

# Fairfax County Confederate Names Task Force

## Meeting Minutes for October 18, 2021, at 7:00 pm

1. The meeting was called to order by Chair Spain at 7:00 PM. A roll call was made of all remote participants, and they were confirmed to be in accordance with established guidelines. A count of in-person members verified a quorum.
2. Chair Spain made a motion to adopt the minutes for Sep 13, Sep 20, and Oct 11. One member asked that the district she represents be included on the roster. Another member requested the correct spelling of her name. With those changes, three sets of minutes were unanimously approved.
3. Chair Spain made several administrative announcements: 1) Security has recommended that all members leave in a group, pairs or get a security escort. 2) Minutes will be in a summary form and will not include names. They will include matters voted on and the vote count. 3) Unvaccinated attendees are asked to social distance. 4) The government center has mandated everyone is required to wear a mask when present in the building.
4. The FCDOT staff provided an update on the Public Engagement Strategy. The citizen engagement survey was officially launched in eight different languages. Citizens have five ways in which they can participate in the process. Postcards should be hitting homes sometime next week; County staff estimates October 28. They also sent the information to the Confederate Task Force members, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, all County agencies, the Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services, the Fairfax County Economic Authority, and the Fairfax County Department of Economic Initiatives. County staff also sent an email to and conducted an interview with Telemundo. There has been no direct mailing to businesses.
5. However, it can still be done. A paper copy of the survey was provided to all libraries. There were several questions and comments: The only Community Engagement Listening Sessions session that will be televised will be the one at the Government Center, on Channel 16. The social media platforms changes being used are Twitter, Facebook, and Nextdoor. The county staff will be posting on Instagram, as well. Task Force members will be provided all data from social media, but it will not be synthesized.

There was a concern that the introduction was not provided on the online survey. It was explained that the information was there. Chair Spain asked that a test be done conducted to make sure everything is working properly. The staff was not sure if the survey results could be broken down by zip code. Listening session update dates were provided. Task Force members were asked to attend as many as possible.

6. A briefing was provided on the estimated cost of changing the names of Lee Highway and Lee-Jackson Memorial Highway.
  - A. County and FCDOT staff conducted an inventory of all the signs related to Lee Highway and Lee-Jackson Memorial Highway. There are multiple types of signs and a different

situation for each type of sign. There are 171 signs for Lee Highway and 55 signs for Lee-Jackson Memorial Highway.

- B. Costs of each sign will vary per type of sign, and what the sign is replaced with matters. Names of similar length will probably equal a lower cost. Names of longer length will equal a higher cost. The difference is primarily for signs mounted on mast arms and overhead structures.
  - C. The estimated cost ranges from \$1.0 million to \$4.2 million. The final cost would be dependent on the names selected. The Board of Supervisors would need to agree to pay for this cost before any changes are made. Weight is also a factor in the cost of a sign.
  - D. No survey of businesses has been conducted yet. Staff in an adjacent jurisdiction has estimated the average cost per business of changing the street name to be approximately \$500. Adjacent governing bodies are considering whether or not to provide grants to businesses to offset this cost. More work will need to be done on this topic before staff makes a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.
  - E. Task Force member asked for information to the website that describes the mechanics of changing a streets' name
  - F. Taskforce members had the following questions:
    - a. Do you have any idea how many businesses will be impacted? Response: No, but it is approximately several hundred.
    - b. Does this include the cost of labor? Response: Yes. What about the cost to upgrade Geographic Information System (GIS) layers for EMT, Fire, and Rescue, and police? Response: There would not be an out-of-pocket cost for those updates. It would be a staff cost. County staff would update the GIS data.
    - c. Would there be any legal cost regarding deeds? Response: No, there will not be a cost for deeds. For contracts, there would be a cost to update and that cost could be handled with a grant from the County.
    - d. Has DMB [DMV] included cost in the budget? Response: No money from the FY 2022 budget will be used. The budget is in development for FY 2023.
    - e. Do streets need a name? Or can I call it Route 50 or Route 29? Response: Streets do not have to have a name. The Taskforce could consider Route 29 or Route 50 as names for the street signs.
    - f. What is the status of the postcard? Response: It's been printed, but it has not gone out. It should be out early next week.
7. There will be no additional subgroups. Henceforth, for transparency, all Task Force members will work together. There was a motion to extend the meeting on November 8th an additional 30 minutes. It was amended to add "if necessary." Original motion was withdrawn and motion passed.
8. Members were asked, "What are the principles important to you in considering the names of roadways in Fairfax County? Look at the big picture. What's the criteria/ principals that are important for each of us." Their responses are below:
- 1. If using "Memorial" names – consider names from underrepresented groups
  - 2. Concept names
  - 3. Origin names
  - 4. Geographic / physical features – destination
  - 5. Numbers (Rt 29 etc.)
  - 6. Caring for citizens

7. Empathy – names that reflect our “best selves”
  8. Names that prevent harming others
  9. Considering important historical aspects of County
  10. Try to be fact-based, not emotion-based
  11. Inclusivity – does the name offend or hurt others
  12. Is it welcoming – does it help repair harms, lift up community
  13. Is it factually correct about the FULL history of VA
  14. Distinguishing between remembering vs. memorializing/ glorifying
  15. Marking key historical events – enable people to learn about the County
  16. Providing a sense of place – Civil War’s impact on Fairfax County
  17. Considering indigenous people who were here long before the Civil War
  18. Refrain from naming roads after people
  19. Does it provoke a sense of pain for others
  20. How do street names / symbols impact our youth?
  21. Names should give a sense of hope – that we are in this together.
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9. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.