

## Arden Advisory Committee Meeting, 13 November 2006

Present: Christine Demsey, Willard Glenn, Aaron Hamburger, Mary Marconi, Denis O'Regan, Sue Rothrock, Danny Schweers, Sadie Somerville, Bill Theis, Debbie Theis, Steven Threefoot, Elizabeth Varley and Larry Walker.

Elizabeth Varley, Advisory Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:39 p.m.

**BWVC FINANCES MERGED WITH VILLAGE:** Trustees would like to integrate BWVC finances into Town Budget. Separate checking and budget had started when Montessori School was a full-time tenant, putting money into account, expenses coming out. Idea is that this would allow residents to vote on BWVC budget and make that budget more easily understood by residents. Discussion ensued. Would contracts need to span a single fiscal year? Income would be town money, but some accounts might be encumbered such as capital and building repairs to be rolled over from year to year. How would the new finances be represented in November's budget referendum since it would include income as well as expenses? Can we introduce this change gradually, so residents understand the change? If the building at some time starts making a profit, can profits be designated for future maintenance instead of being rolled into town assets? Will this change how effectively the BWVC Committee makes decisions? Will the Town Assembly then be micro-managing that committee? Will finances be more easily understood as a part of Village finances than they are now, with a separate annual budget presentation? Normally the BWVC budget is presented in September, but will be at next town meeting. The BWVC Committee is asked to consider the matter.

**LETTERS OF CONDOLENCE:** Steven Threefoot suggests sending letters of condolence to family of the deceased rather than observing moments of silence. Question is who gets the letter at what addresses. This suggestion met general approval.

**CONTRACTS:** How do we handle contractual obligations that span several years. Aaron says we interpret it as a rejection of the contract, that it not be renewed.

**VIDEO FRANCHISE AGREEMENTS:** Contracts with Comcast and Verizon, negotiated by all three villages, overseen by our lawyer, Ted, are nearly complete. These are not Internet contracts, but video contracts, allowing these companies access to cables strung from telephone poles and allowing them to offer video to residents.

**MULTIPLE DOMICILES:** Motion approved by Town Assembly is being pursued with New Castle County. Community Planning and Trustees hope to revisit the issue of new extra domiciles at a future town meeting.

**EXPENSES WAY OVER BUDGET:** How can Village respond to sudden expenses that greatly exceed line-item budgets approved by referendum? One option is to have a much larger contingency fund. [A \$1,000 increase was suggested at last meeting.] Another option is to hold special referenda. At this point, those present thought Willard Glenn had gone into cardiac arrest when, hypothetically, it was suggested that emergency funds would be needed when the BWVC exploded.

**SECRETARY'S PAY:** Why is Village Secretary paid such a hefty amount and other village positions are not? Currently, \$6,780 is budgeted for 2007-2008, plus additional amounts to cover taxes, insurance, etc. Discussion ensued. Many years ago, it was estimated that the position took 450 hours a year. The current secretary, with good time-keeping practices, records only 270 hours/year. Noting that this position no longer requires the number of hours previously estimated (perhaps because computers really do save time), it was recommended that the salary be dropped to \$5,000 a year. Even if the next Secretary, without the current Secretary's experience and talents, puts in 330 hours/year, the \$5,000 salary is equivalent to \$15.15 an hour for what is regarded by many as a partially volunteer position of service to the Village.

Meeting concluded at 9:14 p.m. with desserts and refreshments in honor of Larry Walker's 61st birthday.

—Faithfully submitted,  
Danny Schweers, Secretary