

MINUTES
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY (ACANC)
FULL COMMITTEE MEETING
20 August 2024

1. DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICER'S REMARKS: Ms. Renea Yates, Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery (ACANC), initiated the meeting at 0900. Present in support were LTC Luis Solano of OAC , Mr. Andrew Clark of ANC G5, and Mr. Matthew Davis, Program Analyst and Alternate Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery. Members of the public in attendance included:

Ms. Yates stated for the record that this Committee meeting is pursuant to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2012, codified in 10 U.S.C. § 7723. The Committee operates under the authority and provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972, 5 U.S.C. Appendix 2, and 41 Code of Federal Regulation 102-3.50(d). Arlington National Cemetery is the agency that receives the benefit of the Committee's advice and recommendations. ANC provides the Designated Federal Officer, nominated by the Executive Director and appointed by the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army. ANC also provides all administrative support to the committee.

The DFO stated that the meeting was open to the public, and that attending members of the public were not allowed to present questions from the floor or speak to any issue under discussion by the Committee, without prior approval of the Committee chairperson, Mr. James Peake. Ms Yates stated that there were 4 requests from the public to address the committee, and allotted time has been set aside in the agenda for these addresses. Any member of the public was eligible to file a written statement or request to make a verbal presentation in accordance with the published Federal Register notice, a copy of which can be found on the ANC website at www.arlingtoncemetery.mil. Members of the public in attendance included Mr. John Kelley, Ms Jinny Widowski, Mr. Kirk Lyons, Ms Laura Rogers, and Ms. Karen Bennet. Ms. Yates also announced that a written summary of the meeting will be prepared and made available to the public on the ANC website.

The Committee was called to order at 0904.

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

Secretary of the Army nominees: Mr. James Peake (Chair), Mr. Chet Edwards (Co-Chair), Mr. Thomas Kelley, Mr. Mark Farley, Ms. Ann Harrell, and Mr. Gene Castagnetti.

Secretary of the American Battle Monuments Nominee: Mr. Gerald Torrence

Ms Rosemary Williams, The Secretary of Veterans Affairs nominee was not in attendance.

MINUTES
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY (ACANC)
FULL COMMITTEE MEETING
20 August 2024

3. COMMITTEE CHAIR OPENING REMARKS. Co-chairs James Peak and Chet Edwards welcomed attendees. Co-chair Peak outlined the objectives for the full committee session and subsequent subcommittee work, emphasizing critical ongoing issues such as the Caisson Platoon suspension, visitor feedback trends, the call center experience, master planning, and long-term eligibility rules.

4. ACANC COMMITTEE BRIEFS:

A. **Confederate Memorial Disposition and Next Steps** Ms Yates and Ms Caitlin Smith (ANC Cultural Resource Manager) Ms. Yates began the briefing with an overview of what has been conducted, to include the removal of the Confederate Memorial including the bronze elements from Arlington National Cemetery. The overview slide presented provided detailed descriptions of the project, including the Naming Commission recommendation which became law in 2022; the fact that there were no remains under the memorial and the remains of those buried near or in Section 16 were protected during the removal. Also noted was that the granite pedestal remained in place. Additionally, Ms Yates stated that ANC was required to comply with the law by 1 Jan. 2024, and that the removal occurred from 17 December – 22 December 2023. Finally, Ms Yates stated that the Army donated the Memorial to the Commonwealth of Virginia on 3 August, in accordance with the amended Programmatic Agreement. All details about the project and way forward can be found at <https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/About/Confederate-Memorial-Removal>. Ms Smith then began to discuss the current status of the granite base of the Confederate Memorial. Ms. Smith discussed how ANC had worked with the State Historic Preservation Office of Virginia and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to determine how to conduct long term preservation of the granite base to complete requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Ms Smith presented slides that described the next steps for interpretation of the site where the Confederate Memorial was removed from which would complete mitigations as required in the Programmatic Agreement. Ms Smith relayed that these mitigations included the manufacture and installation of signage that showed the original location and design of the Confederate Monument as well as the manufacture and installation of interpretation which showed the use of the Confederate Monument from its dedication in 1914 through its removal date. This completed Ms Smiths presentation. Following this presentation, there was discussion and questions to Ms Smith about how entitled consulting parties and invited consulting parties are determined. Ms Smith provided this response and reminded the committee that the ANC website lists all parties involved in the consultation process.

B. Public Comments

Karen Bennett (*Defend Arlington*): Noted that legal action is pending on appeal in the DC Circuit regarding whether the DoD complied with NEPA and the National Historic Preservation Act. She alleged that consulting parties were not properly noticed about the amended programmatic agreement and the donation to Virginia.

MINUTES
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY (ACANC)
FULL COMMITTEE MEETING
20 August 2024

Kirk Lyons (*Southern Legal Resource Center*): Reaffirmed SLRC's intent to legally appeal the removal and described the dismantling of the monument as a desecration.

Jinny Widowski -President of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC): Stated that the UDC originally funded and cleaned the monument. She requested that the UDC have a seat at the table regarding the wording on the future interpretive signage to ensure the Confederate soldiers remain respectfully memorialized.

Laura Rogers (*Public Member*): Highlighted the visual and emotional impact of the monument's removal on families visiting adjacent graves.

Committee Discussion: Co-chair Edwards noted that Congress has actively engaged with this issue, citing a House amendment in June 2024 to relocate the memorial back to ANC that was defeated (230 "No" votes to 192 "Yes" votes). Edwards reiterated that the public should continue using their voice through congressional representatives.

C. Wait Times and the impact of the Suspension of the Caisson

Briefer: Neal McIntyre, Director of Interments

Scheduling & Wait Times: ANC reduced its scheduling wait time from 65 weeks (August 2023) to 53 weeks. This reduction of 12 weeks was attributed to a change in supervisor leadership, which increased individual scheduler productivity. The team conducts 24–27 services daily and receives approximately 30 new burial requests per day.

Eligibility & Documentation: The timeline for eligibility determination remains a bottleneck. Casketed remains are prioritized over cremated remains to ease family burdens. While casketed eligibility determinations meet the 14-day standard, cremated remains have exceeded the 45-day standard (currently averaging 35 days for casketed and longer for cremated due to staffing constraints). ANC has hired a dedicated eligibility determination team to improve these numbers.

Caisson Suspension: The suspension of the Caisson Platoon due to herd health and infrastructure assessments has had minimal operational impact. Over 2,000 Military Funeral Honors with Escort (MFHw/E) services have been conducted since the suspension. Only 29 families have opted to wait indefinitely for the Caisson's return. The Caparison (riderless) Horse remains available for eligible services (Army and Marine Corps Colonels and above).

D. Organizational Strategy and Objectives Assessments.

Briefer: MAJ Andrew Clark, Strategic Planner

MINUTES
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY (ACANC)
FULL COMMITTEE MEETING
20 August 2024

MAJ Clark updated the committee on five selected objectives from ANC's 22 FY24 goals under the core pillars of **People, Modernization, and Readiness**:

Improve Prescheduling Communications (Obj 1.1): Handled via the Director of Interments' specialized eligibility team.

Acquire Talent & Reduce Time to Hire (Obj 1.2): Standardizing hiring practices and utilizing career fairs (March and September 2024) to target high-turnover roles like internment operators, security guards, and schedulers.

Revise and Publish AR 290-5 (Obj 2.4): The draft has been converted to the new Army Publishing Directorate (APD) format. Eighty percent of stakeholder feedback has been received, with armywide staffing expected to initiate in Q1 FY25.

Sustain and Improve Burial Accountability (Obj 3.1): Semi-annual chain of custody training is on track to be completed by Q4, maintaining the target of 100% accountability.

Maximize Burial Capacity (Obj 3.2): ANC successfully identified an additional 500 gravesites this fiscal year by reclaiming utility corridors and adjusting layouts around fallen trees, coordinating closely with horticulture to preserve ANC's Level 3 Arboretum status.

E. Southern Expansion Update

Briefer: COL Andrew "Andy" Wiker, Director of Engineering

COL Wiker presented a comprehensive progress report on the Southern Expansion, a major program designed to maximize contiguous burial space by incorporating the former Navy Annex site:

Site Preparation and Challenges: The former Navy Annex site was historically bisected by local roads and congested with underground utilities. COL Wiker noted that while they initially anticipated a dozen underground utilities to relocate, they actually discovered upwards of 20 to 30. No residential properties were displaced, though mitigation measures continue for neighbors (especially in the housing area west of Nash Street) experiencing construction noise and vibrations from retaining wall placements.

Three Phased Projects:

Defense Access Roads (DAR): Began Fall 2021, running through Winter 2025. A major milestone will occur in September 2024 with the reopening of realigned Columbia Pike. This will allow the closure of Joyce Street and other interior roads.

Phase II (New Operations Complex): Located South of Columbia Pike, construction began in Summer 2023 and is slated for completion in Fall 2026. Buildings are currently rising, and the primary service vehicle tunnel beneath Columbia Pike has been backfilled. This tunnel will only be used by government employees and contractors.

MINUTES
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY (ACANC)
FULL COMMITTEE MEETING
20 August 2024

Phase III (Cemetery Expansion): The design packet will be finalized by December 2024. Bidding and acquisition will take place throughout 2025, with a contract award in January 2026. Construction is scheduled for Spring 2026 to Fall 2028 (estimating a 600–660 day period of performance).

Timeline Adjustments: The final completion date of the expansion has shifted from 2026 to Fall 2028 due to differing site conditions, including the undocumented utility lines and historical building foundations found beneath the new operations complex.

Layout and Capacity:

The expansion adds approximately 50 acres and over **88,000 total burial opportunities**, extending active cemetery operations by 20–22 years based on current burial rates (approx. 4,000/year).

Capacity Breakdown: In-ground casketed (approx. 40,000), preset crypts (approx. 13,000), in-ground cremated (approx. 38,000), and columbarium niches (approx. 36,000).
(Note: Final design revisions may cause slight fluctuations in these numbers).

Funding: Approximately \$500 million has been appropriated for the program to date, using military construction funds for the DAR portion.

9/11 Memorial Visitor Education Center: ANC is currently drafting a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Pentagon Memorial Fund (PMF) to permit them to build on the designated parcel. Land transfer cannot occur until the Phase I DAR contract is finalized.

F. Area Development Plan 1 (ADP1) Charette (Entry Corridor)

Briefer: Stephen Crawford, Architect and Project Manager

Mr. Crawford briefed the committee on the Entry Corridor Area Development Plan (ADP1), which covers the primary arrival points at the Welcome Center:

- **Scope and Land Transfer:** Under the 2020 NDAA, the land north and south of Memorial Avenue and the area in front of the Women's Memorial were transferred from the National Park Service (NPS) to ANC, opening up new opportunities for development and capacity.
- **Current Welcome Center Issues:** The existing building (constructed in the late 1980s/early 1990s) was not designed to accommodate modern security screening. This creates visitor bottlenecks, compromises the exhibit space, and creates vehicle-pedestrian conflicts on Memorial Avenue.
- **Proposed Feasibility and NEPA studies:**
 - **New Welcome Center:** Constructing a brand-new Welcome Center to the west of the existing facility. Demolishing the old structure will create a wide-open entrance plaza.

MINUTES
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY (ACANC)
FULL COMMITTEE MEETING
20 August 2024

- **Screening Plaza:** Creating a separate, state-of-the-art visitor screening facility to move security checkpoints out of the main visitor lobby.
- **Traffic Realignment:** Moving the entrance of the parking garage further east to completely separate vehicle arrivals from pedestrian foot traffic.
- **Improved Amenities:** Relocating the tram ticketing area and constructing a new, two-sided public and family restroom facility situated directly on the secure fence line.
- **Updates and Milestones:** Maintenance projects are wrapping up, including pylon straightening, Memorial Avenue repaving, and the rehabilitation of the Women's Memorial Fountain. A Design Charette was held in May 2024 with stakeholders (CFA, NCPC, and NPS).
- **Upcoming Public Scoping Meeting:** A public scoping meeting to review the Draft Feasibility Study and the Description of Proposed Actions & Alternatives (DOPAA) is scheduled for **October 16, 2024**, in the multipurpose room.

G. Other Public Comments:

Mr John. Kelly, who had previously requested to speak, sent his thanks and noted that he was not going to return to the meeting in person. His written comments were formally passed around and distributed to the committee.

H. Section 60 Memorial Collection

Briefer: Dr. Stephen Carney, Senior ANC Historian

- **Background:** Established in 2009 by order of Secretary Preston Geren, the Section 60 Pilot Program gathered mementos left at the graves of Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) casualties. In 2014, Secretary John McHugh declared these items a "historical memorial collection" and ordered active collecting to cease upon the withdrawal of combat troops from Afghanistan, which occurred on August 30, 2021.
- **Status Update:** Curation and cataloging are **100% complete**. All collected items have been photographed in situ, cataloged, and securely housed in a searchable database.
- **Upcoming Actions (Conservation):** ANC is partnering with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (St. Louis District Center of Expertise) and the Veterans Curation Project (VCP). Phase 1 (18 months) will involve professionally rehousing items, taking high-quality photography, and conducting a conservation needs assessment. Phase 2 will execute the physical conservation.
- **Final Disposition:** Dr. Carney noted that several premier institutions, including the Smithsonian and the 9/11 Memorial Museum, have requested long-term loan agreements for specific items. ANC also plans to rotatively display select, de-identified mementos in the Memorial Amphitheater starting in October 2024.

MINUTES
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY (ACANC)
FULL COMMITTEE MEETING
20 August 2024

I. Visitor Trends

Briefer: Bob Quackenbush, ANC Chief of Staff

- **Visitation Metrics:** Pedestrian visitor numbers are tracked accurately via magnetometers at the Welcome Center, Ord & Weitzel Gate, and 123 Gate. Vehicle arrivals are calculated assuming two passengers per vehicle.
- **Recovery Trends:** Visitation is steadily rising post-COVID, with CY 2024 expected to exceed 2.5 million visitors. While this is still below the 2018 peak of 3.5 million, virtual engagement (blogs, social media, and interactive tours) has seen a massive surge.
- **Operations:** Welcome Center pedestrians represent the bulk of foot traffic, with approximately 20% utilizing the tram service. The Ord & Weitzel Gate in the north is crucial for tracking pedestrian arrivals from the Rosslyn area.

5. COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

Following the formal briefings, the committee engaged in a strategic dialogue on the critical operational trajectory of the cemetery:

- **Revised Eligibility:**
 - Co-chair Edwards expressed immense frustration that the proposed eligibility rules, which were heavily debated and submitted to the Federal Register in September 2020, have sat stagnant in the DoD adjudication queue for nearly four years.
 - Without the implementation of these rules, the current cemetery space is projected to be completely exhausted by **2041**. Even with the completion of the Southern Expansion (extending life by 20-22 years), capacity will run out by **2063** (excluding Medal of Honor recipients), failing the congressional mandate to keep ANC open for active burials for the next 100 years.
 - **Proposal:** Mr. Edwards suggested that if the broader eligibility reform remains frozen due to political resistance from Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs), the committee should formulate a "Plan B." This plan would focus on legally reserving a set number of gravesites specifically for service members Killed In Action (KIA) and Medal of Honor recipients, ensuring those who make the ultimate sacrifice in combat can always be buried at ANC 100 to 150 years from now.
 - **Ruled Action:** The Co-chairs will formally request a face-to-face meeting with the Secretary of the Army and the Secretary of Defense to push for Plan A. If that effort fails, they will task the Honor Subcommittee with developing the parameters for Plan B.
- **Opposition to Political Burials:**

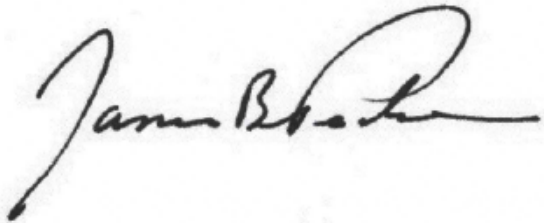
MINUTES
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY (ACANC)
FULL COMMITTEE MEETING
20 August 2024

- The committee discussed rumors circulating within the Department of Defense regarding proposed criteria that would permit senior politicians (such as Presidents and Vice Presidents who have never served in uniform) automatic burial rights at ANC.
- The committee **reaffirmed its unanimous and strong opposition** to this proposal. The committee formally laid down the marker that wearing the military uniform must remain the absolute, non-negotiable prerequisite for burial at Arlington National Cemetery. They recommended that ANC align its rules with the VA, which requires a minimum of 24 months of active-duty service.
- **Next Meeting Planning:**
 - The committee plans to hold virtual subcommittee meetings in early November to refine eligibility recommendations and Plan B options ahead of the next full committee session.

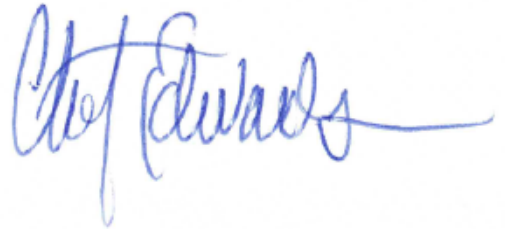
6. MEETING ADJOURNED

Mr. Peake thanked those in attendance and asked if any members had other business for the Committee, or any final comments. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to adjourn. Multiple members moved to adjourn, speaking simultaneously; multiple members also seconded the motion. Mr. Peake thanked members for all of their hard work.

The meeting adjourned at 1525.



James Peake
Co- Chair



Thomas "Chet" Edwards
Co- Chair