

Arden Budget Committee Meeting
Thursday, October 19, 2023
Via Zoom Video Conferencing

Attending: Garrett Colgan-Snyder, Bob Erenburg, David Gerbec and Debbie Ricard

- Meeting Called to Order at 7:05 pm.
- A **Motion was Made** and unanimously accepted to approve the Minutes from Sept 21, 2023.
- Debbie thanked all budget committee members for working together to draft a budget ballot for referendum that was passed at the Oct 3 Town Assembly Meeting without discussion or change.
- Garrett shared his findings from Ardentown and Ardencroft budgets. Both of these sister villages contribute to the Arden Page as well as BWVC, ACSM, ACRA and Arden Library. The formats are different than Arden's referendum ballot format.
- Members discussed the recurring difficulty of getting out the vote to pass the Budget referendum. Arden's Charter requires a majority of eligible voters to participate and vote YES in this annual referendum in order to fund Arden's budget for the next fiscal year.
 - A majority of current registration committee members feel changing from this Charter requirement of a "majority of eligible voters" to a "majority of eligible voters who vote" would be a better solution. A referendum ballot for this change is included in the voting materials mailed to all eligible voters this year.
 - Arden requirements for voting are: anyone 18 years or older and a resident of Arden for more than 6 months. Renters are eligible to vote. Leaseholders who do not reside in Arden are not eligible to vote.
- Discussion included the need for more Arden government sponsored events. Many of the social events in the village are sponsored by ACRA, Arden Club or Swim Club. Some remembered and shared fun events from years past that brought out neighbors.
- Discussion included the need to improve decorum at Town Meetings. Cordial and civil behavior should be expected and reinforced. All residents should feel welcome, included and heard. The late hour of some Town Meetings is seen as a problem for those who work and/or have young children.
- The committee discussion ended with the realization that much work remains to be done to support greater community involvement and participation in voting. (To be continued)

ACTIONS:

- Debbie will post prior meeting minutes to the town web site.
- Budget Committee members are encouraged to actively remind Ardenites to complete and return the November voting ballots.

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 7:00pm via Zoom

Meeting Adjourned 8:15 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Ricard