

Governance Task Force

General

The Village of Arden Town Assembly is creating the Governance Task Force (GTF) to review and suggest changes to the Village of Arden's Governing documents including the Town Charter, ordinances, policies, and motions. The Governance Task Force shall conduct this review with the assistance of the Arden Committees, town residents, the Village attorney, and other parties they deem helpful. The GTF will work with Town committees that enforce ordinances to determine the need for potential updates. The GTF shall meet at least monthly and report their work at the quarterly Town Meetings.

Purpose

1. The Arden Charter and Town Committee structure have remained largely unchanged since their creation during the 1960's and 1970's. Since then, new ordinances and policies have continued to be added, edited and re-interpreted. There has not been a comprehensive review of how those new documents fit into the existing governing documents and inconsistencies have arisen. These inconsistencies can create non-compliance with governing documents, confusion, piece-meal corrections and "work-arounds" to assure compliance.

2. In addition, today we live in an environment much different than just ten years ago. Arden is confronted like every other local government with the effects of climate change, global pandemic, social and political polarization, the need for social justice for all, and the need for public trust in our government as well as democracy itself. Given these challenges, it is time to evaluate our governing process and assure that we are living up to the community goals that we have set for ourselves as well as to evaluate our governing process against others throughout the state.

Governance Task Force Formation

The GTF will be made up of five (5) residents of the Village of Arden, including at least one from the Community Planning Committee, nominated by the Town Chair with consent of the Advisory Committee. The Town Assembly will approve the final members of the Task Force.

Topics for the GTF to consider include but are not limited to:

1. Village boundaries
2. Budget process and timeline
3. Voting

Output

The Task Force will present its findings within one year of its formation to the Town Assembly. A second year may be granted by the Town Assembly if needed. At its discretion, the Town Assembly will enact the recommendations of the Governance Task Force.