has leveraged various Army organizations' expertise and processes. He told the Commission that ANC would be operating geospatially and assigning gravesites electronically within the week, providing updated information in real-time across all ANCP directorates. He also noted by this summer, ANC will have a public facing downloadable application that will allow ANC to share information about events, directions and other highlights with visitors at ANC (via kiosks or through their smart phones) or those visiting the website.

MAJ Miller also discussed other ongoing ANCP information technology initiatives. He introduced the headstone and niche design tool, currently being tested with families to allow them to design their loved one's headstone before arriving for the service. He discussed the "find a gravesite" link, which this summer will be linked to the data being validated now by ANCP and that will also link with the geospatial information. MAJ Miller also showed on the website where members could go for the upcoming burials and the different methods ANC is implementing to receive feedback and then track each unique feedback case. MAJ Miller noted that the Army is also administering ANC's call center, which assigns a unique case numbers for all queries, feedback and taskings to help improve Arlington's communications, activities and records accuracy. The records management system also requires official documentation and user authentication to change records. This creates auditable processes that clearly identify when, why, and by who changes are made.

HON Cleland noted that the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) receives periodic feedback from families about headstone errors; correcting these means everything to the families. He noted that by making this information accessible to the public, the ANCP will receive significant and very useful feedback to help correct many errors. Ms Condon noted that the ANCP expects to ask the public for help with some of the cases for which ANCP has not found publically-available records to validate the headstone's accuracy. Mr Edwards noted that over 400 Medal of Honor recipients are buried at ANC, and asked whether their commendation or other data could also be attached to their records. MAJ Miller answered that by developing the authoritative database, all of these initiatives to attach or share information associated with that person become possible—based on programmatic and technical priorities. HON Cleland did encourage ANCP to create systems that non-technically savvy individuals can understand and use to access and explore the cemetery. LTC Yates noted that ANC would still retain print capabilities, including at the kiosks the ANCP is planning to place throughout the cemetery.

HON Cleland asked MAJ Miller to share this brief with the ABMC staff; MAJ Miller agreed. Ms Condon also noted that ANCP has been working with the Department of Veterans Affairs to share our Headstone designer tool, while ANCP employees are also attending their training schools. Ms Condon also noted that the SecArmy is having

ANCP help the other Army Cemeteries with their efforts, including eventually allowing family members to view any headstone at an Army Cemetery online. All Commission members agreed this cooperation was important for our veterans and Americans of all ages to be able to inspired by what is at the Cemeteries.

**6. ANCP CAMPAIGN PLAN.** MAJ Stephanie Ahern, ANCP Strategic Planner and Alternate DFO, then provided the Commission a brief on the Army National Cemeteries Program Campaign Plan, published 1 January 2012. She briefly outlined the ANCP lines of effort within the Campaign Plan. The Commission members then used this time to express their concern for and discuss how Arlington could ensure the changes being made at ANC would be lasting, especially after the intense oversight and external inspections passed. MAJ Ahern discussed the standards and measures, training, and verification processes the ANCP were developing and codifying to support the vision, mission and objectives identified within the Campaign Plan. She noted that as part of the Campaign Plan, the ANCP is creating an organizational inspection program that will formalize routine inspections across the organization. The ANCP directors are already providing routine updates to the ANCP leadership on their assigned objectives within the Campaign Plan, being held accountable for their progress based on their approved metrics and milestones within the Campaign Plan. The ANCP is also using this document and updates to prioritize its resources, including balancing the daily priorities with the long-range efforts to extend the life of Arlington. MAJ Ahern also discussed the ongoing ANCP efforts to update the Army Cemeteries regulations, which will be another way to institutionalize the Army standards, processes and procedures that ANCP is now using to ensure ANC remains the premier military cemetery now and in the future. LTC Yates also noted that in addition to these robust systems and checks, the leaders' and individuals' integrity at the Army cemeteries was paramount to ensuring the ANCP keeps permanent these ongoing changes.

**7. LUNCH.** The Commission members then broke for lunch, reconvening at 1300.

**8. SUBCOMMITTEE DISCUSSIONS.** HON Cleland asked the chairpersons of each subcommittee to discuss items of issue and their way ahead.

a. Honor: Mr Peake informed the Commission that the Honor subcommittee had a working session the day prior, receiving an excellent review of the Millennium Project designs. Moving forward, the subcommittee is receiving outside assistance within the week from an expert at the American Battle Monuments Commission, offered by HON Cleland, to review the designs. The subcommittee plans to have a teleconference following this review so that the subcommittee can report back to the whole Commission—likely telephonically—on their recommended design. The Commission will then forward this recommendation to the SecArmy, allowing the Commission to provide feedback within the SecArmy's planned decision timeline. Mr Peake asked LTC Yates for assistance with the teleconferences; LTC Yates agreed.

b. Remember: Mr Davis informed the Commission that the Remember subcommittee sees three options for the large Tomb of the Unknowns sarcophagus:

continue to repair, replace as soon as possible, or procure and store the large marble block currently in Colorado once/if a decision is made to replace the sarcophagus. The subcommittee is developing questions that can be answered once the Tomb of the Unknowns springtime repair inspection occurs. If the repairs are not holding, there would be a series of options. If they are holding, the subcommittee would examine the level of risk in shipping the marble block from Colorado. Mr Davis asked LTC Yates for a copy of the report once complete; LTC Yates agreed. Mr Davis also had questions on additional tests on the marble; LTC Yates noted that the last structural tests were from 2006 and ANCP could pursue more information today.

c. Explore: Mr Edwards informed the Commission that the Explore subcommittee (for which he was just appointed chair) had not yet met. He thought that the Honor and Explore subcommittees should work closely together—e.g. on master planning and the visitor experience—since there was significant overlap. He asked the Commission their thoughts on having a public hearing in which people could share their ideas with the Commission, thinking a hearing sooner rather than later would be helpful. HON Cleland noted that Mr Peake had mentioned there were approximately 200 Veteran Service Organizations and other organized groups that were interested in ANC. Since the Commission meetings are all announced publically and anyone could attend, HON Cleland suggested that the Commission may want to solicit written recommendations focused on their three subcommittees. Written recommendations would all go into the formal record, which would also save time. Mr Edwards thought this method would give interested groups an opportunity to provide ideas; based on the written feedback, the Commission could then see if there were interest in a public hearing. HON Cleland agreed to sign a one-page memo to these organizations, which would note the three subcommittees and say the Commission would be happy to consider the organizations' recommendations. LTC Yates agreed to draft the memo, which would include language from the subcommittees' Terms of Reference to help focus but not limit the organizations' recommendations. LTC Yates also noted she would vet the letter with the Commission members before sending.

**9. NEXT MEETING.** HON Cleland noted that the next Commission meeting would be after Labor Day. LTC Yates agreed to confirm September dates. HON Cleland told all subcommittees that at the next meeting they should report their status, progress and plan forward.

**10. ADJOURNMENT.** With no further comments, Mr. Kimsey moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Davis and unanimously agreed upon. HON Cleland thanked all members and visitors for participating, and adjourned the FY2012 Spring Meeting of the Army National Cemeteries Advisory Commission.



APPENDIX TO THE MINUTES:

ROLL CALL

**Secretary of the Army Nominated Members:**

Honorable Max Cleland (co-chair)

Mr. Russell Davis

Mr. James V. Kimsey

Mr. James Peake

**Secretary of the Veterans Administration Nominated member:**

Mr. Thomas Kelley

**Secretary of the American Battle Monuments Nominated member:**

Mr. Chet Edwards

**Not present:**

Mrs. Janet Manion (Secretary of the Army Nominated Member)

Two final members, Secretary of the Army nominees, are pending appointment and were not present.

**Other attendees:**

LTC David Fedroff, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District

**ANCP leaders and staff in attendance:**

Ms. Kathryn Condon, Executive Director, Army National Cemeteries Program

Mr. Patrick Halinan, Superintendent, Arlington National Cemetery

COL Victoria Bruzese, ANCP Engineer

LTC Renea Yates, Designated Federal Officer

MAJ Stephanie Ahern, Alternate Designated Federal Officer

Ms. Floscelia Johnson, ANCP Administrative Officer

Ms Barbara Dunlap, ANCP Administrative Specialist

**Members of the public:**

Ms. L. Crawford, Department of Veterans Affairs / National Cemetery Administration

Mr. J. Crow, Senate Veterans Affairs Committee staff

Mr. William J. Collins, Jr., House Veterans Affairs Committee staff

Ms. Rory Riley, House Veterans Affairs Committee staff