

Draft: Being reviewed by the committee as of 1/30/21

**Village of Arden
Registration Committee
Minutes of Meeting
January 18, 2021**

Present were Committee members Cecilia Vore, Dela Bryan, Barbara Macklem, Elizabeth Varley, and Marcia Scheflen, and Secretary to the Trustees Julia McNeil. Visitors attending were residents Brooke Bovard, Marianne Cinaglia, and Carol DiGiovanni.

The meeting was held virtually, via Zoom, because of Covid 19 precautions.

Cecilia opened the meeting at 1:15 PM. She reported that the proceeding occasioned by the recent FOIA Request had been satisfactorily completed with the assistance of Danny Schweers as previously arranged and approved.

Dela Bryan reported that six Welcome Packets had been delivered and asked for assistance with several others. She will deliver those to the members who volunteered to help this week. She also reported a need for additional Walking Tour brochures for future packets. Barbara Macklem will supply these.

The major item of business was the needed planning for the upcoming election of Village committee members scheduled for the Village of Arden town meeting on March 22, 2021, in light of continued Covid 19 restrictions necessitating the meeting to be held in a Zoom forum.

Traditionally, ballots are distributed at the beginning of the Town Meeting for the use of those in attendance, and completed ballots are collected before voters leave. There has always been a process for those unable to attend the March meeting to request and receive an absentee ballot in advance of the meeting.

After consultation with Town Chair Jeff Politis, Cecilia made the following proposal, requesting suggestions and feedback from the committee:

- 1) Absentee ballot procedure will be handled as usual, for the accommodation of voters who have cause that would prevent them from participating in the Zoom meeting. The deadline for absentee ballot request would be March 15. There was discussion concerning possible changes or elimination of 'reason' for this election only. (See # 3 below). Cecilia will be circulating a sample ballot for suggestions.
- 2) The 'in-person' ballot would be presented on screen during the Zoom meeting in a form that could be downloaded by attendees and afterward printed and returned by them. It was suggested that the deadline to return the ballots, in envelopes identified and signed on the outside, to the Village mailbox be Thursday, March 25, by 3:30PM, at which time the Committee will convene to count the vote.
- 3) There will need to be a process whereby voters who 'attend' the meeting, but have either no means or no ability to download the ballot can receive a paper ballot in a timely manner. Possibly this could be an acceptable reason for absentee request.

Cecilia will see that all information for the March Election procedures will be posted in a timely manner on the Village website, bulletin boards, the Arden Page, and at the meeting.

Discussion followed concerning the technical details of providing the downloadable ballot. These will be worked out by Cecilia in cooperation with Jeff Politis.

It was decided that Elizabeth Varley will report to the Village at the January Town Meeting on the results of the November Election and Budget Referendum as well as the tentative plans for March. It will be noted that additional nominees for committee openings will be encouraged and will be accepted until the ballot is solidified at the March Advisory meeting.

Barbara Macklem will attend the March Advisory meeting and will manage the election procedure at the Village meeting and the vote counting procedure and arrangements on March 25.

There followed some discussion of possible nominees we might recruit to run for the Registration Committee in future, in hopes of some younger participation.

In other business, Cecilia reported that she and Elizabeth had met on January 15 with three members of the League of Women Voters who are interested in the mechanics of the Hare System or other proportional voting systems. There has also been another request for information on our system from out of state. Cecilia is providing description and pictures in response.

There was further discussion concerning whether to number Village college students living away from home as eligible voters when determining successful vote thresholds or the number required for a majority going forward. This would apply to students who have indicated they do not wish to participate in voting at present. This might also apply to voters serving in the military or in medical or assisted living situations.

In this connection, it was proposed that we develop a Birthday Letter for 18 year olds inviting them to become an active voter and including further information. This idea will be taken up at the Fall meeting for further development.

Business being completed, the meeting was adjourned at 1:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Marcia Scheflen

DRAFT