

# Village of Ardentown

Established 1922

Ardentown, Del. 19810

Incorporated 1975

The regular meeting of the Village of Ardentown was convened at 7:30pm on Monday, November 10, 2014. Enno Krebbers, Chair, presiding. A quorum was present.

## IN ATTENDANCE:

- |                     |                              |                             |
|---------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. June Kleban      | 13. Suzanne Winkler          | 24. Holly Custer            |
| 2. Joan Fitzgerald  | MacGuire                     | 25. Ben Gruswitz            |
| 3. Betty Ann Themal | 14. Enno Krebbers            | 26. Shari Phalan            |
| 4. Harry Themal     | 15. Joy Mulholland           | 27. Shelley Robyn           |
| 5. Tara Kelly       | 16. Dotty Verne              | 28. Terri Hansen            |
| 6. Mike Fish        | 17. Maureen Gordon           | 29. Sue Cherrin             |
| 7. Alison Wakelin   | 18. Annie Gutsche            | 30. Elaine Schmerling       |
| 8. Hetty E. Francke | 19. Oliver Gutsche           | 31. Anne P Lutz             |
| 9. Hans Francke     | 20. Steve Cohen              | 32. Steven Curley           |
| 10. Hardy Hoegger   | 21. Peter Slattery           | 33. Steven Threefoot, guest |
| 11. Rusty Hoegger   | 22. Cassandra Lewis Slattery | 34. Bill Theis, guest       |
| 12. Sandy Landerl   | 23. Hugh Phibbs              |                             |

**MEETING:** Regular meeting called to order at 7:30 pm by Enno Krebbers, Town Chair. A quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The minutes for the February meeting were approved with no changes.

**SPECIAL GUEST:** Kiki Evans, constituent liaison for Bryon Short's office attended the meeting and encouraged residents to ask any questions they may have about state level issues. Several residents raised concern about the safety for pedestrians and children waiting at the bus stop at the intersection of Sconset and Harvey Road. It is a blind turn from Harvey on to Sconset and there is no safe walkway on that side of Sconset, even though the crosswalk is at the top of the hill. Can something be done? She will check and see if DelDOT has had any other complaints and can do something to address the safety concerns.

**REGISTRATION-** Betty Ann Themal reporting:

### NEW LEASEHOLDS:

Lot 157- 2309 Loreley Lane David Burslem and Theresa Truono 10/10/14

### NEW RESIDENTS:

Heather LaCorte and Eric Weiss- 2309 Loreley Lane

Carly Hampton- 2305 Brae Road

Tara Kelly and Mike Fish- 1505 Harvey Road, first floor

Jeanine Pollard and Scott Fackler 1505 Harvey Road, second floor

Jonathan Favors and Brianna Moore- 1707 Harvey Road

### PREVIOUSLY UNREPORTED NEW RESIDENTS:

Althea Noronha- 2311 Brae Road

Rose Carey- 2316 Orchard Road  
Johanna Rucker- 2316 Orchard Road  
Mary Margavage and Tom Bowser- 2301 Sconset Road  
Heather Moran- 2303 Sconset Road

**TREASURER'S REPORT-** Terri Hansen reporting for Barbara Mondzelewski:

Operating Accounts:	\$41,517.20
Municipal Street Aid	\$10,762.68
<u>Arden Building and Loan</u>	<u>\$22,134.88</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE</b>	<b>\$74,414.76</b>

**MEMORIAL GARDEN-** Rusty Hoegger reporting: All action items reported on at the September Meeting have now been accomplished with the hope that the work will last for many years to come.

**PLANNING COMMITTEE-** Elaine Schmerling reporting for Drew Hansen: Elaine has been working with DNREC for several months and now has 2 bids submitted for grants. There was so little interest in grants for this season that the deadline for applications was shifted to April, which will delay potential funding and work. Ben Gruswitz will call Bryon Short's constituent liaison in the hopes of getting some help from his office for this. Hetty Francke wonders if another Eagle Scout could be approached to do the job. Unfortunately, the plans recommended from DNREC are quite complicated and involved due to safety issues so a licensed, bonded and insured contractor is needed.

**PUBLIC WORKS: WAITING FOR REPORT TO BE SUBMITTED**

**PLAYGROUND** – Stephen Curley reporting: Does anyone have any suggestions for playgrounds, he is open to hearing them

**BUZZ WARE VILLAGE CENTER-** Terri Hansen, representative reporting: Terri Hansen read a report she had prepared and took questions at the end of that report:

When I first joined the Buzz Ware Village Center Committee a number of years ago I went with the idea that I was representing Ardentown and our land rent money and assisting in the effort to manage and provide stewardship for the Buzz. For many years this is how I and other Ardentown and Ardencroft representatives were treated. The Committee was a team of folks from all three Ardens, and while those from Ardentown and Ardencroft did not have “official votes” all business was conducted together and by consensus.

In 2013, the “official elected committee members” asserted that the only “real” committee members were those elected from Arden and that those of us from Ardentown or Ardencroft were simply volunteers. As a part of this shift, we were no longer asked to give a vote in decisions, and we were closed from Executive Sessions, which became more regularly used. The monies from Ardentown and Ardencroft, which had been called contributions, began to be called gifts.

As the atmosphere continued to decline, with official representatives of the Arden Committee refusing to attend meetings requested by Ardentown and Ardencroft representatives, use of Executive Sessions to bar participation by those outside the elected Arden members of the committee, the three Town Chairs reached out to Ted Rosenthal in the hopes of mediating a more conciliatory way forward. This process has taken all of the year and resulted in simply a validation of the legality of the changes made by the Arden Buzz Ware Village Center Committee. The legal documents show there is no way for

the three Villages to share in the management and supervision of the building or the Renovation Fund, which is used to fund capital improvements of the building, unless all three Towns agree upon something and pass that agreement with a vote in all three Town Meetings.

Repeatedly the Ardentown and Ardencroft representatives have been told that only Arden has a fiduciary responsibility and stake in the operation and management of the Buzz. I feel that this is not the case. For many years we have contributed financially with our land rent to pay the bills at the Buzz. Our representatives and residents have given of their time and talent to assist in management, operations, and events. We have created, coordinated, and assisted with many fundraisers for the Buzz, sometimes with little or no help from Arden residents. Through a budgeting fluke, there were two years when the Buzz rentals paid all the operating expenses and the money we and Ardencroft contributed to the Buzz was reabsorbed into the Arden Village coffers.

Today, the Village of Ardentown's contribution, along with the Trust's, is designated to go to the Buzz Renovation Fund, which is managed the Buzz Ware Village Center Committee. Only those elected to serve from the Village of Arden can vote on how and when it is spent. This money is meant to be used to make capital improvements to the Building. Regular maintenance, utilities and salaries are paid for from the operating budget which, ideally, is covered by rentals. With this in mind, is it fiduciarily responsible for us as an independent municipality to give our land rent to capitally improve the property of another independent municipality? I do not believe it is prudent or appropriate to do so.

My recommendation, as your appointed representative to the Buzz Ware Village Center Committee is as follows:

1. As a Village, we should not continue to contribute land rent monies to the Renovation Fund, and instead encourage all Ardentown residents to make individual contributions to this Fund when they attend community events at the Buzz such as the Coffeeshouse, Art on the Town, or the New Year's Brunch.
2. We should see the Buzz as an organization more along the lines of ACRA, the Craft Shop Museum, and the Arden Page and not a physical location.
3. We should continue to support the Buzz, not as a physical location, but in its mission to serve as a place where community events happen. To do this I would propose that the Village give a \$300 "designated gift" to the Buzz to be used to defray the material costs of events like those named above. By giving money to buy decorations, food and drink for events that all residents of all Ardens benefit from we will be focusing our efforts and our land rent far more appropriately.

***QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR:***

***Alison Wakelin***- Won't decreasing the amount of our contribution adversely affect participants of programs like community events and meetings? ANSWER- No, the current monies do not go toward support of public programs, but rather to the capital improvements on the building like windows, doors, lighting, painting, etc. By designating the money to be used for material expenses related to community events we will actually help them increase offerings, since right now there is no line item specifically related to community event expenses.

***June Kleban***- Can't we find a way to get a vote? ANSWER- No. All three villages are bound by the law and the law is simply that non-residents may not vote on a Town Committee. Arden residents cannot vote on Ardentown business anymore that Ardentown residents can vote on Arden business. As long as the building remains the legal property of the Village of Arden, only Arden residents elected to the BWVC Committee have a legal right to vote. This can only be changed by agreement by all three Village Meetings and votes from all three Village Meetings.

**Hetty Francke**- Commented on the history of the 3 Ardens involvement with the BWVC being built with assessments (funding) from Arden and Ardentown. Arden bought the building from the local School Board for \$1, couldn't Ardentown and Ardencroft not each contribute 33 cents?? Asked about availability of meeting minutes in the interest of openness. ANSWER- Minutes for the BWVC meetings are currently being taken by Liz Resko and are available on the BWVC web site shortly after the meetings are completed. They are publicly available there. If you do not have access to a computer, or prefer to receive them directly, you can always reach out to Steven Threefoot, chair of the BWVC Committee for a copy of minutes.

**Steven Threefoot**, Chair of BWVC Committee addressing the meeting as a guest- Steven Threefoot wants to reassure Ardentown residents that access and availability of the BWVC is not reliant on a village contribution to the BWVC. All community events are open to all residents of all three Ardens, free of charge. If a community group would like to hold an event or meeting in the building that does not charge a fee and is open to all members of the community, space will be available at the Buzz.

Residents of all three Ardens receive a 10% discount on rentals. Wants Ardentown to consider the attribute of free space and open space represented by the Buzz and how that benefits all the Ardens. This must be as cost neutral to Arden as possible. There are costs associated with the building that don't show up in the BWVC budget but must be born by the Village of Arden.

**TRUSTEES REPORT:** Harry Themal reporting: Nothing to report.

**TOWN CHAIR REPORT:** No report

#### **ELECTIONS:**

**Treasurer-** Barbara Mondzelewski retired after 27 years of service. The community thanked her for her many years of dedicated service. Holly Custer stood for election. No nominations from the floor. Holly Custer was elected with a unanimous vote.

**Town Chair-** Enno Krebbers retired after 5 years of service as Town Chair and many more years in a variety of other roles. He thanked the town for the opportunity to serve the community, and the Coordinating Committees, Town Officers, and Trustees for all of their help. Harry Themal, speaking for the residents and leaseholders of Ardentown, thanked Enno for his many years of service and dedication to our community. A move was made for a standing ovation, which passed with enthusiasm. Annie Gutsche agreed to stand for Town Chair, no nominations from the floor. Annie Gutsche was elected with a unanimous vote.

**Community Planning-** Andrew Hansen was unanimously reelected to serve as head of the Planning Committee. Gil Johnston has retired. Mike Fish volunteered to serve as a member of the Planning Committee. No other nominations or volunteers from the floor. Mike Fish was elected to the committee with a unanimous vote.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm