

MINUTES

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY (ACANC)

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

January 24, 2017

ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY (ANC), ARLINGTON, VA

1. **DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICER'S REMARKS:** Ms. Renea Yates, Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery opened the January 2017 Organizational Meeting. Ms. Yates noted that present in person were Major Shannon Way, ANC Strategic Planner and Mr. Timothy Keating, Alternate Designated Federal Officer, ACANC. Ms. Yates stated for the record that the Committee operates under authority of 5 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. Ms. Yates 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, 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.

Ms. Yates noted that the meeting was open to the public. She stated that the public was not allowed to present questions from the floor or speak to any issue under discussion by the Committee without permission of the Chairperson. 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. Ms. Yates also noted that the proceedings were being video-recorded, and a summarized transcript of the meeting will be prepared.

The meeting was called to order at 1000.

2. **ROLL CALL:** Ms. Yates noted a quorum for the record, with the following members in attendance:

Secretary of the Army Nominees: Mr. James Peake (Co-Chair), Mr. Gene Castagnetti, Mr. Russell Davis, Mr. Ronald Fetherson, and Ms. Debra Fix.

Secretary of the American Battle Monuments Commission nominee: Mr. Chet Edwards (Co-Chair)

Secretary of Veterans Affairs nominee: Mr. Thomas Kelley

3. **CHAIRMEN OPENING REMARKS:** Mr. James Peake, Co-Chair of the Advisory Committee, welcomed Ms. Karen Durham-Aguilera, the new Executive Director, Army National Military Cemeteries and Ms. Katharine Kelley, Superintendent, Arlington

National Cemetery. He expressed that he was delighted to learn of the new appointments and looked forward to the important work of ensuring the Secretary gets the best advice for very difficult and important issues. Mr. Edwards, Co-Chair of the Advisory Committee, conveyed that it was a great honor to be part of the Committee and looked forward to continued good work with ANC. He then informed everyone that the daughter of Mr. John Marshall, Chief of Staff for the former Chairman of ACANC, Mr. Max Cleland, had passed away.

4. **PRIOR MEETING MINUTES:** The DFO announced that the minutes from the 25 October 2016 Committee meeting were available for review in the members' binders.

5. **REPORTS AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** The DFO reported that there were no reports or any unfinished business from the Committee meeting on 25 October 2016. She then introduced Ms. Karen Durham-Aguilera, Executive Director, ANMC.

6. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REMARKS:** Ms. Durham-Aguilera stated that it was both an honor and humbling to accept such a great leadership role. She expressed a passion for this service saying it was hard to imagine a better place to work. She acknowledged the ANC team as dedicated professionals with a big responsibility to these sacred and iconic grounds. She said she was aware of the changes and improvements at ANC. She recognized that the Advisory Committee had played a significant role and expressed thanks. She then presented the following brief to the Committee.

7. **STATE OF THE CEMETERY, FY 2016:** Ms. Durham-Aguilera noted that the presentation was a year in review to inform the way ahead. She noted that on January 19, 2017, the President (elect) and the Vice-President (elect) came to ANC to lay a wreath and honor the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. She mentioned that President (elect) Trump took a few minutes to engage with senior ANC Staff which speaks to the national awareness of ANC; that ANC is truly a national shrine.

She then presented data which highlighted ANC performance over the year. ANC conducted a total of 7,141 interments and inurnments, 4,442 of which were first interments and 2,698 were subsequent interments. Roughly one-third were casketed interments, one-third were in-ground inurnments, and one-third were above-ground (Niche) inurnments. Of the Ceremonies conducted, 26 percent were Full Honors, 32 percent were Standard Honors, and 34 percent were Dependent Honors. She emphasized that only 25 percent of services were for decedents from states neighboring Virginia.

Regarding tempo and optimal performance, she noted that thus far 2017 was closely matched to 2016 in annual performance. At this time last year, ANC had performed 2,142 services, while this year there have been 2,182 services. In support of this performance effort, ANC employs 192 civilian employees and 14 Active Duty military personnel. Of all ANC employees only nine have 30 or more years of service, while the remainder average just over nine years. She noted that 192 civilians is below the authorized end strength of 210, however, at the time of the meeting it was unclear whether the Executive Order freezing the hiring of government civilian personnel would affect ANC. She noted the ANC budget (capped by the Bipartisan

Budget Act) of \$70,800,000 was utilized at approximately two-thirds for Operations and Maintenance and one-third for Infrastructure Modernization and Repair.

She noted significant public awareness of ANC as seen in nearly 71,000 ANC Explorer application downloads, nearly 3,000 wreath laying ceremonies, over 75,000 calls, over 470,000 Face Book followers (up 38%), thousands of ANC tours, millions of annual visitors and over 9 million Face Book engagements (opening, sharing, liking, etc.).

After presenting operational statistics, the Executive Director discussed planning efforts as ANC continues to evolve. Near-term emphasis is focused on the pending Congressional report, ensuring the correct resources and training efforts are in place, and developing the right plans for future efforts. Mid-term objectives include consideration for geographic gains, policy reviews and getting the right message out as to what ANC is about. Thoughtful and deliberate planning and decision making is critical. Far-term efforts are seen as taking actions to achieve the desired end state with clear interagency communication as well as keeping the public informed.

ANC guiding principles are that ANC is a place to honor individual sacrifice and service; the precious resource of space must be preserved to do so; and ANC must set the conditions to ensure the cemetery is preserved well into the future.

Discussion / Comments. During the presentation of performance metrics, it was noted that this data was not available in the past. Now, however, analysis has been conducted which resulted in improved performance. For example, analyzing capability against demand, Saturday services were added which yielded an overall reduction in wait-time. Importantly, data shows that while ANC performs approximately 30 services per day, the demand signal to eliminate wait-time remains higher at approximately 38 per day.

There are various methods to increase / maximize burials, but many will likely not maintain the iconic nature of ANC. The Congressional report directly addresses that concern. The Southern Expansion project should not be considered a foregone conclusion that it is best for the future of ANC.

The Chair thanked the Executive Director and called for a five minute recess.

8. TOMB OF REMEMBRANCE: COL Peloquin, ANC Engineering presented an update to the progress of construction of the Tomb to the Committee. He briefed that the Tomb was designed for a 500 year lifespan. He noted that all components are built offsite and shipped to ANC. Since all pieces must fit to precise specifications, measurement accuracy is critical. A delay in construction was caused when engineers discovered that since the site of the Tomb has a slight gradient, the benches installed for visitors were not plumb. The problem was resolved however. He then noted that winter weather has impeded overall progress, but hardscaping was expected to be completed by the end of February and landscaping completed by the spring. The target date for Tomb opening is mid-May (prior to Memorial Day).

Discussion / Comments. The Tomb will be utilized by the Department of Defense as an alternative to burial at sea. There will not be any type of plaque or other marker for

names of those interred. All remains placed in the Tomb are unidentifiable comingled remains or unclaimed remains. Comingled remains may be the result of a mass casualty incident. Comingled US and foreign remains in the Tomb will be a policy decision, however, there are remains of Allied Forces at ANC now (Section 60).

9. WORLD WAR I DISPLAY: Dr. Steve Carney, ANC Historian, provided an update on upcoming World War I Exhibit at ANC. The exhibit is a joint ANC / ABMC effort which depicts the story of WWI with emphasis on American involvement in the conflict. The exhibit will highlight the impact on ANC of post-war repatriations and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The exhibit will be displayed in the Welcome Center and the Memorial Amphitheater Display Room. A new design style for exhibit spaces will facilitate easier updates for future displays. Installation in the Welcome Center is planned for completion by 25 February will no impact to visitation during normal hours of operation. All work is scheduled to be complete by 6 April 2017, the centennial of the US Declaration of War. The displays in the Amphitheater are focused exhibits with Chief Plenty Coup's head-dress and Riding Staffs. Also on display will be "Winged Victory", a statue created by Augustus Saint-Gaudens, presented as a gift by China to honor the World War I Unknown. The statue, which has been located on the lower level of the Amphitheater since the late 1940s (when China became Communist), will be returned to the original position in the Display Room in a protected case.

Discussion / Comments. The project includes significant infrastructure upgrades, including lighting for the Welcome Center. Also, new displays allow for easier changing of exhibits in future years and doubles the available space for viewing. ANC Welcome Center will display the largest exhibit in the National Capitol Region during the WWI centennial. ANC is adding more information to the website and Explorer application as well as WWI Specialty Tours. A video of archival footage has been developed to be viewed in the Welcome Center, however, due to the challenges of building acoustics, sound will not be used.

10. BUDGET FORECAST: Mr. Paul Zacharzuk, Chief, ANC Resource Management presented an ANC Budget Overview for 2017. He noted that direct funding is a separate appropriation provided through Cemetery Expenses Army (CEA). The ANC budget for 2017, \$70.8M, is limited / capped by the Bipartisan Budget Act (BBA). During FY13 – 17, approximately \$25M per year is used to repair ANC aging infrastructure. Major construction funding of \$81.7M for the Millennium Project and \$18M for future expansion (Southern Expansion planning) was provided in FY13 (for 5 years). Current preliminary rough order of magnitude estimate of \$274M for the Southern Expansion Project was identified for FY19 – 22. Ongoing operational projects include the Funeral Procession Queuing Area and the Tomb of Remembrance. Expansion projects include Columbarium 9 (complete) and the Millennium Project (spring 2017).

Discussion / Comments. The BBA limits the ANC budget to \$70.8M for Operations and Maintenance and Infrastructure Modernization and Repair. In accordance with Public Law 114-113 General Provisions, DoD and Army MILCON funds may not be obligated / expended for ANC design or construction. Therefore, the BBA and Public Law restrict ANC from requesting funding to fully execute completion of actual construction Planning, Engineering and Design.

11. CONGRESSIONAL INTERIM REPORT UPDATE: MAJ Way, ANC Strategic Planner, provided an update to the briefing presented to the Subcommittee during the October 24, 2016 meeting. He reminded the Subcommittee that Public Law 114-158 directed a report including the estimated date that the Secretary determines the cemetery will reach maximum interment and inurnment capacity and also recommendations for legislative and non-legislative options that the Secretary determines necessary to ensure that the maximum interment and inurnment capacity is not reached until well into the future. Analysis reveals that if ANC operations continue status quo, the cemetery will reach full capacity in the early 2040s. The additional space created by the Southern Expansion project could extend the capacity limit by approximately 11 years to 2052. Given those projections, based on current operational data and life expectancy trends, ANC will reach full capacity before veterans of the Gulf War, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Iraqi Freedom can be interred – even if awarded the Medal of Honor. He then briefed past burial trends at ANC from 1921 to the present noting the precipitous drop in burials in 1968 after then Secretary of Defense McNamara limited eligibility to strictly KIAs, Medal of Honor Recipients, Active Duty deaths, and Retirees. He briefed that regardless of the recommendations provided in response to the 1973 National Cemeteries Act, eligibility was expanded in the early 1980s. He then noted that the ANC Columbarium opened in 1980 resulting in a steady increase of first interments per year when eligibility was extended to all veterans with Active Duty service (at least one day, not for training) and an Honorable Discharge. These changes effectively returned ANC eligibility to pre-1968 requirements.

For the Record: At 1:20 p.m., Mr. Davis departed the meeting. The DFO noted that a quorum for the meeting was maintained.

The next segment of the briefing presented information regarding development of sample Courses of Action (COA) for the Secretary to consider to meet the requirement of extending the active life of ANC “well into the future”. He stated that the development of these COAs was based on the precepts of Joint Military Planning that COAs must be “Feasible, Acceptable, and Sustainable”. To meet that objective, COAs were developed considering those options which were “Eligibility-centric”, “Expansion-centric”, and “Others” (blended or hybrid combinations of the above). He emphasized that many of the options considered were not mutually exclusive of the others and that the best COA may be a combination of options. In order to evaluate options, weighting criteria was developed and applied which resulted in a demonstration / explanation of the weighted numerical comparison technique as it applies to each option. He then demonstrated two sample COAs which illustrate how the Secretary might employ options to determine a way ahead to meet the requirements of the law.

Discussion / Comments. Acquiring land to expand ANC is significantly more complex than perhaps many realize. Exhausting all options to expand before changing eligibility requirements may be desirable to some groups.

Perhaps an option to consider is legislating a time period in which to pursue expansion options. If no expansion results are identified, eligibility changes are then made. Because of the long lead time required to geographically expand, as demonstrated by the Millennium Project, getting buy-in now is essential to make the

determination whether expansion is possible.

Further, because of the complexities involved with expansion, an idea of identifying or appointing a blue-ribbon panel of experts to study the practicality of expansion was discussed. Such a study might reveal whether expansion is truly a viable option when determining courses of action to extend the active life of ANC "well into the future". The timing of the Congressional Report works well to raise awareness with the new Secretary that ANC is not a renewable resource.

Note: these comments were discussion points only, not intended as Committee recommendations.

12. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS: The Honor Subcommittee Chair reported that the discussion of the Congressional Interim Report with MSO representatives attending the meeting of the previous day was very useful. Reaching out to senior VSO and MSO leadership may provide an excellent opportunity to engage once the report is made and available.

Mr. Edwards, a member of the Remember and Explore Subcommittee, reported in lieu of the Chair, that discussions about notable graves was very useful noting the ANC website and Explorer application are becoming increasingly user friendly. He reported that data presented on family satisfaction reveals that currently, ANC does a much better job than the VA in collecting and analyzing customer feedback through the use of Information Technology. He then mentioned the efforts underway to upgrade the Memorial Amphitheater to support ADA accessibility are challenging, but noteworthy.

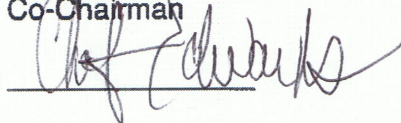
13. ADMINISTRATIVE NOTES. The DFO opened a discussion with the members to determine subsequent dates for Committee meetings. Several periods over the spring and summer were considered. The consensus was 6 and 7 June 2017 is acceptable. A follow-on meeting in August was agreed, with those dates to be determined.

14. MEETING ADJOURNED. The Chair then called for any other business. There being none, Mr. Castagnetti motioned to adjourn. Mr. Edwards seconded. All members voted in favor.

1430 Meeting Adjourned.

CHET EDWARDS
Co-Chairman

(Date)



J. d. R.
JAMES PEAKE
Co-Chairman

(Date)

15 March '17



Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery
Arlington National Cemetery Welcome Center
Arlington, Virginia 22211-5003
24 January 2017

SIGN IN

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