

MINUTES
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY (ACANC)

September 7, 2018

1. DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICER'S REMARKS. Ms. Renea Yates, Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery opened the September 2018 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 a summarized transcript of the meeting will be prepared.

The meeting was called to order at 1030.

Prior to Roll Call, the DFO requested all members rise to swear the Oath of Office. The following new members were present: Ms. Elizabeth (Ann) Harrell, Mr. John (Jack) Kelly, and Mr. Nick Miller.

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), and Ms. Debra Fix, Mr. Ronald Fetherson, Ms. Ann Harrell, and Mr. Thomas Kelley.

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

Secretary of Veterans Affairs nominee: Mr. Jack Kelly

The following members were not present: Mr. Gene Castagnetti and Ms. Ann Rondeau.

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3. **PRIOR MEETING MINUTES:** The DFO announced that the minutes from the May 8, 2018 meeting were available for review in the strategic documents binders on the meeting tables throughout the room.

4. **CHAIRMEN OPENING REMARKS:** Mr. James Peake, Co-Chair of the Advisory Committee opened the meeting by welcoming all member, specifically noting the newest members, and requested the first presentation.

5. **NEW BENCHES AND WATER STATIONS:** CW4 Prosper, ANC Engineering provided the committee with an update on plans and installation to enhance the visitor experience with more locations to rest and hydrate as well as provide uniformity across the cemetery for benches, drinking fountains, and trash receptacles. The plan:

- Adds six new benches and 23 new drinking fountains, including water bottle fillers in the Welcome Center, Columbarium, and Amphitheater
- Adds 18 trash cans and 14 recycle bins and reserve stocks for all items
- Replaces 35 existing benches and nine existing drinking fountains

Discussion. In response to a concern, the DFO noted that ADA compliance is considered for all projects within ANC.

Considering the sheer volume of visitors, along with a wide-range of age groups and nationalities, it was suggested ANC consider producing a handout which informs visitors regarding activities and behaviors which are disrespectful. It was noted that the tour guild is assembled annually in the WIMSA, and consideration will be given to putting a proposal into the tour guide contract.

The ANC Explorer App will be updated to show all new water points, seating areas, and restrooms.

6. **NEW INFORMATIONAL SIGNS:** Mr. Quackenbush, Deputy Chief of Staff briefed ongoing planning and work to upgrade real-time information for visitors. He noted ANC currently lacks the ability to quickly disseminate information to the public in key areas of congregation in order to support safety, security, and general awareness. The requirement is identified as the ability to display various types of information in text, image, and video format for public consumption in a simultaneous, rapid / instantaneous and customizable manner in multiple locations within the boundaries of ANC during hours of operation. The intent is to develop and deploy a visual messaging system for use in key areas such as the Welcome Center, Administration Building, and Amphitheater to facilitate the dissemination of information to the public in a readily available but un-intrusive manner that is consistent with the dignity and respect of the ANC experience. Efforts include expanding upon the successful messaging system already in place with the Funeral Queuing system.

Discussion. New equipment is expected within several weeks to begin installation of video monitors to display real-time information in the Welcome Center. Content

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development and system information training is in work. A Network Unit Controller for information display, similar to that used for the funeral queuing lanes, will be developed for new displays in the Welcome Center and throughout the cemetery.

Regarding use of a “Giant Voice” system, as used in emergencies on some military bases, it was noted that capability was considered. However, because of CFA involvement in maintaining the iconic nature of ANC, the hardware required to install that alert system has not been approved. Additionally, the CFA is similarly involved in widening the Wi-Fi capability within ANC.

It was further noted that mass notification capabilities exist to alert the public and ANC employees including fire alarms, security patrols and a radio network. Procedures are in place to cease, hold, or alter activities and to evacuate. Evacuation procedures were carried out on August 22, 2018 after a credible bomb threat was received at ANC.

7. BURIAL REQUEST MODULE: Mr. Mercer, ANC Director of Quality Assurance, presented the committee with a demonstration of a newly implemented Burial Request Module (BRM) which will greatly enhance record and data search capabilities and eliminate duplication of data. Importantly it will allow improved ability to determine eligibility. The system is now approximately 50% operational and expected to perform at 95 – 100% within 6 months. The BRM completed action from the last DoD Inspector General finding from the 2013 report addressing “swivel-seat” data entry procedures for all burial requests.

Discussion. Regarding security, the BRM is a Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) permissions-based system secured behind the same DoD firewall which protects all ANC information systems. When implemented, the Enterprise Interment Services System (EISS) will be utilized ANC and all Army cemeteries. EISS data will be available in the new BRM. A significant improvement provided by BRM is the ability to rapidly identify requests for those who are not eligible for interment at ANC, such as an unfavorable characterization of discharge, conviction of certain crimes, or a remarried widow or widower for example.

All records will be kept permanently, however because of past record keeping protocols, data mining / retrieval is limited for some information prior to 2013.

8. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS: The Chair of the Remember and Explore Subcommittee reported the challenges of maintaining the appearance of monuments in ANC caused by an organic growth known as Biofilm. ANC will continue to use zinc-oxide for cleaning until an improved method is developed. The committee agreed that engaging academia and government laboratories is well advised.

The subcommittee also considered a proposal for a commemorative monument for all USS Thresher personnel lost at sea in widely-known mishap in 1963. The Chair reported that the proposal was supported by a large volume of endorsement received

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by ANC and was reviewed by the ANC Monuments Working Group. However, since the package required some additional detail regarding architectural drawings and private funding certification, the subcommittee elected to postpone a vote whether to recommend approval or disapproval at this time.

The Chair of the Honor Subcommittee reported that Southern Expansion project planning was ongoing. Design completion is expected by winter 2020; new road construction to begin in 2021 with an estimated completion date of 2025. The projected new interment yield is expected to extend status quo operations until 2055.

The subcommittee also met again with VSO / MSO community representatives to review the analysis of the second public survey and discuss possible courses of action to consider in prescribing revised criteria for interment at ANC as required by NDAA 2019. The Chair further reported that:

- The VSO / MSO community is aware and understands the law. Several guests mentioned that given the new law, interment eligibility changes must be given further consideration.
- There is a consistent theme that ANC remain an active, iconic national symbol of valor and sacrifice until well in to the future (150 years).
- On average, nearly 90% of public survey responses support interment for those KIA, Medal of Honor recipients, high award for valor, and Purple Heart recipients.
- Today there are roughly 22 million veterans eligible for 101,000 available graves at ANC.
- Further outreach to VSO / MSO leadership should be made to ensure any course of action recommended truly reflects the desire of the nation for the future of ANC.

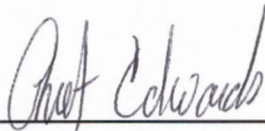
After thorough discussion of the Honor subcommittee Chair report, the Committee agreed to postpone a vote on recommendations to SA regarding changes to eligibility and agreed to send a letter cosigned by the Chairmen outlining ACANC efforts to senior leaders across the VSO / MSO community. A letter was subsequently generated and sent to all congressionally-recognized and VA sponsored VSO and MSO organizations. TAB A.

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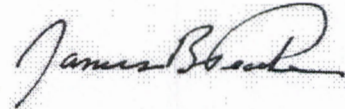
9. **MEETING ADJOURNED.** The Chair then called for any other business. Hearing none, he called for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made and seconded. All members voted in favor.

Meeting Adjourned at 1600.



CHET EDWARDS
Co-Chairman

(Date) 10-31-18



JAMES PEAKE
Co-Chairman

(Date) _____