

Village of Arden
Advisory Retreat
May 20, 2017

Attendance

Chris Junk (Safety designate), Warren Rosenkrantz (Budget designate), Ray Seigfried (Community Planning), Barbara Henry (Registration designate), David Michelson (Treasurer), Denis O'Regan (BWVC, BOA), Danny Schweers (Advisory Chair), Jeffrey Politis (Town Chair), Liz Resko (Secretary), Cookie Ohlson (Auditing), Daryl Holcomb (Playground designate) and Carol Larson.

Guests: Joe DeGrazia, Carol DiGiovanni

Meeting

Advisory Chair, Danny Schweers commenced meeting at 2:05 P.M.



AGENDA

Arden Advisory Committee Retreat
Saturday, May 20, 2017, 2-4pm
Room 4, Buzz Ware Village Center

**Review of the policies and procedures
of the Village of Arden**

Finances including Contracts

Freedom of Information Act

Posting of Minutes

Use of Village Email

Updating Village Website including putting
the Village of Arden Handbook on-line

Conflict of Interest Policy

Handling Conflicts between Committees

Founding documents for the Advisory
Committee and its chair

Danny Reviewed Advisory Meeting Purpose/Functions:

Open Meeting in which anyone is allowed to observe. Request visitors to remain silent unless recognized by the Chair. End of meeting will accept comments and questions from visitors. Same courtesy asked of committee.

Advisory meets first Monday in June, September, January (Exception Tuesday 2018) and March. 7:30 P.M.

Purpose to set agenda for Town Assembly

Put together full slate of candidates for elections of officers and committees for the March Town Assembly elections. Absentee ballots sent out shortly after.

The advisory meeting is for Officers, Trustees, and Chairs to meet to get a sense of what is happening in the Village beyond their individual committees. Town Office is located in BWVC and hours 1st and 3rd Wednesdays each month at 7:30 to 8:30.

Good time for committees to present vouchers to reimburse for expenditures.

Income drop it off.

Advisory retreat is usually held in spring of each year after the March committee elections and after the first meeting of each committee in which their Chairs and secretaries are elected.

Review the Villages Policies and Procedures

Financial Policies (hard copy provided)

Freedom Of Information Act: Checklist (hard copy provided)

Newly elected Chairs and committee secretaries:

	Committee Chairperson	Committee Secretary
Budget	Denise Nordheimer	David Gerbec
Audit	Cookie Ohlson	Roger Garrison
Forest	Carol Larson	Jill Althouse-Wood
Civic	Ed Rohrbach, Al Marks	Town Secretary minutes only.
Playground	Ruth Panella	Ruth Panella
Registration	Cecilia Vore	Elaine Hickey
Comm Planning	Ray Seigfried	Mark Wood (Ron Meick backup)
Safety	Brooke Bovard	Steven Harcourt
BWVC	Denis O'Regan, Walter Borders	no secretary elected as of yet
Archives	Lisa Mullinax	?

David Michelson, Treasurer, reviewed the following:

Budget: Sample Ballot (Copy provided)

Budget Fiscal Year starts March 25.

Budget Time Line Budget

Approved budget September Town Assembly Meeting

Passes in November

Becomes the budget in March 25 of the following year.

Committee Budget Amount - Each Committee receives a budget amount to be spent during the fiscal year. It is the maximum amount a committee can spend within the current fiscal year without transferring money from another committee's budget amount.

Jeff referred to policy - Policy-Transferring of Funds between Budget Line Items (October 2009) – There is mechanism in place to increase budget but it has to be approved by Treasurer. Denis - Is there an oversight of this? Jeff - The oversight is the Committees and the Town Assembly.

Denis will make a proposal at the next Advisory Meeting that can be presented at next Town Assembly.

- 1 Transferring funds between budget line items, might be a policy change and
- 2 Specific oversight of a committee staying within budget which would be a new policy.

Tracking Budgeted Amount throughout Fiscal Year – Financial Report presented each quarter at Town Assembly it lists most recent budget balances available per committee (based on voucher receipts submitted). After each Town Assembly, Danny will send an email to each committee chair with their current available budget balance which in turn they will share with their committee members so no one overspends budgeted amount. It is the responsibility of all the committees to be aware of budget balance amounts.

Vouchers Reimbursement Expense Form

Accounting Codes -There is a list of accounting codes for each expense category.

Receipts - Most important is a receipt must be attached to voucher. Cannot reimburse without a receipt.

Signature - A voucher must be approved by Committee Chair or officer but cannot be approved if reimbursement is for yourself.

Checks - All reimbursements checks are prepared and available 1st and 3rd

Wednesday of each month. If emergency check, will work out arrangement for pick

up. Requires two officers' signatures for internal controls purposes. Checks are usually mailed, not hand delivered, so they are not lost or misplaced.

Submitting Reimbursement forms - Can be dropped off at Trustees/Officers mailbox located across the street from front entrance of BWVC. Or Wednesday officers' hours at town offices located in BWVC.

These steps will be posted on the Village website.

Questions/Comments

Warren – Sustainable Energy Credits: where do they go? Jeff - Have not received the money yet. Contract was signed. No decision has been made as to where the money goes. Maybe BWVC renovation fund or Capital Maintenance fund. Open for suggestions.

Contracts – Contracts can be negotiated by committees with vendors but only the Town Chair can sign a contract. Otherwise they will not be enforceable in court. 29

Danny reviewed FOIA:

Posting Notice of meetings:

FOIA requires posting notice of meeting 7 days before meeting.

Notice posted at meeting place. Each committee is responsible for posting their agenda at meeting place in a conspicuous place. Agenda does not have to go into Arden Page, or Town website. At June Advisory Meeting discuss conspicuous notice? Danny will ask town attorney for clarity.

The notice must list location, time and agenda.

Agenda

The agenda does not need be detailed. A standard agenda with subtopics that will be discussed is sufficient.

If there is something important for the community to be aware of and Committee knows about it prior to meeting, it must be listed on agenda. Agenda can be changed up to the day of meeting.

Posting of Minutes

Brooke Bovard filed complaint against BWVC. The Attorney General of the State of Delaware issued an opinion in her favor about conducting meetings by email and will be discussed June 5th (Advisory Meeting).

Town Secretary is the FOIA coordinator.

Each committee is responsible to post their meeting minutes to the Village website arden.delaware.gov. Audit Committee and Safety are going to be posting their minutes. If you do not know how to post, Liz will go through the mechanism and provide a step by step procedure to post minutes.

Minutes are not approved until the following meeting. Post committee minutes right after meeting to Village website and insert a DRAFT watermark. When minutes are approved at next meeting go back to posted minutes and remove draft watermark and update if need be with any corrections, modifications etc.

The May 2017 Advisory Retreat meeting minutes and March 2017 Advisory meeting minutes will be presented for approval at June 2017 Advisory Meeting.

Village E-mails

Goal is to have all committee chairs and officers to use the Village emails @arden.delaware.gov instead of their personal email when conducting Village business.

Every Committee has a Village Email (I.E. Secretary@arden.delaware.gov, budget@arden.delaware.gov, registratoin@arden.delaware.gov etc.).

There is a log in and a password for each email. Danny has access to all passwords. Danny can send out an email to each chair with their password and how to log in.

At present only chairs of each committee have been set up with village emails, members of committees have not been set up. Chris - FOIA compliance – If you are writing an email and it doesn't belong to someone, it will be hard to know who sent it. Part of having an email address for every committee is if all the email from citizens to that chair and from the Chair back to that citizen, if a FOIA request comes in, you only have to sequester one email account. That is assuming the Chair is using the email account. If you have five people using the same email account, you don't know who was using that account. Should be committee chair and keep everything discoverable.

Village Handbook (referred to as the Red Book)

Handbook list some of the following:

Outlines policies and procedures.

Town Charter is listed.

An effort is underway to post all the information in the Village Handbook on Village website. Barbara Henry - The "Red Book" Arden Government Handbook is 20 years old, outdated but still useful. Cecilia has created a web page that will link the content of the Red Book to current content on the Village website. If everyone likes the idea, she will finish the web page, make it public, and we can distribute the Red Book again with instructions on how to find updated information on the website.

Motions

Liz has collected all motions from 2005 to 2015 and will update to current. They will be posted to Village website. Presently in PDF format and unable to search.

Village Web Administration

Liz will oversee website administratively until a web master is retained in how to manage content. Right now, everyone has access to website and as a whole is managed by all volunteers. This need to be further discussed.

Ray - Concerned about web page security? We are contracted with Stephany Polkus as a web master and she is hosting website. It is not a state hosting. We need to make sure we understand how all the information is protected.

Conflict of Interest Policy

The policy is posted to Village website under Community Planning page.

The Village has a Conflict of Interest Policy and every Chair is responsible to present a copy to the committee members and review it so that every committee member knows what the Conflict of Interest Policy is. It not only covers true conflicts but it also covers potentially perceived conflicts.

Barbara Henry - Should there be documentation to support that each member is aware of Conflict of Interest Policy? A convener letter is sent out after elections with a copy of Conflict of Interest Policy and instructs the convener to share policy with its members at their first meeting. As far as documenting - The minutes list attendees, minutes should state that all members received a copy of policy and they were reviewed. Just refer to first minutes after election for documentation of awareness and understanding of policy. This should be written up and brought to the June Advisory to be voted on.

Handling Conflicts between Committees

A policy has been established and Danny will locate policy to be discussed for June's Advisory Meeting.

Advisory Chair – Officer of Village

Marianne Cinaglia - When did the Advisory Chair position become an officer of the Village?

Advisory Chair position is not listed in Red Book.

Position is not listed in Charter.

Advisory Chair has a long history but exactly when is unclear. Where are our founding documents for this position?

Danny is clearly an officer because he was elected at the Town Assembly as an officer of the Village.

Cookie - Might be important to establish when Advisory Chair position became an Officer. Barbara Henry suggest contacting Arden Museum who can assist in hiring an intern to go back into old records.

Survey

Marianne Cinaglia suggested include a Q & A letter with the Budget Referendum and Assessors' ballots that are mailed out.

Discussion:

Barbara - Voting ballots are anonymous. Can't mix a Q & A from an identified resident with anonymous ballot. But anonymous question can be answered and posted to Arden page.

Denis -Committee has to work longer and harder to come up with written explanation to weigh out exactly what it is saying. Does it meet the policy of last year's committee? Is there some nuance that is created? We need to make sure everyone is educated on how to get answers and when the meetings are and come get involved. To generate response to somebody who did not even attend Town Meeting and did not get a response they liked. Every time you have to go back and create a paragraph, it consumes valuable volunteer time. Meetings are there to attend and information is on website and he believes these accomplishes this.

Carol – FAQ on Village website

Chris Junk - Its redundant because we already have Town meeting, committee meetings, official Chair emails in which you can ask any questions you want. Also, all minutes are posted to website.

Jeff – Trying to understand more of what Marianne is trying to solve. It sounds like she is suggesting a solution to something. Is there a problem that exist? Danny will speak to Maryanne and clarify.

Open Floor to Visitors

Carol DiGiovanni – Suggest through the Arden Page familiarize the community with the Arden website and what information is available and where to find it.

Carol Larson- Suggest a Town computer be placed in Arden Library for those that do not have access to a computer.

Carol DiGiovanni– Is it true that committees before the Town Assembly give Liz their reports and no matter what the Chair says at the Town meeting all Liz puts into the minutes are the reports given to her? Danny- The report that the committee gives to Liz is the same report that they read at the Town Assembly. In addition to the

report there can be additional discussion, comments made, questions and answers.
Jeff - the Parliamentarian will review the findings at the next Town Assembly.

Next Advisory meeting is Monday, June 5, 7:30 P. M. at BWVC.

Meeting adjourned 3:58 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Resko

Village Secretary

Handouts follow on next page

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT: CHECKLIST

This checklist provides a list of key considerations and items that committees will need to follow in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act "FOIA"

DISCLAIMER

This checklist is distributed for general information purposes with the understanding that under no circumstance its contents represent legal advice. Users are encouraged to consult the Freedom of Information Act, available online at <http://delcode.delaware.gov/title29/c100/#10001>

Issues to consider:

- All meetings must be open to the public with the exception of the ones referred to in subsections b, c, d and h of section 10004 of the Act.
- Executive session closed to the public must be held following the procedures established in the Act and limited to the purpose listed in it.
- Regular scheduled meetings must be held within the geographic jurisdiction of the committees.
- All committees must give public notice of their regular meetings at least 7 days in advance thereof. The notice must include the date, time, and place.
- The public notice must be visible at the place where meetings of the committees are regularly held, and sufficient amount of it should be available.
- Any special or rescheduled meeting must be notified as soon as possible but in any event no later than 24 hours before such meeting with an explanation as to why a belated notice is given.
- Special or rescheduled meetings are the ones taken place less than 7 days after the scheduling decision is made.
- The public notice requirement does not apply to any emergency meeting.
- An action taken at a meeting in contravention of the Act may be voidable by the Court of Chancery.
- The agenda must include but is not limited to a general list of the main issues likely to be discussed.
- The agenda must be part of the public notice. However, the agenda may be subject to change to include new items or to delete items which arise at the actual time of the meeting.
- If the agenda is not available at the time of the initial posting of the public notice, the agenda must be attached to the notice at least 6 hours before the meeting with a brief explanation for the delay.
- All committees must keep minutes of all meetings.
- The minutes must be available for public inspection and copying as a public record.
- The minutes must include a record of the members present at the meetings (except for town assembly where all citizens have the right to vote) as well as a record by individual members of each vote taken and the identification of the action agreed upon.
- The minutes or portions of them, and any public records connect to executive sessions, may be kept back from public disclosure as long as the public release would void the legitimate purpose for the executive session.

My suggestion for “Updating” the Red Book

In 1996 the Legislative Reference Committee published the Village of Arden Handbook. It was a huge accomplishment and a valuable source of information about Arden government for all the residents. The intention was to keep this guide up-to-date with periodic revisions. It was a good intention, but never carried through. The committee, formed in September 1987, was dissolved at the January 2006 Town Meeting, after many years of inactivity.

The “Red Book” as it is commonly known, is still a useful guide to town government, ordinances and policies. But now we have the Internet, and keeping information up-to-date is much easier on a website than a printed document.

Maybe a lot of residents don’t care about a revised Red Book. But we have boxes of them sitting in the office and before we recycle them all, I tried to come up with a way they could still be distributed and somehow merged with the website.

I created a page on the website with a brief introduction to the Red Book, plus the Table of Contents of the Red Book. Then I linked all the items in the Table of Contents to material on the website. In doing this I discovered that the Red Book includes some information that needs to be put on the website. But I also found that most of the material in the Red Book IS on the website, plus additional up-to-date information.

This page is not a public page. It does not appear on any menu. But you can see it by entering this in your browser:

<http://arden.delaware.gov/home/arden-redbook-guide-to-village-government/>

Please visit this page. I can send you a link so you don’t have to type that long address. If the Advisory Committee thinks this is a useful endeavor, I will finish the page by the June Town Meeting. The Red Books can be available at the meeting, with a new cover sheet that explains how to find up-to-date information by using this virtual Table of Contents.

If someone has a better idea for using the Red Book, that would be great. This is just one approach and I’m willing to do the work to complete it.

-- Cecilia Vore 5/20/2017

June 2010

Financial Policies – Village of Arden

Policy - Use of Contingency Funds Policy (May 2010)

Contingency funds are specified as part of a budget referendum. The purpose of the contingency funds is to cover unplanned village or committee expenses. Expenditure of contingency funds requires the pre-approval of three officers and should only be utilized when other mechanisms to cover the costs has been unsuccessful.

Policy - Expenditures of Greater than two-thousand dollars (April 2010)

All committee expenditures of \$2,000 or more require preauthorization of two officers of the Village prior to the commitment of Village funds. In case of an emergency – significant threat to persons or property – appropriate action should be taken as soon as possible with the committee informing at least one officer of the Village within 24 hours.

Policy - Transferring of Funds between Budget Line-items (October 2009)

Funds may be shifted between budget items on the budget referendum by approval of the committee if all budget items are within the committee's responsibility or with the approval of the representative of all committees involved and a least one village officer. Transfer of funds is only allowed if the source account has sufficient funds available and that no standing vouchers are in place covering the funds.

Policy – Authorizing Payment of Funds (March 2009)

The authorization of payment of funds by electronic funds transfer or check or by any other means, requires the approval of two Village Officers. Officers are not allowed to authorize payments to them self.

Policy – Obligations over \$10,000 (March 2007)

Obligations of Village funds of \$10,000 or greater, requires the signature of the Village Chair, or in the case the Chair is not available, the Secretary.

Policy – Contracts or Agreements with Commitments of One Year or Longer (September 2004)

All contacts and all agreements with duration of one year or longer require the signature of the Chair and the Secretary. (Note – the Charter of the Village of Arden specifies the signature requirements for executing contracts).

2017 – 2018 ARDEN BUDGET BALLOT

for the expenditure of Town funds for the fiscal year beginning March 25, 2017, and ending March 24, 2018

See accompanying notes to Fiscal Year 2017-2018 Arden Budget Ballot on back of this form.

PROJECTED INCOME

	Notes	
Land Rent	1	\$ 617,680
Delaware Municipal Street Aid	2	\$ 16,731
Interest and other Income	3	\$ 23,050
Buzz Ware Village Center	4	\$ 43,000

Total Projected Income \$ 710,461
 Reserve Funds 3 \$ 265,600

TOTAL Funds Available **\$ 976,061**

PROJECTED EXPENSES

Non-Budget Expenses	Notes	
County Taxes	5a	\$ 87,418
School Taxes	5b	\$ 396,106
Trash Service	6	\$ 57,600
Trust Administration	7	\$ 26,006
Village Non-budget	8	\$ 56,968
Buzz Ware Operations	9	\$ 43,667
Buzz Ware Renovation Fund	9	\$ 2,000
Long-term Debt Service	10	\$ 16,176
Delaware Municipal Street Aid	11	\$ 16,731
Total Non-Budget Expenses		\$ 702,672
Proposed Budget Expenses		\$ 108,500

TOTAL Expenses **\$ 811,172**

DIRECTIONS FOR VOTING: Please choose one of the following - either #1 OR #2:

#1. Approve or disapprove the entire budget by marking an X in the box next to your choice.

I approve of the entire budget.....

I disapprove of the entire budget

OR

#2. Disapprove individual items by marking an X in the accompanying box ().

Any items not marked will be counted as approved.

If you choose to disapprove individual items below, DO NOT mark either of the items in #1 above.

	NOTES*		disapprove		NOTES*		disapprove
Advisory Committee	12	\$ 200	<input type="checkbox"/>	Safety Committee: General	22	\$3,400	<input type="checkbox"/>
Archives Committee	13	\$ 1,800	<input type="checkbox"/>	Safety: Speed Enforcement	23	\$1,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board of Assessors	14	\$ 100	<input type="checkbox"/>	Buzz Ware Support	24	\$5,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Budget Committee	15	\$ 100	<input type="checkbox"/>	Donations – ACRA	25a	\$2,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Capital Fund	16	\$ 10,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	Donations – Arden Page	25b	\$ 500	<input type="checkbox"/>
Civic Committee	17	\$ 8,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	Donations – Arden Library	25c	\$ 1,050	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Planning Committee	18	\$ 1,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	Donations – Fire Companies	25d	\$ 1,600	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forest Committee	19	\$ 8,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	Donations – Arden Club	25e	\$ 500	<input type="checkbox"/>
Playground Committee	20	\$ 4,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	Contingencies	26	\$ 10,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Registration Committee	21	\$ 250	<input type="checkbox"/>				

TOTAL PROPOSED BUDGET EXPENSES: \$ 108,500