

Village of Ardentown
Ardentown, DE 19810

Established 1922
Incorporated 1975

The regular meeting of the Village of Ardentown was convened at 7:30 pm on Monday, September 12, 2022, Alison Wakelin, Town Chair, presiding. A quorum was present.

In Attendance

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Steven R. Cohen | 18. Joan Fitzgerald | 34. Maura Lynch |
| 2. Oliver Gutche | 19. Uttam Shanbhag | 35. Micah Altman |
| 3. Shari Phalan | 20. Mhairi Craig | 36. Gerry Marcus |
| 4. Pat Phalan | 21. Stuart Craig | 37. Barbara Mondzelewski |
| 5. Annie Gutche | 22. Sandie Cooper | 38. Betty Ann Themal |
| 6. Janet Cosgrove | 23. Howard Cooper | 39. Maureen Gordon |
| 7. Allen Riblett | 24. Jill S. Emery | 40. Cindy Cohen |
| 8. Lisa Wilson Riblett | 25. Daniel Emery | 41. Melissa Parsonson |
| 9. Joe Grippe | 26. Lucy Faella | 42. William Parsonson |
| 10. Beverly Bizup Hawkins | 27. Mike Faella | 43. Paige Thommes |
| 11. Robert Custer | 28. Chris Demsey | 44. Chelsey Buscaglia |
| 12. Dorothy Verne | 29. John Demsey | 45. Drew Hansen |
| 13. Allison Wakelin | 30. Conner McGivney | 46. Melissa Truman |
| 14. Joe Painter | 31. Janna Scheflen | 47. Mike Buscaglia |
| 15. Suzanne Cherrin | 32. Elaine Schmerling | 48. Ann Lutz |
| 16. Samuel Molina | 33. Peter Slattery | 49. Heather Horan |
| 17. Sharon Kleban | | 50. Mike Faella (non-resident) |

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes for the May meeting are approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Peter Slattery reporting: Finances are in good shape. Starting from Peter Slattery's last presentation, we had (\$40,000 - \$41,000). Since it has been awhile, there has been quite a lot in expenses (\$37,000-38,000). \$33,000 in income. Received second ARPA payment. Total checking and savings, a little bit less than \$60,000. The biggest expense is with Trash Tech. A Check received from 2020 for \$600 from a donation made to the Arden Page. Income from Comcast and Verizon continue to come in. Also, contributions from the Trustees. Donations made for restoration and for the centennial.

REGISTRATION COMMITTEE: Cindy Cohen reporting:

1. Committee Activity: Micah Altman & Gerald Marcus received a Welcome packet while they were in town in late April. They will not be moving in full-time from CA for another year or so. In the meantime Kalai King is renting from them.
 2. Recent Resident Changes: Welcome to Bethany Rees & Patrick Scolnick, who moved into 2314 East Mall (previously Priscilla Campbell's home) in May. Welcome to Dela Muhlenberg and daughter, Katie Bryan, who moved into 2305 Loreley Lane (previously Joan Fitzgerald's home) in August. The Hoegger home at 1513 Harvey is scheduled to transfer to John & Christine Demsey on August 31st.
- Alison announced: Are there any new residents in attendance at tonight's meeting? If so, please let us know by unmuting yourself and saying hello. As always, if you know of any other leasehold changes, or changes in rentals within Ardentown, please contact us. It takes the whole village to keep track of all the comings and goings of our residents. Connor McGinty introduced himself.

MEMORIAL GARDEN: Melissa Parsonson reporting for Betty Ann Themal: The committee met on July 27, 2022. We reviewed the Memorial Garden regulations and added the following sentence to the Eligibility section: "Ashes of non-resident spouses or domestic partners may be buried in the same gravesite as that of an eligible individual". This phrase has been added to the Regulation page.

The committee discussed the plastic chairs which mysteriously appeared in the garden some time ago. We noted that people seem to be using them, moving them from place to place to perhaps to sit near their departed loved one. We hope that we might be able to replace these chairs with similar, light-weight moveable chairs in a more subdued color like tan.

We talked about what could be done to improve the groundcover which has more weeds and vines than grass and presents an uneven surface for walking. We will be looking for possible solutions. Any helpful suggestions on these would be welcomed.

ASSESSMENT: Janet Cosgrove reporting: There is no report yet. The last report is that we are taking the summer off. We will reconvene.

COMMUNITY PLANNING: Joseph Grippe reporting: Met on July 27th and May 31st to discuss the Centennial. The community planning community and some volunteers met. We came up with a concept for the centennial and dates and arranged for the things we need. Especially thanks to Allan Kleban for the band and Edmund Bischoff for the food in addition to the potluck. The event is Saturday, September 24th. It starts at 3pm on the Pettit green. The band will start at 5 with a dance floor. The band and dancing will go to about dark. The Craft Shop Museum will donate some things to show the history of Ardentown. We came in under budget. If you have any questions, please contact Joseph Grippe. Thanks to Lisa and the Trustees, we planted some dogwoods and one will be dedicated to Hal Goodwin, Jr.

Alison reporting: There is a volunteer sign up sheet to help with set up and to help Edmund with the food. The Centennial committee has done a lot of work, especially Joseph Grippe, Alan Kleban, and Edmund Bischoff.

AUDIT COMMITTEE: Drew Hansen reporting: Overall, the Audit committee finds the 2021 trust and village books to be in good order, with a few items to note for follow-up, which are listed below:

--- **Village of Ardentown** --- Check #1347 on 9/3 to Smith Associates for \$140.00, whereas the receipt/invoice is for \$280.00, a difference of \$140.00. Check #1325 on 10/12 to Carol Larson for \$1,203.94, whereas the invoice appears to be for \$1,296.34, a difference of \$92.40. These will be reviewed in the 2022 audit.

--- **Ardentown Trust** --- Four items in December and November 2021 ledger entries do not appear in 2021 bank statements. Presumably they did not hit the bank until January 2022 and will be captured in the 2022 audit. They're noted here for future reference:

- Business Checking - check 4550 for \$100.00
- Business Checking - check 4554 for \$6,300.00
- Robin Hood: \$3,674 payment to Arthur Hall Insurance
- Business Checking - check 4543 for \$4,500.00

For the 2022 audit, it will be helpful if the trust provides the 2021 and 2022 ledgers so that the committee can cross-check these expenses. Also, a January '21 reimbursement of trust office expenses for \$89.29 did not include back-up receipts. Please be sure to include receipts for all reimbursed office expenses.

BUDGET COMMITTEE: Drew Hansen reporting: Drew Hansen will be stepping down as the chair. The budget itself will be sent out to the Committee Chair to see what the 2023 Budget looks like. In an earlier town meeting, it was decided that a 2023 budget will be drafted for the November meeting, so that going into the new year, we can have a budget in place.

Alison reporting: We are looking for a new budget chair. Allison stated that after November, Allison would like to take on the position of Budget Committee Chair. Thanks to Drew for doing the budget for so long.

PUBLIC WORKS: Roads Projects - Oliver Gutche reporting: there is a project along Lorelli for storm water runoff. One project we have is to put in swales to improve water runoff. We have gotten estimates and are requesting more details

on the estimates. Once these estimates have been obtained, Oliver will present the options. The second road project we have are the speed bumps that have been installed on Sconset Rd. Since then, we have had meetings at the speed bumps to discuss why the speed bumps were installed. There has been an action committee to discuss having the speed bump heights lowered by a half inch to an inch. Allison - speed bumps have not been lowered. Oliver - residents state that they are difficult to ride over. Several residents from Sconset spoke about their concerns related to the speed bumps and different options to prevent speeding. The motion is to remove the speed bump in front of Mike's house.

Motion to remove the top speed bump and lower the remaining speed bump on Sconset Road. Motion approved.

Steve Cohen requested that In the future if there are any changes on Sconset going forward it is to be voted upon at the next town meeting, so it's a vote rather than a committee decision even though the committee has the ability to make the decision without the town.

Paths & Restoration - Elaine Schmerling reporting Sunnyside – Elaine Schmerling has gone out several times w/Redtail. We cleared stiltgrass and mile-a-minute (MAM) several spots off the main N-S path and pulled back MAM in the meadow, where we continued saving sassafras trees from it. We have cleared these and Devils Walking stick, Tree of Heaven (TOH) seedlings and even Asian beautyberries, from the entire area of the main E-W path to the creek. We have cleared many branches off the paths in all directions. Town Invasives: Lee Painter helped pull some stiltgrass in the Ardentown woods. It is especially in lower areas by the creek Ardentown woods, and below the power lines (where I have found them and beautyberry & mimosa seedlings, among others). By doing this we have saved toads (which can't live in stiltgrass), and many flowers which I posted on Forests of the Ardens FB site including blue-stem goldenrod, white wood aster and a few others down by the creek which are starting to fill in, my 3rd year pulling. But stilt grass covers the other side of the creek & will keep seeding in, and falls down from yards and greens too. I also found Asiatic dayflower (2-petalled blue flower), mimosa, Asian beautyberries & others by the creek, among others. Now the Japanese Virgin's bower (sweet autumn clematis) is flowering many places in town: look for the white sweet smelling flowering vine w/smooth edges – DON'T let it go to seed please pull and put it in yard waste! These vines can pull down small trees. Others: I pulled various invasives in the Glen including Japanese maples and Ginko trees – but mostly the usual burning bush, barberry, ivy, etc. I have dug burdock, thistle and mugwort at the compost area; dug these and poison hemlock (at least 50 stalks) at Marsh Rd. old Bickhart leasehold. HERE the native swamp goldenrod, and many trees, are filling in. I have gone twice already to pull back bamboo from where it still creeps from the leasehold on Chestnut St. Other plantings and native plants including bayberry are growing, but slowly, still not a hedge; a car ran off the road into the best holly which is now gone. Pruning – Over 2 weeks Lee & I pruned the lower branches of 2 black gum trees that we had planted years ago on Petit. They are now totally mowable under. We also pulled a lot of stilt grass – and privet, MF rose, and even a Bradford pear growing up under these and nearby large trees. There is always more for others to pull too! (We weeded crab grasses from rain gardens twice, and trimmed top, and pulled stiltgrass and grasses that are hanging over and would seed in). TOH – Cory with Advanced Ecology hack-n-squirted remaining tree of heaven trees in Sunnyside, and lower Sconset. Some from last year's treatments were still ½ alive. There were fewer suckers inside Sunnyside than the last few years, and NONE in the lower Brae area. Hack-n-squirt is the most direct application, and Cory will be available to re-treat later this month if necessary. The RR TOH's however are totally well and alive, and hosting 1,000's of SLF. Carol Larson did NOT trap treat any this year -those on town land and the RR below Harvey Rd are full of them. This could lead to an increase in SLF next year for residents near Sconset. But where they are farther from TOH's, predators do appear to be eating more of them.

STORMWATER COMMITTEE: Alison Wakelin reporting for Terry Harvey: Waiting for proposal from Ed Smith, but will probably use Rich Cropper if it can be done quickly. It is all in process.

PLAYGROUND COMMITTEE: Lisa Riblett reporting: The committee is still in the process of getting estimates to replace the fence at the playground.

BUZZ WARE VILLAGE CENTER: Shari Phalan reporting: Employment - Building Manager's position has been divided into two jobs - Sales and Building Manager. Pam Cohen will continue with sales Rentals - 5 new rentals; ACRA has ended 7/30; ARPA Request for \$16,000 sewer replacement was granted. It will consist of evaluation of the sewer system, installation of interior/exterior cleanouts and possible replacement of soil pipe. Work will be performed in stages.

Coffee House - Coffee House closet has been cleaned out and some items donated. 5/13 had 44 guests, \$223 donations.. This year is the 25 anniversary and celebration is planned for the fall. 25 chairs donated to Sellers Senior Center Classes: Tai Chi - Mon, Weds and Sat. Yoga Arden Bookies - 2nd Monday of the month using Zoom until further notice. Free Little Library - has been built by Mike Moran, installed by Patrick Barry and decorated by Mary Lebeis; Arden Fiber Arts - canceled until further notice; Art on the Town - Jeff Steen photography on 5/6, 54 attended, \$75 donations. Awakened Heart - working on lease-to-lease, month-to-month Peddlers, Potions and Practitioners - will be at the Fair; \$2 fee Mask Mandate - still following the Governor's protocols for public events.

TRUSTEES REPORT: Lisa Riblett reporting: Craig Stuart has been voted in as a Trustee. Several trees are scheduled to come down this year and that will deplete our budget. If you know of a tree that is a hazard, let us know and it will go on the list for next year. Thanks to Joseph Grippe the work on the leak behind the Parsonson's leasehold has been corrected. There is another leak being worked on. Station Path - will be cleaned up October 29th. Terri Hansen is going to set out coffee and danishes. Thanks to Cindy Cohen for stepping in as Secretary.

Joan Fitzgerald reporting: This is the last time reporting as Trustee. The senior rebate checks have been mailed out. Any one who is going to be 65 by June 30, 2023, put in an application now. Cindy Cohen mentioned the leasehold transfers earlier in the night. Cindy Cohen will handle any land rent billing and lease transfers.

Annie Gutche reporting: There was another leak found between the water main and the meter within the Candlelight Theatre. The water company didn't know and the Candlelight didn't know. Thanks to Joseph Grippe since he measured it. The water company said it must be fixed in 10 days. The work will be finished up tomorrow and then we will have to work on the parking lot and paving.

Archive Committee: Bev Bizup Hawkins reporting: Excited about the Ardentown Centennial. The plan is to have some photographs and items for that day. The Arden Shop Craft Museum will be opening on October 22nd. The WHYY special on the Ardens is being nominated for an Emmy for the Mid-Atlantic region.

TOWN CHAIR REPORT: Alison Wakelin reporting - **Motion for the Arden chair to sign the new 10 year agreement with Comcast. Motion approved.** Trash pick up is on Tuesdays from now on. There is now an Intern - Mailee Gutsche

ELECTIONS: Budget - Drew Hansen stepping down, Allison Wakelin elected as chair, Stephanie Lombardo re-elected
Registration - Mhairi Craig nominated for November voting
Assessment - Janna Scheflen re-elected, Joseph Grippe re-elected

OLD BUSINESS: Steve Cohen reporting: Ardentown sign has been built by the prison. The hold up for having it placed in the ground is due working with DelDot for approval of placement. Drew Hansen reporting: Drew Hansen is stepping down as Chair of the Audit Committee. Jill Emery has agreed to step in as Chair of the Audit Committee. Jill Emery is appointed by Alison Wakelin. Melissa Parsonson reporting: Melissa Parsonson is stepping down. Edmund Bischoff appointed by Alison Wakelin to the Safety and Public Works Committees

NEW BUSINESS: Joseph Grippe: Ben Gruswitz put a poster on the exit of the Candlelight about the Inter Ardens Transportation Working Group. Alison Wakelin: They will submit a plan and then it will need to be approved by the Villages of the Ardens. Janet Cosgrove: Could we consider lowering the speed limit to 10 mph? Allison: Let's think about that at the next town meeting. Joseph Grippe: Submitted plan for zoom equipment. The cost is \$6,000.00. Elaine Schmerling: Proposed if the ARPA money can be used for the equipment, it should be bought. If it cannot, the town will vote on it at the next meeting. Alison Wakelin: **Motion - If we can use our ARPA funds, then we should purchase the equipment that Joseph Grippe has researched for about \$6000.00. If we can't, the motion should be tabled.**

November we have the Treasurer, the Town Secretary, and seats on the Community Planning Committee are up for re-election.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.