

**MINUTES**  
**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY (ACANC)**  
**Remember and Explore SUB COMMITTEE MEETING October 2023**  
**12 October 2023**

**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 1600, noting that this is a virtual meeting. Present in support were LTC Petra Papavasileiou of OAC G5, DR. Allison Finkelstein, ANC Historian, Mr. Justin Buller, Office of the General Counsel, Mr. Bob Quackenbush, Deputy Chief of Staff for ANC, and Mr. Matthew Davis, Program Analyst and Alternate Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery.

Member of the public attending virtually included: Chancellor AMS, Harold Robinson, Mike Binetti, Stephen Carney, Timothy Lawson, Julie Hardaway, Derek Jones, James Rzonca, Gary Carr, Greg Tardieu, Edwin Kennedy, Jack Lea, William Collins, Lunelle Siegel, John Coffindaffer, Ken Kraetzer, Jenifer Van Vleck, Ely Almendarez, Kerry Meeker

Ms. Yates stated for the record that this virtual subcommittee 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 subcommittee, without prior approval of the subcommittee chairperson, Mr. Mark Farley. It was noted that 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](http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil). Ms. Yates highlighted that Subcommittee members were provided the public comments received as a result of the Federal Register Notice and also announced that the proceedings were being digitally recorded, and that a written summary of the meeting will be prepared and made available to the public on the ANC website.

All guests were asked to ensure that their cameras were inactive, and their microphones muted. The proceedings were being digitally recorded, and a summary in written form will be available to the public on the ANC website. Any disruption or disturbance to the Subcommittee may result in removal.

The Subcommittee was called to order at 1604.

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

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Secretary of the Army nominees: Mr. Mark Farley, Ms. Rose Duval, Mr. Nick Miller, Mr. Robert Hess

Secretary of Veterans Affairs nominee: Mrs. Rosemary Freitas Williams.

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

Not Present was Ms Ann Harrell.

**3. SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIR OPENING REMARKS.** Mr. Farley welcomed members and noted that there were 2 topics to discuss. The 1<sup>st</sup> Topic was a follow up regarding Jackson Circle. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Topic was an update brief on the Chaplains Hill Monuments and the proposal from the National Conference on the Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF).

**4. SUBCOMMITTEE BRIEFS:**

A. **Jackson Circle Re-Naming.** . Ms. Yates introduced the Deputy Chief of Staff, Mr. Bob Quackenbush to brief the Jackson Circle Re-naming nominations. Mr. Quackenbush gave a brief introduction of his position and career and began his presentation.

The presentation began with a slide depicting ANCs obligation to Commemorations, and how ANC represents the history of our nation as told through the military service members, eligible dependents, and the entirety of the complex history of the land that ANC rests upon. Mr. Quackenbush continued by explaining that ANC does a good job of explaining the stock history of the cemetery, to include the history of the Custis Family, Robert E Lee, expansion history, and of the heroes buried at ANC. He also explained that because the property did not begin in 1864, a good portion of the history has yet to be told, and that ANC is attempting to provide alternatives with road naming to assist in this endeavor.

Mr. Quackenbush transitioned to explaining guidelines established in AR 1-33 (The Army Memorial Program and displayed an evaluation criteria chart developed by the ANC staff that serves to quantify nominations. Mr. Quackenbush stated that existing road names are very much focused on senior officials and senior officers, and that the Army and the Navy are prominently represented.

Mr. Quackenbush then discussed recent surveys to visitors at the cemetery, specifically recalling the question “Do you feel like your community is represented at the cemetery?”, with a significant portion of the respondents answering “no”. Mr. Quackenbush stated that ANC currently does not have any road names representing minorities. Mr. Quackenbush further explained the current representation of roads on ANC. Highlights include that only one road isn’t named after an individual (Memorial Drive); 7 named after U.S. Presidents; 1 named after a former Secretary of War; 36 named after Flag Officers; 1 named after a Field Grade Officer; 2

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named after Non-Commissioned Officers; and 1 named after a female. Furthermore, he stated that Army service represented 27 of the roads; Navy service represented 10 roads; US Air Force service represented 2 roads; US Marine Corps service represented 1 road; and the US Coast Guard represented 1 road (technically the US Light House Service, a precursor to the US Coast Guard).

Mr. Quackenbush displayed a slide with 8 nominations: James Parks Circle; Syphax Circle; Milton Holland Circle; Alexander Augusta Circle; Ruth Lucas Circle; Lee Archer Circle; Frank Peterson Circle; Catherine Murray Circle.

Mr Quackenbush then further explained each nomination beginning with James Parks. Justification included that James Parks was present at ANC his entire life, beginning with being born enslaved at the former Arlington Plantation, entire life as a child, a newly freed person, and then as an employee for the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps, maintaining the cemetery at the time. Mr. Quackenbush explained that James Parks was present, working at the cemetery during witnessing events such as the construction of the Tanner Amphitheater, the Memorial Amphitheater, the internment of the Unknown Soldier, and participated in the interment of the sailors around the Mast of the USS Maine. Additionally, James Parks served a significant role in the restoration of Arlington house in 1925, as he was one of the few living persons that had firsthand knowledge of what the house looked like before, during, and just after the Civil War. Mr. Quackenbush stated that because of his service to the Quartermaster Corps, the then Secretary of War granted full military honors upon his death, and he is buried at ANC in Section 15.

Mr. Quackenbush moved on the next nomination, the Syphax Family. He explained that Maria Syphax was the daughter of George Washington Parke Custis, and the half-sister of Mary Custis Lee (Wife of Robert E. Lee). Mr. Quackenbush explained that as Maria Syphax aged, her father enabled her freedom, and he gave her 17 acres of the Arlington Plantation on the property now known as Henderson Hall. He explained that in the early 1900s, the US Army, under imminent domain rules, took the property and the entire Syphax family was relocated. History of the Syphax family includes many descendants with military service, with many buried at ANC, all the way back to the US Colored Troops. Mr. Quackenbush stated that the family remains a prominent family in the District / Maryland / Virginia area.

The next nomination to consider was Milton Holland, born enslaved in antebellum Texas and a recipient of the Medal of Honor in the Civil War. Mr Quackenbush stated that Milton Holland enlisted in the US Colored Troops in 1863 and rose to the rank of Sergeant Major. During the Battle of New Market Heights in 1864, after all of the white officers of his regiment were killed, he led commanded his regiment. He received the Medal of Honor for his actions, and lived until 1910, where he was buried in Section 23 of ANC.

Mr Quackenbush moved onto the next nomination, Alexander Augusta. Mr. Augusta was an African American born free in Norfolk, Virginia in 1825. Mr. Quackenbush stated that because of a ban of education for African Americans in Virginia at the time, Mr. Augusta moved to

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Toronto Canada in the 1850s to pursue a medical degree. In 1863, Mr. Augusta moved back to his adopted hometown of Baltimore, and wrote President Lincoln asking to serve as a doctor for the US Colored Troops and was commissioned as a Major and the first African American commissioned as a Medical Officer in the US Army. Mr Quackenbush explained that his initial post was as the Administrator for the Freedmans Hospital in Washington DC and was known as the first African American Hospital Administrator in United States history. After the Civil War, Mr. Augusta served on the faculty at Howard University. Mr. Quackenbush noted that recently, Mr. Augusta was recently honored by having the hospital at Fort Belvoir named in his honor.

The next nomination Mr. Quackenbush discussed was Ms. Ruth Lucas who was the first African American to be promoted to Colonel in the US Air Force. Ms Lucas enlisted in the Womens ArmyAuxiliary Corps and then transferred to the US Air Force for the remainder of her career. Ms Lucas was an instrumental educator in the Air Force and the Department of Defense. Upon her retirement Ms Lucas taught at the precursor to the University of Washington, D.C., the Washington Technical Institute, where she retired in 1994 as the Assistant Dean. Ms Lucas died in 2013 and is interred at ANC.

Mr Quackenbush continued with the next nomination which was Lee Archer. Mr., Quackenbush explained that Lee Archer, and African-American, left New York University to enlist in the Army during World War II. Though initially denied pilot training because of his race, in 1942, Lee Archer was accepted into the new, experimental pilot-training program for African-Americans at Tuskegee Army Airfield. Mr. Archer graduated #1 in his class from flight school and then subsequently deployed to the European theater where he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal. Mr Archer was credited with 4 ½ kills, ½ kill shy of becoming an ace. Mr. Archer remained in service and retired as a LTC in 1970.

Mr. Quackenbush described the next nomination, Lieutenant General Frank Peterson. General Peteerson enlisted in the US Navy in 1950 and enrolled in the Naval Aviation Cadet program. In 1952 he became the Marines' first African American aviator and was commissioned as a second lieutenant. He flew 350 combat missions over Korea and Vietnam during those conflicts. In 1979, he became the first African American General Officer in the Marine Corps. Lieutenant General Peterson earned twenty medals for bravery in combat and a Distinguished Service Medal.

The final named person nomination that Mr. Quackenbush presented was Ms Catherine Murray. Ms Murray is noted for being the first female US Marine to retire from active duty. She joined the Marine Corps Womens Reserve during WWII, just after Pearl Harbor and served an honorable career throughout her 15 duty stations and wrote several training manuals for the USMC.

Mr Quackenbush then described some "concept" names for the subcommittee to consider, if they thought that a named person was not appropriate. These concept names included "Reconciliation Circle" as suggested by the Full ACANC during a previous meeting. Mr. Quackenbush cautioned the subcommittee to not use this name as this has become recognized by historians as

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the reconciliation really only occurred between white northerners and the white south, and came at the expense of African American rights. Another name included “Freedom Circle”, which Mr. Quackenbush stated that ANC has Freedman’s Village and that the staff is intentionally going to be conducting interpretation of Freedmans village as part of the agreement with Arlington County.

Mr. Quackenbush discussed the option of Horticulture themed names. Section 16 is noted for its Red Cedars, so the possibility of “Red Cedar” circle is appropriate, as well as Maple, Oak, Holly, and Cherry.

Mr. Quackenbush concluded that ANC believes that this is a great opportunity to select an individual and really use that individuals history to assist in interpretation with the history of the cemetery.

The subcommittee members then began discussing the nominations presented by Mr. Quackenbush. Ms Freitas began by discussing Milton Holland and how it was appropriate to potentially name the circle after him in that he was awarded the highest Medal, the Congressional Medal of Honor for his service. Mr. Hess echoed these sentiments and added that Mr. Holland went on to completing his law degree at Howard University and becoming the first African American to pass the BAR exam, so he is an inspirational example of somebody continuing to better themselves and bettering the community.

Mr. Farley asked if there were any other subcommittee member comments. Ms Freitas stated that since the Cedar tree is a symbol of eternity, the Red Cedar circle option is viable in her opinion.

Several members cautioned on the use of an individual name to replace another individual name (Jackson), stating that the reason for the change is social driven. They shared concern that in the next 25 years, the pendulum could shift again, and the names would have to be altered, so the thought of a thematic name was appealing to them.

Mr. Farley then stated that before the subcommittee votes to make a recommendation, he wanted to hear any public comments. He then turned the meeting over to Ms Renea Yates for the public comment period.

**B. Public Comment** Ms. Yates opened the floor to public comments for approximately 30 minutes. She stated that those members of the public who pre-registered to provide public comments would be called upon, and for them to state their name, enable their microphone, and they would be given 3 minutes to present their statement.

The first individual to provide comments was Mr. John Coffindaffer. Mr. Coffindaffer provided comments that if Arlington’s mission is to interpret history, then why is history being erased. He also questioned that with bases renamed, and statues removed, why recruiting has not increased.

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The next member of the public to speak was Edwin Kennedy. He provided a brief introduction of his credentials as a historian. Mr Edwin questioned an earlier statement that Reconciliation was at the expense of African- Americans. As evidence, he mentioned that in 1863 was the first time that African-Americans were allowed to enlist in the US Army, but were officially segregated for the next 85 years after that time. He questioned if that meant that every conflict period during those 85 years would have to be relooked because of that segregation.

The next member of the public to speak was Lunelle Siegel - Ms Siegel thanked the subcommittee for their work and stated that she was really just looking for a status of the full Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemeteries report to the Secretary of the Army, and then transitioned to providing an opinion that the Confederate Memorial should remain in place.

This concluded the public comment session. Ms Yates then relayed to the Subcommittee and members of the public the timelines outlined for providing reports and minutes related to the Advisory Committees.

Mr. Farley thanked the members of the public for their comments.

C. **Subcommittee Discussion.** Chairman Farley opened up the subcommittee deliberations old business, the Monuments at Chaplains Hill. The slides from the previous subcommittee discussions were displayed, and Mr. Farley explained to the Subcommittee members that they were looking at the Chaplains monuments, separate monuments dedicated for a specific time period or a commemoration for a certain denomination. He talked about the history of the proposal and previous discussions within the subcommittee, including the answers to the subcommittee RFIs.

Mr. Farley then stated that the subcommittee was agreeable to one part of the NCMAF proposal – replacing the cement backing of the Protestant Chaplains Memorial with granite. With the second and third part of the NCMAF proposal, the subcommittee had various concerns with the addition of 81 names to be added to the Protestant Chaplains Memorial and the addition of 31 names to be added to the Catholic Chaplains Memorial. These concerns related to the 25-year rule as stated in 38 USC 2409, potential double commemoration for those already commemorated at ANC with a headstone, and the potential for these monuments to become “living” memorials with the addition of more names each time a Chaplain dies on active duty. Discussion continued reference a previous meeting where the Subcommittee talked about potentially receiving a memorandum from NCMAF stating that they would not request any additional updates to the Chaplains memorial if their current request was approved. Chairman Farley clarified that this is no longer an option, as a result of discussion amongst the subcommittee members resulted in concerns that leadership of NCMAF could change, and therefore change opinion on updating of the memorials.

There was additional discussion based on comments from NCMAF, that the 2022 NDAA removed the 25-year requirement from 38 USC 2409. The 2022 NDAA was displayed and

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showed that the Secretary of the Army “may permit” NCMAF to make changes but showed no deletion of the 25-year rule.

With that clarification, Chairman Farley brought up a vote to the Subcommittee. Each member present (Farley, Duval, Williams, Hess, Miller, Torrence) voted in favor of replacing the concrete backing of the Protestant Chaplains Memorial with a granite backing.

With the question of adding additional names, Chairman Farley recommended adding all of the names brought forward to the subcommittee, with the exception of those who died inside of the 25-year rule as stated in 38 USC 2409, and that the Secretary of the Army retains the authority to waive that requirement and add the additional names that do not meet the requirement. All members present (Farley, Hess, Williams, Miller, Duval, Torrence) voted in favor.

Moving to the topic of renaming Jackson Circle, Chairman Farley asked the subcommittee on any names to recommend to the full committee. There was ample discussion about concern over “replacing a name with a name” and the cause of renaming Jackson Circle as a social pendulum. Much discussion centered around replacing a perceived wrong with a wrong. Discussion continued to replace with something universal such as Freedom, Liberty or Red Cedar. Chairman Farley opened up voting recommendation by providing 3 names for the full committee to decide. These names were 1. Jackson Circle 2. Liberty Circle and 3. Red Cedar. The committee was in full agreement that changing names based on social paradigms was something that was not in the Charter for Arlington National Cemetery. Mr. Hess agreed on this concept, but wanted to add that if we are forced to change the name, he would rather change it to a good news story, such as Milton Holland, as it more closely aligns with the job ANC has with telling a story. Mr Hess did not think that a thematic concept name fits with Arlington’s History or its job of how does the name tell the story of Arlington National Cemetery.

Discussion continued and the question was brought up as to whether the subcommittee could recommend leaving the name as is. Ms Yates clarified that the subcommittee can make whatever recommendation that they feel is the correct recommendation, but that the Army is required to change the name base on congressional mandate. Additional discussion amongst the subcommittee members regarded that it seemed the entire structure of the naming commission was that Congress was hands off, and that Congress created a commission, which created a report, and once the report was 90 days old and nobody from Congress acted upon it, this forced the Secretary of Defense into bringing the cemetery into a very divisive issue. The Committee decided that regardless of the political situation that ANC has been brought into, they wanted to provide the full committee with some recommendations.

Mr Farley Proposed 1 – Jackson Circle, 2 – Liberty Circle and 3 – Red Cedar Circle. Ms Duval Concurred. Mr. Miller wanted a name in the group and opposed. Ms Williams Concurred. Mr Hess wanted a name in the group and opposed. Mr Torrence concurred.

With the vote 4-2, Mr. Farley attempted to gain full concurrence by replacing Red Cedar Circle with Milton Holland. Mr Torrence stated that by adding a name to the list, it almost provides an

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escape valve and the cemetery would still be stuck in a political game and stated that he liked the original proposal. This had sway to some of the other subcommittee members. Going back to the original vote for 1 -Jackson Circle, 2. Liberty Circle and 3 – Red Cedar Circle that vote went 5-1 with only Mr. Hess wanting to replace Milton Holland with Red Cedar circle.

With the voting complete, Mr. Farley asked the Subcommittee if they would like to hear any additional topics discussed during the next meeting. Mr Miller stated that he would like to see Arlington designated as a DOD High Impact Service provider under OMB Authority. He would like to know if Arlington is doing anything to implement some of the OMB guidance around high impact service providers that came out in an executive order. He believes that it is important because it is about customer facing and customer service activities, and he believes that Arlington was overlooked, and that the committee was formed to ensure that ANC is not overlooked. Mr Farley thanked Mr. Miller for that and brought up that he would like to hear more about the future of the education and interpretation program at ANC. Ms Duval asked if the subcommittee would be involved in road naming for the expansion. Ms Yates relayed that yes, road naming is part of the master planning and that the committee would be involved in that aspect.


Mr Farley asked if there was any additional business that the subcommittee needed to conduct. Ms Yates relayed that there were 2 members of the public with hands raised. Mr Robinson of NCMAF was called upon and stated that the specifically referenced NDAA that refers to the waiver of the 25-year rule was not read or shown to the subcommittee. Ms Yates relayed that she was asked to show the 2022 NDAA and that is what was shown. Mr. Robinson was mistaken and wanted the 2023 NDAA shown. This was shown and this too did not remove the 25-year rule from 38 USC 2409, but stated again that the Secretary of the Army “May waive” the requirement. Mr Robinson then stated that he wanted the record to show that the Chaplains memorial previously referenced at Fort Jackson is for Army Chaplains only and does not represent the entire Chaplains Corps of all of the Services. Mr. Collins was also called upon and stated that he was on the legal team that assisted in drafting 38 USC 2409 when the 25-year rule was placed. He stated that there was nothing special about this number and it was just placed sort of arbitrarily, and that is why the Secretary’s are authorized to waive this requirement.

Mr Farley thanked the members of the public for their comments and then asked the subcommittee if anything they had just heard would change anyone’s vote. All members said no.

**5. MEETING ADJOURNED**

Mr. Farley asked if any members had other business for the Subcommittee, 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. Farley thanked all members for all of their hard work.

The meeting adjourned at 1825.

  
Mark L. Farley  
Chairman