

EXECUTIVE SERVICES

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

The Board is pleased to submit its annual report for 2014 to Arlington residents. The Board is composed of five elected residents who set policy and oversee the management of municipal functions of the Town.

In 2014 Diane M. Mahon was elected to the Board of Selectmen for her 6th consecutive term and Daniel J. Dunn for his 2nd term. During 2014 Steven M. Byrne served as Board Chair, and Joseph A. Curro, Jr. as Vice Chair.



Arlington Board of Selectmen clockwise, left to right: Diane M. Mahon, Joseph A. Curro, Jr. (Vice Chair), Steven M. Byrne (Chair), Daniel J. Dunn, Kevin F. Greeley

Year in Review

Arlington concluded its once-in-a-generation Master Plan process on land use and physical development in Town. A Master Plan for Arlington will guide the Town in these uses over the next twenty years. A series of meetings and surveys were conducted throughout the year on the elements of the plan including: public facilities (including school buildings), housing, transportation, economic development, land use, open space, recreation land, natural, historic, and cultural resources. The Arlington Redevelopment Board adopted the plan in early 2015. The Board would like to commend the hard work of the Master Plan Advisory Committee (MPAC) and residents who participated in this two-year long process. The MPAC will continue work to implement the plan in the coming years.



Over the summer the Town launched a brand new website. The new site captures the spirit and character of Arlington while employing new technologies that make it a solid foundation for improved public engagement and future enhancements in the coming years. As we all move toward communicating with multiple devices, such as smartphones and tablets, it's nice to know our site will be easily accessible to the public, however they choose to connect with us.

In the Board's ongoing efforts to improve transparency and increase efficiency the Board adopted the use of digital packets for its meetings. Digital packets allow for a significant increase in access for the public to our meeting materials by making them available on the Town's website prior to our meetings. Additionally, the board can use tablets or laptops during meetings thereby eliminating the large volumes of paper previously necessary.

Designated as a "Green Community" in 2010, Arlington continues to move forward in its energy and conservation initiatives. This year Arlington was recognized by the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) for reaching its 20% energy use reduction goal. This goal was reached through the successful implementation of a number of energy efficiency measures throughout Town. These measures included installation of more energy efficient boilers in various facilities and the upgrade of all Town streetlights to energy efficient LED technology. Out of 136 Green Communities, Arlington was one of seven that reached this milestone.

In the November elections, Arlington voters passed the Community Preservation Act (CPA) to establish a dedicated funding source for preservation purposes including open space, historic resources, and community housing. Beginning FY16, the CPA will be funded by a surcharge of 1.5% on the annual property tax assessed on real property, subject to some exemptions, and by annual distributions from a trust fund provided by the

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state under the CPA. A Committee will be established to make annual recommendations to Town Meeting for approval of spending the funds.

Volunteerism

Arlington's many volunteer committees continue to provide valuable contributions to the community by helping those in need, participating in Town governance, and educating the public on important issues.

One such example of volunteer participation is EcoFest. Co-sponsored by Vision 2020's Sustainable Arlington, the Arlington Garden Club, and Public Works and held at Town Hall. The theme in 2014 was *ReThink Recycling!* At the event local vendors and environmental groups demonstrated different ways to use and reuse a variety of items to reduce waste. Another example of volunteerism is Arlington Alive's Summer Block Party. The event promotes and celebrates Arlington's creative economy and is co-sponsored by the Arlington Committee on Tourism and Economic Development (ATED), Arlington Cultural Council, and local businesses.



Arlington Alive Summer Block Party

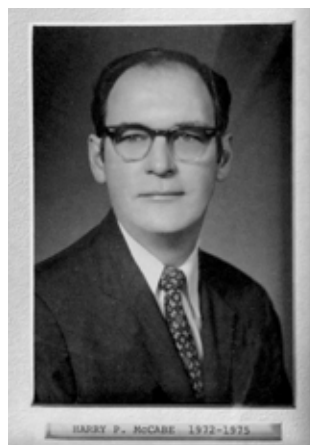
Town Day Celebration

Arlington Town Day was another successful event. Resident and vendor participation was at an all-time high. Again, the Town Day Committee is grateful for the strong community participation that has become well-known as a source for Arlington's strong and thriving community spirit. The Board would like to extend its thanks and congratulations to the Town Day Committee, and especially the Co-chairs, Marie Krepelka and Kathleen Darcy. The Board also wants to extend the same thanks to the many businesses and tireless volunteers whose loyalty, dedication, and hard work made this celebration a success again. All Town Day activities are privately funded and this event continues without any Town funding.

These are just a few of the highlights in Arlington this year. More highlights are included in this report.

Acknowledgments & Recognitions

The Town experienced the great loss with the passing of Harry McCabe. Mr. McCabe served in Town Meeting for 48 years, representing Precinct 21. He was a founding member of the Council on Aging and served on it for 48 years. He served on the Finance Committee, the Board of Selectmen, and was the Town Moderator. His contributions were vast and Mr. McCabe has left a legacy that Arlington will benefit from for years to come.



The Charles H. Lyons Selectmen's Hearing Room dedication in September honored the long-serving former Selectmen for his years of dedicated service to the Town. Mr. Lyons served on the Board from 1981-2005. He was on the Board of Directors for both the Massachusetts Water Resources Agency (MWRA) and Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA). He was also the president of the Massachusetts Selectmen's Association and the National League of Cities. The Charles H. Lyons Selectmen's Hearing Room will serve as a reminder of his exceptional service to the Town.



The Board of Selectmen would like to thank all Town employees for the work they do to make Arlington a special place to live, work, and enjoy leisurely activities. We also thank the volunteers who spend thousands of hours each year performing a labor of love for their community; Arlington would not be the same without them. We particularly thank the staff of the Selectmen's Office for their tireless and intelligent work on our behalf: Marie Krepelka, Board Administrator, Mary-Ann Sullivan, Frances (Fran) Reidy, Jean Burg, and our newest member Ashley Maher.

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TOWN MANAGER

I am very pleased to deliver what will now be my third Annual Report to the Town of Arlington in the capacity of Town Manager. I am honored to serve the Town of Arlington in this capacity and I am thankful to the Board of Selectmen for continuing to entrust me with this role. Arlington has a long tradition of professional management, and I am proud to be able to continue this tradition. I also feel very fortunate to be working in a Town that is made up of so many dedicated, committed, and talented residents. Without the contributions of volunteers, many of Arlington's successes would not be possible.

My goal in making this report is to provide an overview of the financial, organizational, and community based efforts that took place during 2014.

2014 was a year of building off our past successes, fortifying our foundations, and building capacity for the future. Construction on the Central Fire station and the Community Safety Building are providing necessary modernization. Our Information Technology Strategic Plan continues to guide our technology use. Significant updates to the Town's website occurred in 2014 that not only improved access for residents, but is building staff capacity by utilizing a robust and user-friendly content management system. The Board of Selectmen took a major step toward going paperless by making their meeting materials digital and readily available to the public, while reducing paper and printing usage. These initiatives and more are included in this report.

It is my hope that through this report, residents will learn about the Town's ongoing commitment to seek efficiencies and improvements in service delivery while providing transparency and information that is both relevant and timely. Residents can also receive information about Town activities year-long by visiting the Communications Center at arlingtonma.gov and signing up to one of our many communication methods. Please also note that in several sections of this Annual Report, we have included a link to a webpage where more information about a project or effort may be found.

Town's Financial Outlook

FY2015, the current fiscal year, is the first year beyond what was initially intended to be a three-year plan that incorporated the Proposition 2 ½ override of 2011 designed to carry the Town's budgets through FY2014. The key commitments along with updates on the status of meeting the commitments of that three-year plan are listed as follows:

1) Override funds will be made to last at least three years (FY2012-FY2014). No general override will be sought during this period. – **Current projections have extended the plan to cover FY2012-FY2020.**



Adam Chapdelaine, Arlington Town Manager

2) If the override passes there will be no Pay As You Throw (PAYT) fee implemented in FY2012, but the placement of a ballot question regarding a revenue neutral PAYT option will be considered in FY2013. - **This ballot question was not advanced due to the Town's implementation of a mandatory recycling program in FY2013 which has stabilized both hauling and waste disposal costs.**

3) Town and School operating budget increases will be capped at 3.5% per year. An additional allowance of up to 7% shall be allowed for documented special education cost increases. Should actual special education cost increases exceed this amount, the remaining School budget shall be decreased by the difference. – **This commitment has been maintained and this year's Town operating budget proposes a 2.95% increase. Due to continuing enrollment growth, a school funding increase above 3.5% is proposed and discussed herein.**

4) Health care cost increases will be programmed at 7%. Should actual increases exceed this amount, the Town and School budget totals shall be proportionately decreased by the excess amount. Should actual increases be less than this amount as a result of negotiated health care savings, the extra savings will be:

a) Deposited into the override stabilization fund to extend the three year override period;

b) Used to preserve services; and

c) To satisfy any and all negotiated items between the Town Manager, employees, and retirees. – **The override period has been extended to nine years from the original three-year period based to a large degree on health care savings and the first year health care savings also supported FY2012 wage settlements with employee bargaining units. For future planning purposes, health care premiums are projected to grow at 5.25%, which more accurately reflects the historical average annual growth of Group Insurance Commission premiums.**

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5) An additional \$600,000 shall be appropriated for the School Department in FY2012 and \$400,000 shall be appropriated each year in addition to the amount currently appropriated in the capital budget for road improvements. – **This commitment has been met.**

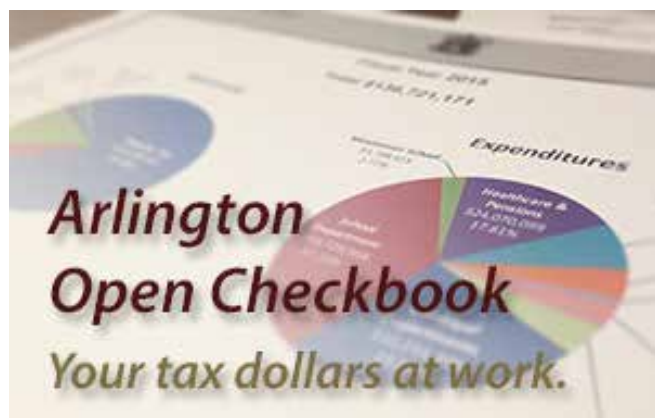
6) Reserves shall be maintained in an amount equivalent to at least 5% of the budget. – **This commitment is being maintained.**

For in-depth information about the Town's financial condition please refer to the Town Manager's Annual Budget & Financial Plan online at arlingtonma.gov/budgets.

Dedication to Efficiency, Innovation & Transparency

Last year, the Town released a Strategic Plan for Information Technology (IT Plan) as a result of a year-long effort to develop a plan that would aid in enhancing the use of technology as a means of delivering more efficient and effective services to the residents of Arlington. Substantial progress has been made on the tasks and goals outlined in the plan, including the completion of a needs assessment across all Town departments. Notable accomplishments within the goals outlined are the launch of a digital meeting management solution for the Board of Selectmen and the recent release of Open Checkbook. The digital meeting management solution has dramatically streamlined the process of creating and distributing Board of Selectmen meeting packets, while also significantly enhancing governmental transparency by making all meeting materials publicly available via a web portal on arlingtonma.gov. The launch of Open Checkbook, in early 2015, takes another step toward enhanced transparency by making all Town and School spending data available to the public via an easy to use web application.

Another example of the Town's dedication to pursuing efficiency via innovation is found in the DPW's efforts to reduce salt usage in the winter. During FY2015, five DPW trucks were outfitted with a new salt spreader



control system. The new system utilizes the vehicle's speed to regulate the rate of salt applied to winter road surfaces. Using speed and a predetermined amount of product to be spread per lane mile, the system adjusts conveyors and spinners accordingly to apply the desired amount of deicing material. Previously, the rate of application was set by the driver using an estimation of speed. Each unit costs approximately \$9,000 and can be reinstalled into new equipment as vehicles are replaced. It is projected that the units will reduce salt usage by up to 30%. Last winter, each truck spread about \$50,000 worth of salt. With a 30% reduction, the new system should pay for itself in the first year.

In FY2016 and beyond, the Town will also remain committed to finding other means of reducing costs which may include, but will not be limited to, regionalization of services and the outsourcing of certain municipal functions.



Sustainability Initiatives

In 2010, Arlington was named a Green Community by the State's Green Communities Division in recognition of the work that Arlington has done in the past to reduce energy usage, and the plans it has to further reduce energy use in the future. In 2013, based on significant fulfillment of these plans, the State's Department of Energy Resources (DOER) honored Arlington with the "Leading By Example" award. This award is given to only four municipalities on an annual basis, and Arlington was proud to have earned the designation.

More recently, Arlington was one of seven communities state wide that was honored by the Green Communities Division for having reached its 20% energy reduction goal within a five year time span. Arlington has substantially benefited from its cooperation with the Green Communities Division, having received three grant awards over the past four years, totaling \$698,082. The most recent grant award of \$247,894 came in 2014 and provided funding for numerous efficiency upgrades at the Ottoson Middle School and the installation of a new energy management system at Arlington High School.

A great deal of this effort has been made possible via the efforts of the Town's Regional Energy Manager (REM) who is shared with the Town of Bedford. Looking forward, the Town is preparing to apply for yet another

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round of Green Communities grant funding in 2015 and is also preparing to sign a power purchase agreement with Ameresco for the installation of solar photovoltaic panels of six school roofs. The power purchase agreement projects to save the Town nearly \$2,000,000 over the course of the next twenty years.

The Central Fire Station is being designed to LEED® Silver Green Building standards and construction is anticipated to be complete in 2015. By using less energy and water, LEED certified buildings save money for families, businesses and taxpayers; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and contribute to a healthier environment for residents, workers, and the larger community.

Around Town

The East Arlington Massachusetts Avenue Rebuild received all final approvals from the Federal Highway Administration in 2013 and construction began in the summer of 2014. The work in 2014 focused on utility upgrades and sidewalk work starting on the western end of the project limits. The project will continue throughout the construction season of 2015 and is on schedule to be completed in its entirety in the spring of 2016.



NLC Prescription Drug Card Program Savings

The Town continues periodic outreach on the National League of Cities (NLC) Prescription Drug Card Program (launched Dec. 2009). At end of calendar year 2014, Arlington leads the state in cumulative savings to residents with \$220,020. The free program offers residents an average savings of 30% on non-insured prescriptions. Residents can obtain the free card online at arlingtonma.gov/prescriptioncards.



Communications & Customer Service

The Board of Selectmen and I continue to make improving public communications and customer service one of our priority goals. This annual report is one such communication vehicle in which we put a great deal of effort to make it informative, easy to read, and attractive. In 2014 the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) awarded Arlington first place for its 2013 report. The Town also makes these reports available online at arlingtonma.gov/annualreports.

We strive to inform the public about general Town activities and during emergencies, plus build a stronger relationship with our residents and improve efficiencies for our staff. To meet these needs and increasing demand for them, we utilize the following information channels in conjunction with local media.

Arlingtonma.gov

Arlingtonma.gov is the Town's communication hub supporting one of the priority goals of the Board of Selectmen: enhance public communication and customer service and leverage technology to improve efficiencies. The site is made up of over 10,000 documents, 650 pages, 250 News Articles, and over 1,000 calendar events. The site serves a population of approximately 43,000 residents, surrounding communities, and beyond. The site supports the online communication and outreach activities of fifteen departments, and over sixty-five boards, committees, and commissions. Since the institution of the Open Meeting Law (OML) in July 2010 approximately 1,000 documents are added to the site annually. In late 2014 the Town launched a Facebook and Twitter channel and accumulated approximately 200 new likes/follows, respectively.

This year arlingtonma.gov recorded approximately 1.3 million Page Views, 496,936 Sessions, and 322,708 Users. Although there is a decrease in Visitor Loyalty it may be a leveling off due to measurement changes made in Google Analytics in 2012. Prior to 2012 the metric was called "Loyalty" and it is unclear how Google changed collecting this information. That being said, re-

Website Traffic (arlingtonma.gov)	2011	2012	2013	2014
Page Views	1,354,141	1,399,333	1,381,574	1,316,919
Visits/Sessions*	547,114	573,288	586,584	496,936*
Unique Visitors/Users*	276,345	300,853	322,708	274,951*
Visitor Loyalty- # of Uniques Visited: Frequency & Recency*: Over 200 Times	24,157	18,810	17,637*	16,992*

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Request/Answer Center: System Stats	2011	2012	2013	2014
Answers Viewed on Portal	203,484	196,393	188,367	267,392
*Productivity Preserved in Hours/Answers Viewed	16,957	16,366	15,697	22,283
**New Customer Registrations	3,071	2,338	2,373	2,251
Requests Created	2,868	2,951	2,772	2,988
Requests Closed	2,616	2,731	2,811	2,543
% Questions/Requests Remain Open System	11%	22%	24%	27%
Request/Answer Center: PIO Requests	2011	2012	2013	2014
Requests Created	897	888	610	370
Requests Closed	934	888	462	355
% Questions/Requests Remain Open System	8%	5%	7%	13%

viewing the combined website metrics traffic is relatively stable and the site continues to be heavily utilized.

Request/Answer Center

The Request/Answer Center is Arlington's online customer service portal where residents can make (and track) requests of Town services, ask questions, and find answers. 2014 marked the seventh year for the service. The system continues to be heavily utilized by staff and residents. A major feature of the service is the ability for residents to easily search an extensive database before calling staff for an answer (Find Answers). If they cannot find the answer online, their question is forwarded to staff for a response. Since launching the service, over one million answers were viewed, yet, only 2,231 questions were forwarded to staff for an answer (less than 1%). This continues to enforce the self-serve method of providing easily accessible information so residents can find the information they need at their convenience. One way to measure how productivity might be preserved in this self-service model is to estimate the time of phone calls to staff members. If an average phone call takes 5 minutes to answer, then this feature preserved, on average this year, 22,283 hours for the Town, or the equivalent to 10.7 full-time employees for providing this information online.

In 2014 The Request/Answer Center received 2,988 new Requests and Town staff closed 2,543. Public Works leads the way with 1,815 Requests submitted, an increase of 123 Requests from 2013. Fifty-three percent of all Requests were entered by the public; a 4% increase from 2013. Staff entered 37% of Requests, up from 32% from 2013, and there was a decrease in internal Requests from 8% in 2014 from 17% in 2013. Although the Department has been working to ensure more requests are entered into the system (they report not all are entered), the Department continues to struggle with the challenge of multiple communication channels available to the public to report requests (online, email, phone, walk-in, social media) and resources necessary to enter them.

The decrease in PIO Requests created and closed represents the reallocation of the PIO's time to develop/launch the new website. The website project is detailed later in this report.

The Town continues to work on solutions to improve our internal functions. Residents can help by making the Request/Answer Center at arlingtonma.gov their first step when seeking information or making a Request.

Receive time-sensitive notifications
Phone * Text * Email



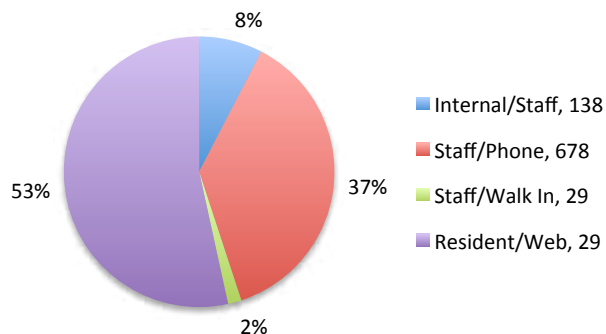
Register at
www.arlingtonma.gov/subscribe
or call 781-643-1212

Powered by **CODE RED**
Keeping citizens informed

Arlington Alerts, Town Notices, Social Media

Since 2012 Arlington Alerts have been notifying residents via phone, text, and email before, during, and after emergencies or to relay important information. When initiating a Town-wide phone call the system reaches approximately 19,000 phone connections. In 2014 the system was utilized for three snow emergencies/parking bans and to alert residents of MassDOT's East Arlington Mass. Ave. Reconstruction project.

Request Intake: Public Works
Total = 1,815



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Online Communications	2011	2012	2013	2014
Town of Arlington Notices Subscribers	4,141	4,573	4,422	4372
% of Growth from previous year	27%	9%	-3%	-1%
% Compared with # of households (19,000)	22%	24%	23%	23%
Arlington Alert Emails Subscribers*	1,543	2,149	3,795	3981
% of Growth from previous year		72%	57%	5%
% Compared with # of households (19,000)		11%	20%	21%
Arlington Alert Text Subscribers*	1,188	2,688	3,310	973
% of Growth from previous year		44%	81%	-340%
% Compared with # of households (19,000)		14%	17%	5%

*Arlington Alert service launched in January 2012. 2011 numbers reflect beginning of 2012 and are included for comparative purpose.

Town of Arlington Notices are official notifications sent by the Town via email to subscribers. This opt-in email distribution list delivers information on Town activities including: public health and public works alerts, election information, and special Town related events. Notices are one of the most helpful and effective tools to communicate to the public.

In 2014 the Town had its second dip in subscribers to the Town Notices email list (50) – representing a 1% decrease for a total of 4,372 subscribers.

Although we are pleased with the subscription rate for Arlington Alerts, we are watching the subscription rates to Notices and the website closely as we want to ensure residents are aware of all the Town’s activities and not only when there is an emergency.

In late 2014 the Town launched a Facebook and Twitter channel and accumulated approximately 200 new likes/follows, respectively. It’s too early to predict the impacts of these channels, but we will work to incorporate them with all our current channels.

We respectfully ask that residents who are not subscribed to these services to do so in the Communication Center at arlingtonma.gov/subscriber.

New Website Launched

In response to increased demand for improved usability and added features, by both residents and staff, the Town launched a new website in July 2014. The site was met with positive reactions from both residents and staff alike. Visitors have commented on the site’s improved navigation, responsiveness, and look and feel. Staff commented on the site’s ease of use and expand-



ed capabilities so they can improve their outreach and document management efforts (agendas/minutes). The site underwent, and passed, an exhaustive ADA compliance study by the Institute for Human Centered Design (Americans with Disability Act). Responsive Web Design (RWD) was also a key component to the new site. RWD allows the site to display properly regardless of the device the user accesses it: mobile, tablet, or desktop. Early indications show that more users are accessing the site in this manner. Although usage varies daily, the graphic below shows that website usage by mobile and tablet devices accounts for approximately 20-30% of all traffic. We anticipate this number to grow and feel confident the new site will meet visitor expectations in this regard.



Google Analytics

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Prior to launch the Town institutionalize its Communication Policy, which was part of the training for over 50 staff members and serves as guidelines for all Town boards, committees, and commissions. Although efficiency and collaboration has improved, adoption of the system is still ongoing and demand for information and features continue to increase. The Town continues to be vigilant in balancing demand for information and online services and meeting those demands with available resources. The Town will report trends and respond accordingly.

Arlington continues its efforts to improve communications and customer service while cultivating positive relations with residents. The Town also strives to maximize technology for efficiencies and will continue to build upon these valuable Town assets. We put a lot of effort into making sure our website is timely and accurate, the Request/Answer Center is working properly and responding to resident needs, and keeping residents up-to-date through Town Notices and social media. During an emergency Arlington Alerts allow us to communicate with residents more effectively in concert with all our channels. We constantly evaluate all these methods so we can maximize service delivery and staff efficiency.

It is important to note, none of the success can be realized without skillful human intervention and collaboration. From the many content contributions from staff, boards, and committees, to residents utilizing these services, we continue to help residents 'get connected' and 'stay connected' to Town Hall.

Acknowledgments

In 2014, Library Director, Ryan Livergood, left the Robbins Library for an opportunity to become the Library Director of a regional library in Gurnee, IL. Ryan is a true library professional and also a person who pos-

sesses tremendous integrity and character. His contributions to the Arlington community will be missed and I wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

Dedicated Team

As I mentioned at the outset, Arlington is very fortunate to have so many talented citizens willing to volunteer their time to serve the Town in various capacities including Town Meeting, Boards and Committees. Together with our elected leaders, management team, and staff, they make Arlington a special community. I would like to thank the Board of Selectmen for its leadership and support throughout my third year as Town Manager. I am also very grateful for the professionalism and knowledge exhibited by Deputy Town Manager, Andrew Flanagan. I would also like to acknowledge the excellence that is regularly exhibited by the Town's Department Heads. Further, I would like recognize the Town's Public Information Officer, Joan Roman, for her work on the Town's new website and perhaps most importantly for her excellent work on producing this award winning Annual Report. Arlington is fortunate to have a talented, dedicated, and hard-working management team that is second to none in the Commonwealth, and I feel privileged to be able to work with them day in and day out. Going further, Arlington is lucky to have a great team of Town employee across all departments.

I would like to welcome our new Management Analyst, Eve Margolis, who will be overseeing the management of the Town's rental properties along with other responsibilities. Finally, I would be remiss if I did not express my warmest appreciation for my office staff, Eileen Messina and Domenic Lanzillotti. They are exceptional public employees dedicated to providing the best possible service to each and every person interacting with the Town Manager's Office.

