The January 25, 1944, Meeting of the Town Assembly of Arden, Del.

The meeting was held at Gild Hall, Arden, and was presided over by Trustee Weare.

After the Chairman had declared a quorum to be present, the minutes of the Organizational meeting of the Town Assembly were read and approved.

Communications were read from Charles Pettit explaining the item in the budget to be proposed at this meeting covering a donation to Arden Civilian Defense and from the Arden Boy Scouts appealing to the residents of Arden to cooperate in the "Save a Life" campaign to obtain blood plasma for the armed forces.

Trustee Cohen reported for the Trustees giving the financial statement for the 10 month period from March 25, 1943 to Jan. 24, 1944, which showed $4826.02 to be on hand at the start of the period, $4723.56 income received during the period, $7784.03 expended during the same period, and $1765.55 on hand as of Jan. 24, 1944. Mr. Cohen further reported that Mr. Wm. Worthington had resigned as a Trustee of Arden, that his resignation had been accepted, and that the remaining Trustees wished to nominate Mr. Victor Lance to fill the vacancy.

Mr. Meyer Pressman suggested that since Mr. Cohen had pointed

out that Mr. Lance had been chosen from a group of several men whom the Trustees thought qualified for the position an alternate candidate might be nominated by the Trustees, thus, giving the residents the opportunity to express their preference. Mr. Ware stated that the Trustees were abiding by the provisions of the Deed of Trust in making their nomination.

Mr. Wm. Frank suggested that mimeographed copies of committee reports be distributed at future meetings for the convenience of those attending. Chairman Wade called this suggestion to the attention of the several committee chairmen.

Mr. Herman Kumme reported for the Civic Committee relating the activities of the committee since the Organizational Meeting of the Town Assembly. He reported that the committee had arranged for regular rubbish collections for the cleaning of the roads & paths, for the trimming of trees etc.; had assisted the Budget Committee in drawing up a budget for the 17 month period beginning with Oct. 25, 1943, and had considered extensive repairs to the roads, operation of the swimming pool, hiring of a policeman, and erection of street signs as items of future business. ~~Her C~~ Mr. Kumme

stated that the Civic Committee wished to obtain the opinion of the Town Assembly on whether the Town should assume the responsibility of cleaning the sidewalks along the roads or the leaseholders should clean the walks adjoining their respective lots. Mrs. Ann Ross made a plea that all leaseholders keep their own walks clear. Mr. Gerstine supported this viewpoint. Mr. Broeker pointed out that if the Town cleaned all of the walks it would be an extremely expensive procedure. Mr. Gordon objected to the cleaning of the walks by the leaseholder contending that it is the town's responsibility to clean such walks. No decision was reached.

Mr. Broeker reported for the Board of Assessors ~~in the absence of Chairman~~ stating that their first meeting would be held in March.

Mrs. Ware reported for the Community Planning Committee stating that the Committee had considered the development of a better Arden school & the care of the woodlands, roadsides and fire lanes & had planned to beautify the surroundings of the swimming pool, to construct a playground, & to erect road signs. Mrs. Ware stated that the Committee objected to the poor manner in which the trees along the Arden roads had been trimmed recently.

Mr. Reimme, chairman of the

Civic Committee, reported that Mr. Brocker had previously complained about the trimming of the trees and that the Civic Committee had taken the necessary steps to insure better trimming in the future.

Mr. Aughey, chairman of the Arden school's Board of Trustees, suggested that since the school P.T.A. was making plans for improving the school that any planning for the school to be carried out by the Community Planning Committee be done in cooperation with the P.T.A.

Mr. Frank criticized Mr. Aughey for saying that the Arden school was the prime concern of the state and suggested that a school committee be appointed by the Chairman of the Town Assembly. Mr. Aughey pointed out that the Arden school was not only for Arden but for a district including many of the outlying settlements.

(See p. 20 for correction) Mrs. Frances Harrison and Mrs. Ann Ross suggested that the Town Assembly take a more active part in running the school.

Chairman Ware asked that further discussion of the school be withheld until New Business was called for.

Mr. Bloom suggested that the Community Planning Committee contact the State Committee for

Post War Planning so as to be prepared to bid for government projects when the war is over.

Mary Morley reported for the Registration Committee giving the results of the referenda for the approval of the By-Laws and for the proportional representation election of the Board of Assessors. Miss Morley further reported on the manner in which the Registration Committee had interpreted the definition of a resident as contained in the By-Laws.

Mr. George Smith and Mrs. Karlson questioned the advisability of permitting a person who just maintained a room in order to qualify as a resident. Miss Morley pointed out that such conditions satisfied the definition of a resident as given in the By-Laws and emphasized the fact that many borderline cases exist that must be left up to the discretion of the Registration Committee to decide whether an individual qualifies or not. Chairman Ware stated that the Registration Committee had a difficult job and that he thought the Committee should be congratulated for the fine job it has done.

Mr. Frank criticized the counting of the Proportional Representation ballots in a closed meeting. Mary Morley stated that the tallying of such ballots was ~~not~~ tedious and time consuming and that if the meeting

were open to visitors, the difficulties of counting the votes would be multiplied manyfold.

Mr. Frank recommended that a definite interim be set between the time the ballots are mailed out and the time they are counted. Mr. Peterson explained that although such a procedure is desirable in the case of balloting by the Hare System of Proportional Representation, it is undesirable for other referenda in which the approval of a majority of all of the residents of Arden is necessary. In the latter case it may be required to extend the initial dead line several times in order to obtain sufficient votes to warrant their tallying. ~~of the votes~~

Mr. Brecker reported for the Budget Committee in the absence of Chairman Thomas Farrell stating that the committee had held a large number of meetings and had worked out a budget for the 17 month period starting Oct. 25, 1943. which they considered to be quite satisfactory.

In the discussion which followed these points were brought out: (1.) The records of the Trustees were consulted ~~at~~ before arriving at many of the budget items

(2.) The town's income is approx. $4500 per year.

(3.) The budget does not include

the taxes which amount to approx. $1700 per year.

It was decided to discuss the Budget for the period from Oct. 25, 1943 to March 25 1944, first, following with the budget for the next 12 months.

Mr. Frank objected to the payment of a salary to the Secretary of the Town Assembly. It was his opinion that no elected official of the Town should receive a salary. He was supported in this opinion by Mrs. Liberman, Mrs. Ware, Mrs. Frances Harrison, Mr. Broeker, Mr. Brooks, Mrs. Ann Ross, Mr. Hambly, Miss Mary Morley, Mrs. Brooks, Mr. Ingley, Mrs. Edith Austin, and Mr. Fold spoke in favor of paying the Secretary. Mr. Broeker explained the Budget Committee's treatment of the Secretary's salary, stating that an estimate of the time put in by the Secretary in one year amounted to over 300 hours. An attempt to transfer some of the work to Mr. Gerstine resulted in a quite inconsiderable amount being removed to give to Mr. Gerstine.

It was moved and seconded that ~~the Secretary be paid $2~~ an item be incorporated in the budget to cover the payment of $25 per month to the Assembly Secretary. The motion was approved by a vote of 29 to 20.

Mr. Gerstine objected to the payment of any money for Civilian Defense contending that Arden had repeatedly footed the bills for Civilian Defense while Ardentown contributed inconsiderable amounts. Mr. Coker, Mr. Bloodwell, and Mr. Peterson emphasized the possible need for Civilian Defense & the fact that Ardentown was to pay ½ as much as Arden at the present time. It was moved, seconded, and approved an item be included in the budget so that that $1,862.50 be contributed to Civilian defense for the period from Oct. 25, 1943 to March 25, 1944 and $150 for the next 12 month period.

An objection was raised to the payment of $360 to Mr. Joseph Habbart for back wages as traffic and safety patrolman. Mr. Brooker explained that Mr. Habbart had been hired by the old Townmen with the approval of the Town Meeting and that the Trustees had paid his wages for some time. Subsequently, however, the Trustees refused to pay his wages although the Town Meeting had approved such payment and although Mr. Habbart did a conscientious job.

Mr. Ware stated that Mr. Habbart failed to reply to the Trustee's requests for a report on his work. The Trustees notified Mr. Habbart that if he did not report to them before a certain date, no future salary payments would be made to

him. Upon failing to report, his salary payments were stopped although he continued to work with the approval of the Townsmen.

Trustee Cohen stated that it was his opinion that Mr. Hobbart should be paid.

Mr. Ford moved that an item be incorporated in the budget to cover the payment of $360 to Mr. Hobbart. The motion was seconded and approved.

Mrs. Frank asked if the referendum would be final if approved by a majority of the residents. Mr. Warren pointed out that even if 100% of the residents approved an expenditure of town funds, it was provided in the Deed of Trust that under certain conditions two trustees could veto it.

Mr. Cohen

Mr. Bloodwell requested that an item of $250 be included in the budget for clearing the fire lanes. The request was approved by the meeting.

Miss Hazel Stephens asked why a constable was not hired at the present time. Members of the Budget Committee and Civic Committee reported that such a step had been considered but was not thought to be feasible at this time. Mr. Ford moved that $375 be put aside for the 12 month budget period beginning March 25, 1944 for hiring a constable if after further consideration it should be found

desirable to do so. The motion was seconded and approved.

Mr. Frank moved that the budgets for both periods, as given on the attached sheet, be accepted for submittal to a referendum. The motion was seconded and approved.

It was moved, seconded, and approved that the By-Laws Committee be dissolved with a vote of thanks.

Mr. Frank moved that a committee of 5 members including the P.T.A. president be appointed to investigate the Arden school and to report at the next meeting on the conditions under which the school is operated. The motion was seconded and approved.

Mr. Anghey read a petition from the people of the Westwood Manor district to the State Board of Education asking that a survey of the school situation in the vicinity of Arden be made and that consideration be given to the setting up of a school district and to the construction of a school building in this vicinity. Mr. Anghey moved that the Assembly meeting endorse the petition. The motion was seconded and approved.

Mrs. Edith Austin suggested that something be done to rid Arden of some of its poison ivy.

The meeting was adjourned.

Signed: R.H. Peterson

Witnessed:

The following correction was made in the above minutes at the April 25 meeting of the Town Assembly. The statement on p. 13 that "Mrs. Frances Harrison suggested that the Town Assembly take a more active part in running the school" was changed to "Mrs. Frances Harrison stated that she thought it would be nice to have the Town Assembly informed of school activities".

Signed - R. W. Peterson