

NEW GUM SPRINGS CIVIC ASSOCIATION

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Mount Vernon Supervisor Daniel Storck
2511 Parkers Lane
Alexandria, VA 22306

Supervisor Storck


Apparently, there is a serious issue pertaining to the management and operation of the Gum Springs Historical Society and Museum (Museum) to the point that Ronald (Ron) Chase, Director, has been banned from the Gum Springs Community Center (community center) by Fairfax County (County). The Museum is housed in the community center.

The New Gum Springs Civic Association (Civic Association) is the official voice and representative of the Gum Springs community. The Gum Springs community has not been adequately apprised of the matter or actions and decisions to include interim or permanent actions and decisions. During the June 14th community meeting, the Museum was being discussed because it was a part of Gum Springs Community Day, which was being held on June 18th. After the meeting had been adjourned, I was informed by a Department of Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS) employee that Ron Chase had been banned from the community center and that the Museum could only be opened by the Museum's Board of Directors. That was all the information the NCS employee was at liberty to provide. No other NCS staff person reached out to the Civic Association to discuss the matter. Now there are rumors galore running rampant throughout the community. No information to quash these rumors from the County or NCS.

You should also be aware that the Civic Association had attended numerous roundtable and individual meetings hosted by NCS for more than two years. It should also be duly noted that it was the Civic Association that detected that the Museum's tax exempt status had been revoked by the IRS after inquiries from community residents concerned about their tax exempt donations. The Museum's tax exempt status was revoked during 2011 for failure to file a 990-N or notice for three consecutive years. Therefore, it was reasonable to assume that the Museum had not filed the appropriate tax documents since 2008. The Civic Association learned about the noncompliance during 2014 and informed NCS shortly thereafter. The IRS reinstated the Museum's tax exempt status earlier this year, 2016 (See Attachment).

The Civic Association and the Gum Springs Community Center Advisory Board (Advisory Board) continued to work with NCS once it was in the opinion of the Civic Association that the Museum needed to have better oversight and accountability. The Civic Association even went so far as to provide a doable draft outline on how to improve access and accountability for the Museum. (See Attachment). Afterwards, both the Civic Association and Advisory Board continued to meet with NCS about the management and operation of the Museum. The Civic Association and Advisory Board provided Mr. Chase a joint letter for a meeting that included NCS (See Attachment).

However, no meaningful feedback or information has been received from NCS and in particular during the past two years to include this year, 2016, concerning our suggested recommendations.



8100 Fordson Road
Alexandria, VA 22306
www.ngsca.org
888-740-6009

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