

Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting  
September 5, 2023 Tuesday  
7:30 p.m. at the Buzz Ware Village Center and Zoom

**Attendance:** Sachin Puranik, Jeffrey Politis, Skip Bailey (zoom), Elizabeth Varley, Simon Hamermesh, Cecilia Vore, Larry Walker, Carol Larson, Bev Clendening (zoom), Steve Benigni, Deborah Ricard, Ray Seigfried, Jennifer Borders, Helen Ohlson, Mary Young (zoom), Bob Erenburg

**Approval of Minutes:** Advisory Chair, Sachin Puranik, convened meeting at 7:37 p.m. The June 2023 Advisory Minutes were approved as presented.

**POSTCARD** -The September 25 & October 2 Town Assembly agenda for postcard mailing was approved as follows:

**Sept. 25 Agenda:**

Due to the holiday, Officers will convene to present a motion to suspend the regular Sept. 25 agenda items and resume the Town Assembly Meeting on Oct. 2.

**October 2 Agenda:**

- Advisory Report - Nominations for Board of Assessors submit nominations to [Advisory@arden.delaware.gov](mailto:Advisory@arden.delaware.gov)
  - Budget - Motion to Approve 2024 - 2025 Budget Referendum
  - Registration Motion: Motion to change two voting procedures defined in the Charter.
  - Safety - Election to fill vacant position
  - GTF - First reading changes to ordinance 1, 2 and 13
  - No zoom, in-person only
  - Library will be open
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**Septembers 25: Agenda.**

Jeff will prepare a motion to suspend the September 25, 2023 Town Assembly and resume on Monday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> and it will be seconded by Advisory Chair, Sachin Puranik. No quorum is required. The secretary will reserve Oct 2 Gild Hall and if not available reserve at BWVC.

**October 2<sup>nd</sup> Agenda (Agenda for next town meeting):**

Call to Order

Approval of Minutes

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New Residents

Recognition of the Departed

Visitors

Jeff has not heard from our state rep, senator nor has he heard from any candidates for November. If they are going to stop by, he will limit their time.

Communications from the Town Chair – Jeffrey Politis

Trustees' Report – Elizabeth Varley

Treasurer – Skip Bailey

Advisory Committee Report – Sachin Puranik

- Nominations for Board of Assessors submit nominations to [Advisory@arden.delaware.gov](mailto:Advisory@arden.delaware.gov). Deborah Ricard will provide a list of nominees by the time of the town meeting.
- Carol Larson is interested in forming a group to create a tree policy. Recommend they determine if they want to be formal or an informal group and define the criteria. If they form a formal group, then they can bring it to the town meeting.
- A suggested topic for the next Annual Advisory retreat is to look into Community Planning's February Retreat Report titled What does Arden look like in 20 years by doing a deeper dive and figure out what topics to move forward and how do we implementing it. Sachin will present this idea for a retreat with a topic at the next quarterly Advisory meeting in January. FYI: The report is on line [arden.delaware.gov/community Planning](http://arden.delaware.gov/community%20Planning).

Board of Assessors – Deborah Ricard

- Jeff will make a statement that no alternative assessment has been provided and therefore, the assessment made in June will stand.

### **Committee Reports (Ascending Order)**

**\*All committees will provide an update on ARPA funds**

**Archives** – Lisa Mullinax

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**Audit** - Cookie Ohlson

**Budget** – Deborah Ricard Budget

There will be a Motion to Approve 2024 - 2025 Budget for referendum

The Civic committee has offered to reduce their budget by \$5,000 so that other committees who have a shortfall can cover it.

**BWVC** - Mary Young

**Civic**- Steve Benigni

September is the third year of Trash Tech's contract. A lot of concern about comingling yard waste continues. One reason is that the three villages need to do a better job to communicate to the residents on how to prepare their trash. There is no other company who collects yard waste. The preference is to work with Trash Tech. For the most part they are doing things well especially by being responsive to Village communications.

**Community Planning** – Jennifer Borders

Will provide Refreshments

**Forest**- Co Chair Carol Larson & Bev Clendening

**Playground** – Mark Wood

**Registration**- Cecilia Vore

Registration will present the motion to change two (2) voting procedures. Originally, they were planning to present their motion to Town Assembly for vote and if approved, send to Referendum. But after considering what would happen if the town assembly votes for it and the referendum votes against it, they decided to put the motion in direct referendum. By having it as a direct referendum then it is a decision of the total body and it will set precedent.

Procedural

- The motion will be modified to indicate that it will be sent to referendum.
- For the postcard, this should read [under committee reports]. Motion to change two voting procedures as defined in the Charter.

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- Allow twenty minutes for discussion to make sure people understand what they are voting on. If more time is needed, then time will be extended. Then debate.
- Will present motion on screen.

**Safety-** Simon Hamermesh  
Election to fill vacant position

**Governance Task Force Report** – Ray Seigfried

"Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less." Marie Curie, I believe that Marie Curie's quote is the right mindset for all of us to be in when we review the recommendation made by the Governance Task Force. To help provide understanding, we are arranging several information public open meetings during October and November to explain our reasoning for the change and address questions about our recommendation. Some people in Arden have criticized a few of our changes without thoroughly reviewing what, how, and why such change is being recommended. It is easy to fear change without understanding, and I hope that when confronted with this, you encourage people to attend our information programs. Our goal will be to have charter changes ready to be presented at the Town Assembly in January. Changes to existing ordinances will directly go to the Town Assembly for review, reading, and a final vote.

The Governance Task Force has met for over 18 months, reviewing all government documents. During this time, we have spent many hours debating changes. The Task Force has worked in a very effective way. Though we have not always agreed, we have always found a path forward. That is the making of a great committee. Throughout our work, we had one guiding principle in Section 1 [b] of the Charter. That is the "All Powers Act". This clause states that Arden has authority granted by the State to approve all laws as long as they are not in conflict with the State or Federal government. Secondly, the Ardens government can prescribe its laws within the Charter or by Town Assembly in an appropriate ordinance or resolution. This brings forth an interesting idea. Every change in our Charter must be approved by the State Assembly to be permitted, but every ordinance is under Arden's control without going before the State Assembly. We agreed that the description of what type of government Arden will have would go into the Charter but descriptions of how that government will function should be moved to an ordinance that the Town Assembly would have control over. Many of our changes were based on this guiding principle.

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Finally, I would appreciate it if you kept the attached outline of changes confidential. I plan on presenting this information along with the scheduled information meetings at our September meeting. Thank you.

Ray

## **Summary of Charter and Ordinance Recommendations**

### **Charter recommendations**

- Added a Preamble
- Language has been modified to a gender-neutral document throughout the charter.
- Section 2 Territorial Limits: added both Sherwood Forest Addition and Mill Race Purchase
- Section 3 Definitions: added new definitions on ordinance, resolution, policy, and motions
- Section 5 Meetings of the Town Assembly: added clarity on special meetings and electronic means of participation for all meetings.
- Section 7 Board of Assessors: Keep the general description of responsibility and eliminate language that describes their process for placement in the ordinance.
- Section 8 Budget Committee: Keep the general description of responsibility and eliminate language that describes their process for placement in the ordinance.
- We are recommending options for the fiscal year. Option one, no change placed in the ordinance. Option two: move the fiscal year to July 1-June 30 and put it in ordinance.
- Section 9 Registration Committee: Keep the general description of responsibility and eliminate language that describes their process for placement in the ordinance.
- Section 12 Enforcements Fines and Penalties: added the statement of the limits prescribed by State law.
- Section 13 Police Force: Keep the general statement but eliminate the other information because it is out-of-date information
- Section 15 Fire, Zoning and Housing Codes: eliminating entire section. We follow the New Castle County Code.

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- Section 15: replaced this with a new section on Amendments.
- Legally retire the Arden Bylaws.

**Questions/Comments**

Jeff - Once the recommendations goes to motion, the task force has completed their task and are officially done. To implement all these changes plus new ordinance, Ray will check with the group to see if they would be interested in create a new task force.

Recommend someone to continue to look at policies, ordinances, current rules by performing an annual review. To be discussed after Charter changes are in place.

Postcard: GTF - First reading changes to ordinance 1, 2 and 13

**Old Business**

**New Business**

- Refreshments will be provided by the Community Planning Committee

**Good and Welfare**

**Adjourn** 9:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Elizabeth Resko  
Village Secretary