

Village of Arden
Advisory Meeting Minutes
March 2, 2020

This Agenda was cancelled and new agenda was created at the special Advisory Meeting on March 14, 2020 due to the State of Delaware emergency to address Covid-19 Virus.

Attendance: Danny Schweers, Jeff Politis, Cookie Ohlson, Carol Larson, Elizabeth Varley, Denis O'Regan, Larry Walker, Barbara Macklem, Mark Wood, Brooke Bovard.

Guests: Carol DiGiovanni, Deborah Ricard & Marianne Cinaglia.

Call to Order – Danny Schweers, Advisory Chair, called meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. at Buzz Ware Village Center and presented the following agenda:

AGENDA:

Advisory Committee Meeting of 3/2/2020

- 1) Acceptance of Previous Minutes
- 2) Discussion of Items to be Listed on
Town Meeting Agenda:

- 2a) Call to Order
- 2b) Approval of Minutes
- 2c) Recognize New and Departed Residents
- 2d) Visitors
- 2e) Reports by Officers and Trustees
- 2f) Assessors Report
- 2g) Committee Reports in Ascending Order
- 2h) Old Business
- 2i) New Business
- 2j) Good and Welfare

- 3) Refreshments for Town Meeting
- 4) Old Advisory Committee Business

- 4a) Nominations for March Election
- 4b) Posting minutes to website
- 4c) package deliveries happen at all hours of day and night - consider a “delivery ordinance”?
- 5) New Advisory Committee Business
 - 5a) Vestry Retreat?
- 6) Set Town Meeting Agenda
- 7) Guests Comments and Questions
- 8) Adjourn

Advisory Agenda

- 1) Acceptance of January 2020 Advisory minutes approved as presented.
- 2) Discussion of Items to be Listed on Town Meeting Agenda:

- a) Call to Order

- b) Elections of Officers & Committees (present at beginning of TA)

Barbara Macklem – Each March is elections for officers and committees.

Verification of accuracy of nominations: Barbara passed around a final draft ballot for each committee to review and sign. (copy follows minutes)

When it is known that it is an accurate list, then a final draft ballot will be printed and posted to Village website. Tonight is the deadline.

Affidavit for an Absentee ballot is on the website.

To date no absentee ballots have been requested. Requests have to be made by March 17. The last day to return an absentee ballot is 6 p.m. on March 23.

Ballots

Distributing ballots at the beginning of the Town Assembly. A resident of Arden for six months can vote.

Policy: At close of Advisory Meeting will be the finalization of the ballot.

Cannot accept any more nominations at close of this meeting

New resident Amber Wesser and her son. Cynthia Cox, who is renting one of Bill Theis's cottages on The Highway.

c) Recognize New and Departed Residents

d) Visitors 5 minutes - If candidates contact town chair prior to Town Assembly meeting, then they can have a few minutes to speak. (Time limit determined by Jeff). Jeff was contacted by Ray Seigfried, who will provide updates.

e) Officers/Trustees

- Town Chairman's Communications Report – Jeff Politis
He will note time for 2020 census. And the county is in process of doing the Hazardous Mitigation Plan
- Trustee - Carl Falco
- Treasurer - David Michelson (Absent)
- Advisory – Danny Schweers

f) Assessors – Mark Wood

g) Committees Reports (Ascending Order) (*Descending: Jan & June. Ascending: March & Sept*)

Archives - Lisa Mullinax

Audit - Cookie Ohlson

Budget – Brooke Bovard 3-year projections

BWVC - Denis O'Regan

Civic - Al Marks (Absent) Mark Woods

Community Planning– Mark Wood will present a **Motion** to create an Education and Governance subcommittee. He will send wording of motion to town secretary. Community Planning Report and the motion both will be moved up to be presented following Assessors Report. Mark will write up why they are presenting a motion and allow time for Q & A prior to presenting it for a vote. (time limit defined beforehand). Brooke requests that presentation be all laid out, so we do not have to go over it.

Forest- Carol Larson

Ordinance #4 addresses use of forests and commons (no dumping, no fires, etc.). Does ordinance #4 needs to be modified to include trespassing?

Jeff - If leaseholder encroaches, then Village will send a letter to address it. How is this enforced? If after receiving a notice by Village they do not comply, the Village takes legal action. If the Village boundaries are encroached, they have legal right to enforce it.

Elizabeth Varley says there are forms of trespassing that people do not view as trespassing. For instance, running a pipe from leasehold into woods. It might be good to add a little language in letter that provides examples (pipes, mowing, etc.).

Danny suggests checking with Bellefonte, neighboring communities, NCC & John Cartier to see what they do to their parks.

Playground – Larry Walker standing in for Daryl Holcomb (Absent)

Playground Committee will hold 2 public meeting in March:

March 12th opening meeting to receive input from the community as to the type and the style of the playground equipment to install.

March 19th open meeting is to present their suggestions based on public comments, interests and concerns.

Motion: If the town shows interest, the committee would present a plan for upgrading & adding new playground equipment, including budget amounts for TA's approval and request approval to craft an application for \$33,000 grant. No town money involved. (Jeff - it's an application for a grant and the work to be done before June. The money needs to be spent in the state fiscal year ending June 30). Jeff points out that Rep. Ray Siegfried had money set aside in the state budget for this playground upgrade. Money has already been earmarked. Now it's a matter of whether it can be done and if there is an interest in the upgrade and how best to use that money.

Registration – Cecilia Vore (absent)

(at bottom of postcard agenda mailing) **Ballots distributed at start of meeting; voting continues throughout meeting. Eligibility, candidates' statements, sample ballots at arden.delaware.gov**

Safety - Brooke

Intersection task force group has been working with Rep. Ray Siegfried and Deldot to have a new strategy for the intersection at Harvey Rd and Marsh Rd. They have arrived at a potential fix for it that meets the challenges that Arden presented. There is a website that goes active today, March 2. This website is a way that people can communicate with Deldot directly about this project. Brooke will email all committee chairs and officers with the website address. Brooke will also post to social media. This is an eighteen-month plan.

h) Old Business

I) New Business

Forest Committee will announce Storm Water Master Management Plan has come through. (Several committees worked on making this happen: Safety, Civic, Forest, Community Planning)

j) Good and Welfare

3) Refreshments for Town Meeting

Hospitality – 2020

Playground March 2020 (Cookie Ohlson requested Fig Newtons).

Registration June 2020

Safety September 2020

4) Old Advisory Committee Business

4a) Nominations for March Election

4b) Posting minutes to website is still an issue. Encouraged all to catch up.

4c) package deliveries happen at all hours of day and night - consider a “delivery ordinance”? **Dead on Arrival.**

Package deliveries happen at all hours of day and night, creating traffic issues and dangerous speeding throughout the community – consider a “delivery ordinance”? Table the discussion. Jeff suggests think about it over the next three months. Dead.

5) New Advisory Committee Business

5a) Advisory Retreat – Danny will set up a retreat sometime in early June to be held on a Saturday. Exact date to be determined. Brooke would like to see listed on the agenda a long-range plan as a whole for the community. Specifically, she would like to see ADA compliance addressed for the houses located in the area better known as the “doughnut hole” (houses located in Ardens but are leaseholds in NCC, not Arden). Another topic to address would be Commercial Property. Mark Wood says Community Planning is addressing many long-term projects that is a work in progress. Reminds it all takes time.

5b) Deborah Ricard - Ad hoc committee is having their yearly Meet and Greet the candidates on Saturday, March 14 at the BWVC at 1 p.m.

6) Guests Comments and Questions

Marianne Cinaglia wants to increase voter turnout for Officer and Committee elections.

Background

She cited two bills by the state to address increase in voter turnout:

1) The state created a law that gives early voting (10 days early) for the right of Delaware voters for state matters. This bill passed.

2) Another bill is currently being presented to change absentee voting ballots forms, in which no excuse is required. (Municipal law reads you can use absentee voting for any reason that's in the municipal charter. She believes it would be a charter change because it says you vote for committee members not the Chairman of the Town Assembly).

She also noted that Arden tried early voting back in 2002 resulting in 34 early votes. Barbara Macklem explained that year demand for early voting was because of the controversial election of the Village Chair position between Bill Press, the incumbent and Steven Threefoot which produced high voter turnout. The next year had only 3 early voters. Several years opened early but each time early voters dwindled precipitously. Since then, Registration has a fully established absentee ballot system. It was not in existence in 2002. There has been a shift in the process.

Absentee Ballot Form

Mariann suggest that the Arden's Absentee ballot form be changed from its present limited criteria to be the same as the state's ballots that have no excuse necessary to obtain Absentee ballot.

Barbara Macklem says they have never turned anyone away who requested an absentee ballot and ballots are not restrictive. Barbara reviewed the 4 options listed on the Arden's Absentee Ballot. They are as follows:

My business or occupation prevents me from voting at the Town Meeting.
(“Occupation” may include care of a family member.)

- I will be out of town on election day. (This includes military service, college, or vacation as examples.)
- The tenets or teachings of my religion prevent participation in the election.
- I have a physical disability – either temporary or permanent – which prevents me from voting at the Town Meeting.

Deborah Ricard suggest adding Other as a choice on the form.

Jeff - Concerned about eliminating reasons. Show up and be informed.

Good topic for retreat agenda.

Barbara will take the suggestions to change the absentee ballot back to the Registration Committee to discussed further.

Registration Committee Meetings Posting Notices.

Although Registration Committee is in compliance with FOIA requirement of posting their meeting notices on bulletin board located at the BWVC at least 7 days prior to meeting, Marianne would like Registration to post several notices of their meetings such as to list in the Arden Page (It is believed that the Arden Page is not the “Newspaper of Record”. Informative but no authority) and post to the Village website. The Registration Committee agrees they will post their meeting notice on the Village website as well as continue to post to the bulletin board.

7) Set Town Meeting Agenda

Motion Seconded & Approved Town Meeting Agenda as discussed.

- Elections of Officers & Committee members.
- Community Planning– Mark Wood will present a Motion to create Education Governance Sub-Committee. The report and

motion will be brought forward on the agenda before all other committee reports. Will be the first committee report.

- Playground Committee - Larry Walker will present a Motion to approve a plan to upgrade new playground equipment and apply for a grant. (Report and motion will be brought forward on the agenda and presented following Community Planning Report.

A motion was presented by Danny Schweers, Advisory Chairman, to move Community Planning and Playground Committee reports and motions forward on the agenda to be the first two committee reports. Motion: voice vote Approved. 1 No, 2 abstentions.

Bottom postcard agenda mailing

**Ballots distributed start of meeting; voting continues throughout meeting.
Eligibility, candidates' statements, sample ballots at arden.delaware.gov**

8) Motion to Adjourn 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elizabeth Resko, Village of Arden Town Secretary

Next Advisory Quarterly Meeting is June 1, 2020, 7:30 p.m. at the BWVC.