

MINUTES
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY
FALL 2012 ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 13, 2012
ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY, ARLINGTON, VA

1. **DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICER'S REMARKS.** LTC Stephanie Ahern, Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery (Committee), opened the Fall 2012 Organizational Meeting. LTC Ahern stated for the record that the Committee operates under authority of 5 U.S. Code (U.S.C.) Appendix 2 and 41 Code of Federal Regulation 102-3.50(d), and is an Advisory Committee subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act. LTC Ahern explained that Arlington National Cemetery (ANC), on behalf of the Department of the Army, is the sponsor of the Committee established by the Secretary of Defense (SecDef) in compliance with 10 U.S.C. § 4723 and the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2012. ANC, now a Direct Reporting Unit to the Headquarters, Department of the Army, is the agency that receives the benefit of the Committee's advice and recommendations, as well as provides the DFO, who is nominated by the Executive Director and appointed by the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army. Additionally, ANC provides administrative support to the Committee.

LTC Ahern 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 Committee. She noted that any member of the public was eligible to file a written statement with the Committee in accordance with the published Federal Register notice as posted in the binder at the entrance of the meeting room. LTC Ahern also noted that the proceedings were being recorded, and a summarized transcript of the meeting will be prepared.

2. **CO-CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS.** The Commission Co-Chair, HON Max Cleland, called the meeting to order at 9:35am. After welcoming everyone and thanking them for taking time out of their busy schedules to attend the Committee's Fall 2012 meeting, he reminded everyone how vital the Committee's mission is to assist in the efforts with our nation's shrine, ANC. HON Cleland then asked the DFO to acknowledge the newly appointed member, the Committee's fallen member, and take roll.

3. **MEMBERS, NEW AND FORMER.**

a. The DFO introduced the newly appointed, Secretary of the Army (SecArmy) nominated Committee member, Colonel (U.S. Army, Retired) Debra Lopez Fix. A 1981 graduate of the United States Military Academy, she was the first Hispanic woman to graduate from West Point. A Human Resources Officer, her 30 year career included two tours with the 101st Airborne Division where she was the Division G1. She

commanded two battalions in her career, one in Alaska and the other at Fort Benning and the Infantry School. A 9/11 survivor of the Pentagon attack, she received a Purple Heart and her duties took her to Iraq, Kuwait and Germany to set Army-wide personnel policies in support of the war. A former Inspector General officer at Headquarters, Department of the Army, she is married to Colonel (U.S. Army, Retired) Bob Fix, an Infantry combat veteran. They have two sons and a daughter in law, all active duty Paratroopers currently in combat with the 173D Airborne Infantry Brigade in Afghanistan.

b. The DFO then reflected on Mrs. Janet Manion, who passed away in April 2012 after having served with the Commission during its initial year. Mrs. Manion was a devoted Gold Star Mother of 1LT Travis Manion, United States Marine Corps, also buried at ANC. She was committed to supporting and preserving the memory of service members having made the ultimate sacrifice for their country, including founding a national charitable foundation dedicated to supporting families of the fallen, encouraging wounded and disabled veterans, and creating the next generation of leaders through a dynamic youth character development program. The DFO noted that the Committee will remember Mrs. Manion's grace, warmth and passion for those also laid to rest at ANC in solemn repose.

4. ADMINISTRATIVE REMARKS. Before taking roll, the DFO provided administrative announcements. The DFO reminded the Committee members and other federal officials present of their official oath of office. She stated this was an inaugural meeting of the Committee. The SecArmy and SecDef disestablished the former "Army National Cemeteries Advisory Commission" and established the "Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery," pursuant to the NDAA of 2012, codified in 10 U.S.C. § 4723, and effective 1 August 2012.

The DFO noted that the SecDef re-approved the three subcommittees and existing focuses:

a. "Honor" Subcommittee: provide recommendations of methods to address the long-term future of Arlington National Cemetery, including how best to extend the active burials and on what ANC should focus once all available space has been used.

b. "Remember" Subcommittee: provide recommendations on preserving the marble components of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, including the cracks in the large marble memorial, the adjacent marble slabs, and the potential replacement of the marble stone for the memorial already gifted to the Army.

c. "Explore" Subcommittee: provide recommendations on the Section 60 Mementos study and improving the quality of visitors' experiences, now and for generations to come.

The DFO noted the binders in front of each member and available to the public, which included the agenda, information and slides for the Horticulture presentation, and the

Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) and copies of the ethics training slides. The DFO also remarked that as DFO, she would provide each Committee member these briefings and be available to answer all of their questions about the Committee's responsibilities, functions and governing rules.

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

6. AGENDA INTRODUCTION AND REPORT REQUIREMENTS. HON Cleland began the meeting noting that the two briefings the Committee would receive—from the leadership and ANC's Horticulture Division—were important updates, especially based on the Committee's Charter and responsibility to develop and provide recommendations that will ensure ANC remains our Nation's premier military cemetery.

HON Cleland then asked the DFO to provide an update on the Committee's report requirements. The DFO stated by the Committee's Charter the Committee shall visit ANC no less than once annually. Within 60 days after this annual visit, the Committee shall submit a written report of its actions, views and recommendations to the SecArmy. Pursuant to 10 U.S.C. § 4723, as codified with the NDAA of 2012, and not later than 90 days after receiving a report or recommendations from the Committee, the SecArmy shall submit the report or recommendations to the congressional defense committees and the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives and include such comments and recommendations of the SecArmy as the SecArmy considers appropriate. The DFO added that any report of a visit, other than the annual visit, shall be submitted to the SecArmy within 60 days after the Committee's visit. The DFO then reported that the Committee submitted the trip report for ANC and the Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery from March, as required.

7. ANMC LEADERSHIP UPDATE. Ms. Kathryn Condon, Executive Director, Army National Military Cemeteries, and Executive Director, ANC; and Mr. Patrick Hallinan, Superintendent, ANC; provided the Committee a leadership update on changes made and strategic efforts ahead. Key items presented were:

Geospatial management of the cemetery began on March 12, 2012; all gravesites are now assigned using automated tools and ANC uses a geospatial database for permanent record management. Additionally, all paper records have moved to the National Archival Records Administration for long term storage similar to records from the US Congress. All digital records are routinely archived.

ANC has implement the strictest chain of custody of remains process of any used in the US; the process incorporates iterative and repeated verifications to ensure 100% accuracy, and includes a non-biodegradable tag which is attached to each urn or casket on the date of interment.

The Gravesite Accountability, validating over 150 years of records of those interred at ANC, is 96% complete and improving daily. Only the toughest cases remain, primarily from the cemetery's earliest ears. ANC will post cases with missing or questionable records on our website to seek assistance from the public, if authoritative

documents do not exist elsewhere. ANC will continue to follow its very rigorous validation standards until this validation effort is complete.

Outreach to families remains a focus. We are conducting grief training for our employees, which is essential to improve how we remain supportive of veterans and their loved ones. We are also constantly working to improve information provided and how it is conveyed on our website and through social media.

Recovering tens of millions in un-liquidated obligations have allowed ANC to fund more appropriate and green equipment and conduct improvements to the maintenance yard; Columbarium Court #9, adding significantly more inurnment spaces, is on schedule (66% complete) to be operational by 2014 or sooner.

Highlight upcoming significant events – 2013 is the 50th anniversary of the assassination of JFK; April 2014 is the 150th anniversary of ANC; and 2015 is the 100th anniversary of the emplacement of the memorial in remembrance of the sinking of the USS Maine.

The DoDIG is currently inspecting most DoD Post cemeteries, the preponderance of which are led by Army. Army National Military Cemeteries will be completing the same accountability efforts at the Army Post Cemeteries as at ANC. The Committee expressed that the American public will be deeply gratified by this accountability endeavor.

The master plan is in the early stages of development and ANC requests advice and input along the course of development. No definitive planning is complete regarding the development of the Navy Annex area. There is an aggressive timeline because of resourcing but the plan will be shared with the Committee and partners as it is developed to ensure the very best product possible.

Actions are essential to communicate the significant improvements to preserve our national treasure's rich history, honor and sacrifice at ANC. The Committee expressed its appreciation to the leadership for its effort and the tremendous progress over the past two years. In specific, the Co-Chair, Honorable Cleland, applauded their efforts and agreed that despite his initial misgivings he supports the Army retaining ANC and is very happy the Army decided to own this mission.

8. ANC Horticulture Chief, a certified Urban Forrester, provided an update to the Committee on the mission and key actions of the horticulture team to maintain ANC as a national shrine at ANC (Tab A). Topics discussed were turf management, general grounds maintenance, landscape and gardening, and tree and shrub maintenance. It was highlighted that tree replacements average 240 per year; the fact that ANC is a "tree museum" with the cultural and natural history which ties directly to the interpretive center. Additionally, highlights of vista improvements to the Niche Wall were presented as well as the impact of the loss of 66 trees due to severe weather in the past 13 months. It was noted that there are over 300 species of trees at ANC; 3 state champion trees (measured by height, tree trunk circumference and 25% of crown circumference); and 142 memorial trees, 130 of them with plaques. Committee members were interested in the ANC's proposed efforts to move ANC to a status of an arboretum. The basic process and requirements were discussed along with the value and historical advantages this effort could provide. ANC has used GIS to map and manage horticultural planning for 10 years. The purposes of a Memorial Arboretum status are:

- Designation as a Living memorial
- Recognition of the natural and cultural landscape resources
- Solidify commitment to preservation of trees and landscapes
- Enhance the visitor experience
- Interpret the natural history and tree/shrub collection (curation)
- Preserve ANC as a major green space
- Promote sustainability

Committee members wanted to ensure the Master Plan would maintain ANC's natural beauty while also acknowledging the expansion areas will provide additional grave space.

Concern was expressed that previous plans did not consider horticultural impacts which must be viewed out 50-100 years. Horticultural staff acknowledged that an arboretum status would help institute current efforts to ensure this holistic view is maintained. The Horticultural staff has been increased at ANC, which has helped in its efforts to ensure replacements for those trees lost due to natural disasters (50 alone in June 2012; Arlington Oak in Aug 2011).

Designation as an Arboretum would ensure sustained planning for trees and other natural components across the cemetery.

9. Sub-committee Reports:

a. Honor Sub-committee: met and discussed the status of the Millennium Project expansion and ANC's process to complete a major revision of its Master Plan. The committee expressed gratitude for American Battle Monument Commission support and would like to continue this collaborative effort with larger dialogue. Information was exchanged regarding ANC's efforts to restore the historic War Department pillars and gates, which once served as two entrance gates for the cemetery. The Subcommittee requested an update from ANC at the 65% draft Master Plan and Millennium Project sometime in early November.

b. Remember Sub-committee: Received an update on the repair to the Tomb of the Unknowns large marble memorial. These repairs are still holding well and USACE will continue to monitor the effects of the repair. The marble slab proffered to the Army to replace the memorial is in Colorado and the specifics of this proffer must be reviewed. The sub-committee will meet in November and provide the Committee information at the March 2013 meeting. The Subcommittee requested the following:

- A formal report on the TUS repair
- The Army reach out to the marble slab donor to determine the exact details of the proffer, and the legal status of the marble slab; and conduct a study to determine the future disposition of the gift, cost of movement and storage, and possible available options for use.

c. Explore Sub-committee: The sub-committee received an update on the U.S. Army Center for Military History efforts in Section 60 and the redesign of Visitor Center Main Hall upgrade. The subcommittee expressed that the details of the VC main hall

improvements were a major step forward but would be enhanced with interactive capabilities and sound. A meeting will be scheduled for ANC to provide further information to the subcommittee. Additional information was provided, to include a hands-on demonstration for the ANC's upcoming release of its mobile phone application. The subcommittee recommended to the Committee that a formal recommendation be adopted to recommend the Secretary of the Army direct removal of non-natural items hanging from the trees in Section 60.

10. Committee Requested Information and Briefings. The Committee noted that it takes seriously its mandate to the Secretary of the Army by providing independent advice on Arlington National Cemetery. As such, the Committee requested to receive the following briefs and to receive the following information related to its subcommittees in order to make more informed recommendations:

(a) Committee: Identify requirements for a public-private partnership or foundation opportunity;

(b) Committee: Provide updates, as the plan is developed, on the 50th anniversary of John F. Kennedy's interment at ANC in November 2013;

(c) Committee: Provide updates, as the plan is developed, on the 150th anniversary of ANC;

(d) Honor: An update on the Millennium Project and more detailed brief on the Master Plan in early November.

(e) Remember: Provide the final report for the evaluation of the repair to the Tomb of the Unknowns marble memorial;

(f) Remember: From the person or family who proffered to the Army the large marble slab in Colorado, determine what is the exact nature of the proffer; and

(g) Remember: Provide details on the cost and logistics associated with moving and storing the large marble slab, currently in Colorado, if the Army would want to pursue this course of action.

(h) Explore: A more detailed update on the Visitor Cemetery Main Hall upgrade as soon as possible.

(i) Explore: An update in October/November on the ANC's current and future plans for the website and mobile phone application.

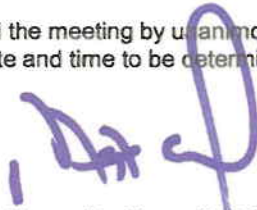
11. Formal Committee Recommendations. By unanimous vote, the Committee concluded two recommendations to the Secretary of the Army during the Fall 2012 meeting:

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(a) To help recognize and further institutionalize the long-range planning efforts to preserve ANC's cultural and natural history, ANC should pursue designation as an arboretum, including on the ANC's proposed timeline to be completed by the cemetery's 150th anniversary in 2014.

(b) To help correct the excess and preserve the uniqueness of Section 60, ANC should remove all non-natural items (e.g., wind chimes, lights, trinkets, etc.) from the trees, shrubbery and bushes in Section 60.

12. Next Meeting: The Co-chair adjourned the meeting by unanimous vote and announced the next meeting will be at a date and time to be determined, anticipated to be held in March 2013.



Honorable Maxwell Cleland
Co-Chairperson, Advisory Committee on
Arlington National Cemetery

APPENDIX TO THE MINUTES

ROLL CALL

Secretary of the Army Nominated Members:

Honorable Max Cleland (co-chair)

Mr. Russell Davis

Mrs. Debra Fix

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:

Two final members, Secretary of the Army Nominees, are pending appointment.

Other attendees:

None

ANC leaders and staff in attendance:

Ms. Kathryn Condon, Executive Director

Mr. Patrick Hallinan, Superintendent

LTC Stephanie Ahern, Designated Federal Officer, ACANC

Ms. Sunny Shin, Information Office

Mr. Steve Van Hoven, Chief, Horticulture Division

Ms. Sonya Goines, Public Affairs Specialist