

# EXECUTIVE SERVICES

## BOARD OF SELECTMEN

The Board is pleased to submit its annual report for 2017 to Arlington residents. The Board of Selectmen is composed of five elected residents who set policy and oversee the management of municipal functions of the Town. In 2017, Diane Mahon and Dan Dunn were re-elected to three-year terms on the Board. Ms. Mahon has served on the board since 1999 and Mr. Dunn since 2011. In 2017, Joseph A. Curro, Jr. was elected by his colleagues as Board Chair, and Steven Byrne was elected Vice Chair. Following Mr. Byrne's resignation from the Board in December, Kevin F. Greeley was elected Vice Chair, and the Board – along with Town Moderator John Leone – appointed former Selectman Clarissa Rowe to serve out Mr. Byrne's term.



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

Board members congratulated Mr. Byrne on his recent marriage and his new career responsibilities, and thanked him for his nearly six years of distinguished service as a Selectman. During his time on the Board, Mr. Byrne had the distinction of serving as the youngest Chair in the history of Arlington. He served as liaison to the Master Plan Advisory Committee, the Community Development Block Grant Committee, and the Parking Implementation Governance Committee. Mr. Byrne exhibited particular expertise in navigating the difficult terrain of traffic and parking issues, which dominate so much of the Board's work, and he brought to bear his graduate studies in urban and regional policy and his professional experience on Beacon Hill.

### Year in Review

#### Community Choice Aggregation

In August 2017, the Town of Arlington launched the Arlington Community Choice Aggregation program for residents and businesses (<https://arlingtoncca.com>).

The primary goals of the program are to provide annual savings and rate stability for participating consumers. The program was approved by Arlington Town Meeting, the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities, and the Board of Selectmen.

According to the latest public participation statistics (October 2017), the Arlington CCA had over 14,408 Arlington Eversource electric accounts participating. Of those 14,400 accounts, the vast majority (13,970) are on the default 5 percent Green Option, which delivers 5 percent more local renewable energy (i.e., MA Class I Renewable Energy Certificates) than what is required by the Commonwealth (a total of 23 percent new local renewable energy, 18 percent required by the Commonwealth in 2018 plus the extra 5 percent provided through the 5 percent Green option). In addition, participants chose to place 72 electric accounts on the 50 percent Green option and 291 on the 100 percent Green option. Conversely, only 75 participants chose the legal minimum renewable energy content and reverted to the "Arlington Traditional" option.

The Arlington CCA also provided significant savings: the "green option" is cheaper than the "less green" Basic Service rate! Currently the Eversource Basic Service rate is \$0.12888 per kilowatt hour, while the 5 percent Green option is \$0.10756 cents per kWh, an over 16 percent savings. Even the 100 percent Green option was priced at only a slight premium to the Eversource Basic Service rate. While the Basic Service rates are seasonal (with higher rates traditionally during the winter), even this past summer the 5 percent Green option, which is fixed through February 2019 to provide price stability, provided modest savings.



#### Green Community

Designated as a Green Community in 2010, Arlington continues to move forward in its energy and conservation initiatives and has been awarded \$1.3 million in grant funding to date, including \$179,698 in 2017 for numerous efficiency upgrades at various elementary schools, the Ottoson Middle School, and Town Hall.

The Board endorsed an environmental initiative to discontinue the use of certain types of plastic bags by retail and other establishments, thereby removing a lit-

ter nuisance and a hazard to wildlife. Following Town Meeting's approval, Arlington becomes one of 64 Massachusetts communities to introduce such measures. Legislation to extend this ban statewide is pending on Beacon Hill.

Following the withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Agreement, the Board of Selectmen resolved to join over 2,600 other municipalities, companies, educational institutions, and other private and public organizations in committing to the goals of the accord within our own community.

The Board of Selectmen continues to take a strong interest in protecting the Mugar Wetlands and in the current efforts of the Zoning Board of Appeals to assert Arlington's "safe harbor" status.

## Human Rights

At the behest of this Board, 2017 Town Meeting voted positively to promote human rights with the passing of Article 15 and 59.

Article 15 establishes an LGBTQIA+ Rainbow Commission to promote equality-affirming policies regarding the full spectrum of sexual orientations and gender identities, and to bring greater visibility and empowerment to the LGBTQIA+ population through education, advocacy, and collaboration with other Town agencies, schools, and community groups. This action built upon previous measures taken by the Town, contributing to Arlington being awarded a near-perfect Municipal Equality Index rating by the Human Rights Campaign.

There was extensive discussion of Article 59, a resolution for Arlington to become a Sanctuary Town, which won unanimous support of the Board and endorsement by over 90% of voting Town Meeting Members. With this action, Arlington joins hundreds of jurisdictions nationwide in providing a safe haven and sanctuary for undocumented residents in their town. The resolution aimed to ensure that all immigrants can fully and safely participate in the civic and economic life in Arlington without fear, by resolving to refrain from using Town resources for discriminatory purposes in gathering information regarding citizenship, immigration status, ethnicity, national origin, or religious affiliation. The resolution strongly endorsed Arlington's current community policing practices, while upholding the role of law enforcement in investigating, arresting, or charging individuals for crimes or other legal infractions.

## Economic Development

Arlington's vacant storefront registry bylaw came into full effect in 2017. This bylaw, which was initiated by professional staff and the Board of Selectmen and passed by Town Meeting in October 2016, requires registration, upkeep, regular inspection, and good-faith demonstration of efforts to fill empty properties. This

initiative was recognized by the Massachusetts Municipal Association for an Innovation Award. The MMA cited a drop in vacant commercial properties in Arlington Center from 17 to 5, which they attributed in part to the bylaw.

The Board of Selectmen adopted a joint goal with the Town Manager to, "Review all board applications for licenses and permits, and update applications and processes across departments." In pursuit of this goal, a working group has been formed, which is looking at the workflow around opening a restaurant. This workflow typically involves multiple departments and licenses (e.g., common victualler, health, alcohol, sidewalk seating, building permits). By eliminating redundant requests for information, clarifying processes, introducing more consistency, and moving toward electronic forms, the Board seeks remove confusion and shorten the time from proposal to viable business.

## Transportation and Parking

In their role as traffic and parking commissioners for the Town, the Board of Selectmen have been gratified by the success of parking demand measures in Arlington Center. In the first full year of operation, merchants and residents have reported increased turnover and ease in finding on-street parking spots. The option to park free for 15 minutes to accommodate quick errands was utilized 250,614 in 2017. The creation of a parking benefits district will allow meter revenue to be devoted to infrastructure and maintenance improvements in Arlington Center.

Additionally, the Board was proud to support an expansion of parking spaces for individuals with disabilities, and the Selectmen continue to support additional curb cuts through Community Development Block Grant funding.

The Board was pleased to see the completion of the Arlington Center Safe Travel Project. Selectmen weighed in on some adjustments to signalization following a few months of operating experience and public input.

Important steps were taken toward the development of plans to address the intersection of the Minuteman Bikeway and Lake Street. The Board also endorsed steps aimed at the piloting of dockless bike share in Arlington.

## School Facilities and Fiscal Planning

The Board of Selectmen was gratified to see the completion of the Stratton School renovation and the Thompson School addition, as well as projects to expand Hardy School, bring the Gibbs School back online as a dedicated 6th grade, and rebuild Minuteman High School. The Board also applauded the entry of Arlington High School into the Massachusetts School Building Authority feasibility phase of consideration.

As discussions have progressed regarding the funding of the high school rebuild, the Board has also considered the need to go to the voters in the coming years for a general tax override. The timing and scope of any potential ballot questions remain under active discussion. Members of the Board continue to work with Town and School representatives through the Long Range Planning Committee and the Budget and Revenue Task Force to revise assumptions and financial projections

As discussions of potential tax increases progress, the Board has attempted to relieve a portion of the tax burden felt by smaller households and to put more control in the hands of all residents, setting a goal of removing water and sewer debt funding from the tax rate. The Selectmen also successfully advocated for new tax relief measures for seniors, veterans, and disabled individuals at Town Meeting.

### Arts and Culture

The Board of Selectmen endorsed the application to the Mass Cultural Council for recognition of an official Cultural District stretching from Arlington Center to East Arlington. This designation was approved by the Commonwealth in August 2017 and has already led to grant funding and free publicity for Arlington on WBUR and through other outlets.

The Board also approved an Arts and Culture Plan, the result of extensive public input and visioning sessions, and gave approval for numerous public art initiatives throughout the year.

### Volunteerism

One of the most gratifying jobs of the Board of Selectmen is to appoint and thank the countless people who step forward to do the important work of our town. 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.



A shining example of volunteerism was the inaugural Civics Day at Town Hall. The event provided an opportunity for residents get to know Town employees and the roles they play in civic life. Every department --

including the Board of Selectmen -- set up booths and activities and made themselves available to answer questions and listen to resident concerns. Exhibits included DPW trucks, Police K-9 unit demonstration, a Tee-Shirt Hackathon, where participants could "upcycle" shirts to make grocery bags, and a planting 101 with the Town's Tree Warden.

Additionally, the Clerk's Office explained the election process, a full complement of Health and Human Services programs were on display, and visitors could take pictures and add them to a special Civics Day app.

Arlington benefits not only from Town committees and organizations, but also from a vibrant and active non-profit sector. The Board is proud to support through Community Development Block Grant Funding many of these organizations and programs, including Operation Success, Arlington Boys and Girls Club, Fidelity House, Housing Corporation of Arlington, and Food Link.

The Board also regularly works with many organizations to facilitate activities and events, including road races and fundraisers at Town Hall and elsewhere. In September 2017, Board members were pleased to sponsor and volunteer at a community dinner with Arlington EATS at the Thompson School.



L-R: Selectmen Joseph A. Curro, Jr., Diane M. Mahon, and, Kevin F. Greeley at Arlington EATS.

### Patriotic Observances

The Arlington Patriots Day Parade has celebrated Arlington's role in America's battle for Independence for more than 100 years. Local re-enactors, veterans, and other celebrants have marched down Massachusetts Avenue year after year, raising our patriotic spirit and uniting the Town in honor of our historic role. The 2017 Patriots Day Parade commenced with a memorial to Senator Ken Donnelly, who passed away in the spring. Korean War veteran and community activist Roly Chaput was posthumously named Grand Marshal. Honorary Grand Marshal was the 2017 Super 8 champion Arlington High School hockey team.

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The Board would like to thank our Veterans' Services Director, Jeffrey Chunglo, and the Patriots Day Committee volunteers for their continued effort in presenting this annual event and breathing new life into it. We look forward to continuing this tradition for another 100 years. The Selectmen also congratulate the efforts of Mr. Chunglo and the Veterans Council for all their work to enhance the annual Memorial Day and Veterans Day observances, moving the Memorial Day ceremony indoors and securing special guest speakers. Special thanks are due the Arlington Fire Department for accommodating Veterans Day activities at the headquarters station, in the face of inclement weather.

Board goals include steps to forward beautification efforts, to include patriotic and seasonal displays.



*Minuteman march in 2017 Patriots Day Parade.*

## Town Day

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. This past year, the Board of Selectmen supported the creation of a first-ever Beer Garden, the proceeds of which supported public art initiatives.

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 expresses gratitude 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 direct Town funding. We acknowledge the logistical support of Board staff and other Town departments, without whose support Town Day

would not be possible. In performing a retrospective of the past year's events, the Board supported the decision of the Town Day Committee to scale back on Town Night activities in the future, prioritizing some events as candidates to be shifted to Town Day itself.



*Karen K & the Jitterbugs entertain Town Day attendees in the Robbins Memorial Garden between Town Hall and Robbins Library*

## Acknowledgments & Recognitions

The Board of Selectmen would like to thank all Town employees for the work they perform to make Arlington a special place to live, work, and enjoy. 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: Board Administrator Marie Krepelka, Fran Reidy, and Ashley Maher.

We send our best to former Comptroller Richard Viscay, who announced his resignation at the end of the year to accept a position in his own community.

The Board acknowledges former Town Treasurer Stephen Gilligan, who retired in 2017. Mr. Gilligan served four terms as Arlington's Treasurer and Collector of Taxes, as well as ten years as a Selectman, ten years on the Conservation Commission, and forty years as a Town Meeting Member representing Precinct 13. The Board thanks Mr. Gilligan for his service and wishes him well in retirement.

The Board would like to give a special nod to Mary Ann Sullivan, who retired in early 2018, after providing fifteen years of dedicated service to the Town of Arlington. Mary Ann served ably as the Board's Office Manager, with a particular expertise in licensing and permitting. Her dedication, attention to detail, and commitment to customer service will be greatly missed.

## TOWN MANAGER

I am very pleased to deliver what will now be my sixth 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 2017.

2017 saw both school capacity expansion and renovation projects working in earnest to address growing enrollment at Arlington Public Schools, while also updating existing infrastructure to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century educational standards. To meet enrollment demands at the Thompson School, construction of a six class room expansion was constructed and completed in time for fall occupancy. The Stratton Elementary School underwent a renovation that included a new roof, windows, and HVAC on the east side of the building to match prior work on west side; a new Media Center and expanded Food Service and Administration areas; enhanced technology, fire protection, lighting, and accessibility upgrades throughout. This renovation was also completed in time for the beginning of the school year 2017-2018. Renovation of the Gibbs school began in 2017 and is being renovated to accommodate sixth grade students from the overcrowded Ottoson Middle School with an anticipated opening in 2018.



*Gibbs School renovation project overview.*

In late 2016, the Town of Arlington was invited into the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) process for the renovation/construction of Arlington High School. Acceptance to the MSBA program does not guarantee state funding. The MSBA approval process must be completed successfully for the state, via the MSBA, to provide significant financial assistance to



*Adam Chapdelaine, Arlington Town Manager*

the project. Local funding must also be assured through passage of a debt exclusion. In February 2017, the MSBA Board of Directors approved Arlington moving into the Feasibility Study phase of the project. The vote allowed to the Town to hire both an Owner's Project Manager and an Architect to begin studying alternatives for the project. Residents can learn more at [ahsbuilding.org](http://ahsbuilding.org).

These initiatives and more are included in this report. They are part of the Town's ongoing commitment to seek efficiencies and improvements in service delivery while providing transparency and information that is both relevant and timely. It is my hope that through this report, residents will learn about this commitment. Residents can also receive information about Town activities year-round by visiting the Communications Center at [arlingtonma.gov](http://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 can be found.

### **Town's Financial Outlook**

FY2018, the current fiscal year, is the fourth 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.

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.

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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 3.23% 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.

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.

At the time the 2011 override was proposed, the Town was facing a projected deficit of \$6 million. Also at that time, the Legislature was discussing giving municipalities more authority to control their health care plans and costs. Optimistically, it was assumed that some changes would be made to allow the Town to save \$1 million. The proposed override was then set at \$6.49 million, an amount that projected to maintain current service levels for three years.

Approximately a month after the override passed, the State approved a significant health care reform

law for municipalities that provided authority to make health care plan designs which matched what the State provides to its employees and also authorized municipalities to join the State's health care plan. As a result, Arlington joined the State's health care plan, the Group Insurance Commission (GIC) and has achieved significant savings, which have enabled the Town to stretch the three-year plan to a nine-year plan. We are mindful of the strong desire of residents to maintain quality services and the sacrifices they have made by supporting the override. We are committed to pursue all appropriate productivity improvements and cost reduction measures in order to sustain these quality services.

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](http://arlingtonma.gov/budgets).

## **Planning Locally for a Changing Climate and a Changing World**

The FY2019 budget contains several proposals prompted by the local impacts of climate change and rapidly evolving technology. First, it proposes increased funding to address increasing concerns caused by disease vectors, both mosquitoes and rodents. Mosquitoes carry disease and are a threat to public health. As climate change has progressed, we have started to see new species of mosquitos that were previously only considered a threat to southern parts of the North America. The requested funding will allow us to dredge mosquito breeding grounds to reduce their prevalence in Arlington. There has also been an increase in reported rodent activity in Town over the past three years. Part of the problem has been caused by the warmer winters as well. As rodents are also a threat to public health, the requested funding will allow the Town to work with residents on strategies for controlling rodent activity on both public and private property. The FY2019 budget also proposes a significant increase in funding for both tree planting and for tree related planning and management via an increase in the Tree Warden's hours. This request is in response to both resident demand and concern, but also in response to recent data compiled by the Tree Committee, which show an increase in heat islands in Arlington that can be mitigated through a strategic expansion of Arlington's urban canopy.

The Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Core Group was formed in the spring of 2017 to coordinate a community resilience planning process to address the local impacts of climate change. A \$23,000 Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Grant by the State's Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs helped launch this initiative that has involved community members in the development of a climate change vulnerability assessment and action plan.

Going further, the addition of Senior Transportation Planner position is partially prompted by the impact that Waze and other navigation apps are impacting traffic on residential streets. This is a matter that communities across the nation are facing and it is caused by the rapidly expanding capabilities of smart phones and their associated apps. The combination of these issues and others has prompted the Town to work to both plan and operate in new and different ways. The Town is committed to this proactive approach to these matters as it works to ensure that Arlington maintain its quality of life and sense of community.



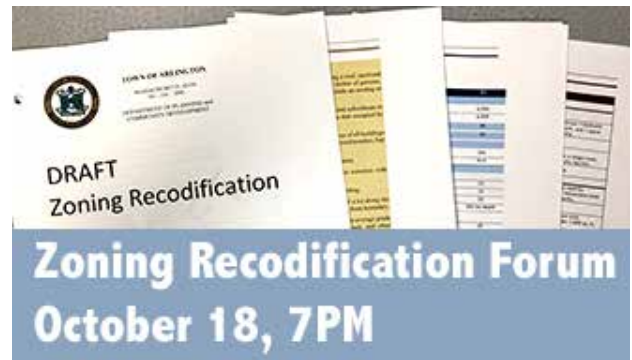
### Sustainability/Energy Conservation

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. Arlington has substantially benefited from its cooperation with the Green Communities Division, having received six grant awards over the past seven years, totaling \$1,365,419. The most recent grant award of \$179,698 came in 2017 and provided funding for LED lighting at the Brackett, Dallin and Ottoson as well as HVAC improvements at the Dallin and the purchase of two electric vehicles for the Town fleet. Also, in 2015, the Town installed solar photovoltaic panels on six school roofs via a power purchase agreement with Ameresco. This installation produced 793,180 kWh in its first year of operation. Over the course of the 20-year agreement, the Town estimates a costs savings of approximately \$2,000,000.

### Master Plan

The Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC) remains active since the Master Plan was adopted in 2015 by the Arlington Redevelopment Board (ARB) and Town Meeting. A highlight of the group's work this year was the Recodification of the Town's Zoning Bylaw. Recodifying the Zoning Bylaw is one of the first recommended steps in implementing the Master Plan, laying the foundation for future policy changes aligned with Master Plan goals. The Town's current Zoning Bylaw was written in 1975 and has been amended many times over the past 40 years, making it more challenging to navigate and out-of-sync with various local, state, and even federal rules and requirements. After much

public input, the recodified Zoning Bylaw was passed by Special Town Meeting in early 2018.



### New Transportation Initiatives

The Planning Department helped introduce new transportation initiatives in 2017, including continued discussions about bikesharing, self-driving cars, and bus rapid transit (BRT). The Town received a \$100,000 grant through the Barr Foundation to pilot BRT. The month-long pilot will take place along portions of Mass. Ave. and aims to improve travel conditions for existing bus users as well as increase the number residents using public transit for their morning commute. The Bikeshare Working Group continues exploring opportunities for bringing bikeshare to Arlington with the goal of ensuring that bikeshare in Arlington is safe, affordable, sustainable, accessible, and dependable. Last fall, the Town hosted a special forum on autonomous vehicles (AV) and the future of this technology in the region. Potential impacts of autonomous vehicles on public infrastructure and land use were discussed as well as the ways autonomous vehicles may influence public revenue sources, including impacts to the state budget, municipal finances, the future of the gas tax, and roadway usage fees. AV discussions will continue as the Town enters into a Memorandum of Understanding with MAPC to continue to study and pilot AVs.



### 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 the end of calendar year 2017, Arlington leads the state in cumulative savings to residents with \$301,272, with \$22,203 this year. 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](http://arlingtonma.gov/prescriptioncards).

# EXECUTIVE SERVICES



## 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. The Town also makes these reports available online at [arlingtonma.gov/annualreports](http://arlingtonma.gov/annualreports).

We strive to inform the public about general Town activities and during emergencies. Additionally, we work to build a stronger relationship with our residents and improve efficiencies for our staff. To meet these ever-increasing needs we utilize the following information channels along with local media.

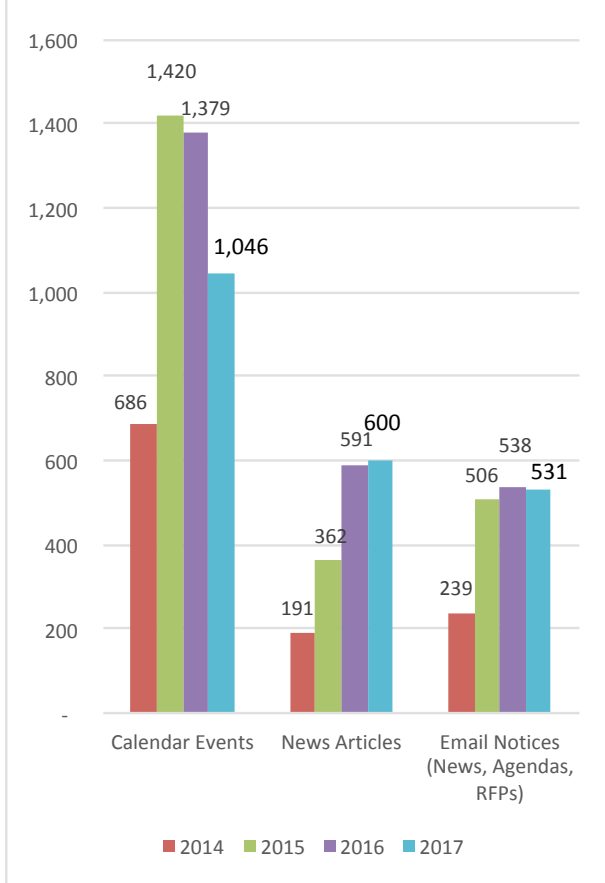
### *Arlingtonma.gov*

[Arlingtonma.gov](http://Arlingtonma.gov) is the Town's communication hub supporting one of the Board of Selectmen's priority goals: enhance public communication and customer service and leverage technology to build staff capacity. 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 seventy boards, committees, and commissions.

The website was updated in July 2014 and allowed content dissemination to be decentralized. In 2017 content output in both news and email notices leveled off, with a decline in calendar event postings. There were 1,499 documents posted, an 8% increase in total documents on the site (15,350). Web pages created are up 3% with a total of 813 pages. A municipal site Arlington's size should generally be around 500 pages. The process of auditing pages to ensure relevance and usefulness will be an ongoing task.

Overall, traffic to [arlingtonma.gov](http://arlingtonma.gov) was relatively level (see table below). Of note was an 8% increase in user loyalty (Frequency and Recency), which we report those users that have visited the site more than 200 times.

### Timely Content Created/ Disseminated



### *Online Security*

The Town's website expanded secure exchange of data on all online platforms by implementing SSL (secure socket layer) on all pages and documents.

### *Request/Answer Center*

The Request/Answer Center is Arlington's online customer service portal where residents can make requests of Town services (and track them), ask questions, and find answers. 2017 marked the tenth year for the service. In 2015 the service was updated with Responsive Web Design (RWD) and in 2016 the back-end system was updated with a new user interface that is more modern and easier for staff to process requests. In 2017 the Answerbase was more closely integrated with the main site in advance of launching the mobile app and in an effort to reduce the site's

| Website Traffic ( <a href="http://arlingtonma.gov">arlingtonma.gov</a> ) | 2013      | 2014      | 2015      | 2016      | 2017      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Page Views                                                               | 1,381,574 | 1,316,919 | 1,538,050 | 1,731,811 | 1,692,233 |
| Visits/Sessions*                                                         | 586,584   | 496,936*  | 558,672   | 649,723   | 648,828   |
| Frequency & Recency*:<br>Over 200 visits to website                      | 17,637*   | 16,992*   | 19,898    | 22,625    | 24,532    |



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| Request/Answer Center: System Stats             | 2013    | 2014    | 2015    | 2016    | 2017    |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Answers Viewed on Portal                        | 188,367 | 267,392 | 298,054 | 297,894 | 165,292 |
| *Productivity Preserved in Hours/Answers Viewed | 15,697  | 22,283  | 24,838  | 24,825  | 13,774  |
| **New Customer Registrations                    | 2,373   | 2,251   | 2,067   | 1,779   | 1,566   |
| Requests Created                                | 2,772   | 2,988   | 3,355   | 3,222   | 3,194   |
| Requests Closed                                 | 2,811   | 2,543   | 3,209   | 3,231   | 2,827   |

page count and improve staff efficiency. More department integration is planned in 2018. The system continues to be heavily utilized by both 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 have been viewed, yet less than 1% of Questions are submitted for staff to respond. This service 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 13,774 productivity hours were preserved, or the equivalent to 7.5 full-time employees (35 hour work week).

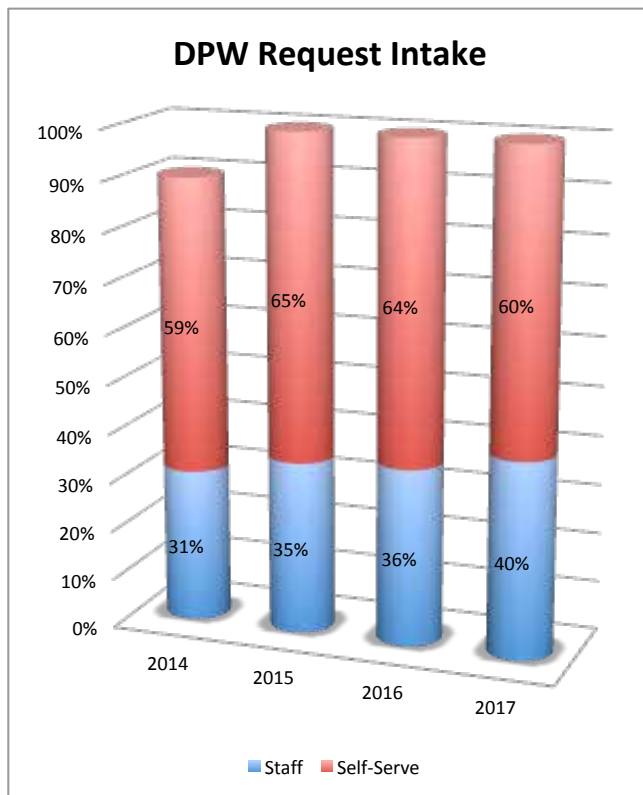
Measuring how requests are submitted (intake), we compared the last four years of DPW requests, comparing staff vs. resident entered requests. Although 60% of requests are entered by residents directly, we are noticing that staff are starting to enter more requests. This is in part by DPW's efforts to enter requests from other intake methods available (online, email, phone, walk-in, etc.). To encourage more direct resident reporting to this system, as well as overall resident engagement and staff ease of use, the Town is developing a mobile app for the Request/Answer Center that is due to launch in early 2018.

Receive time-sensitive notifications  
Phone • Text • Email



Register at  
[www.arlingtonma.gov/subscribe](http://www.arlingtonma.gov/subscribe)  
or call 781-643-1212

Powered by **CODE RED**  
Keeping citizens informed.



Since 2012 Arlington Alerts have been notifying residents via phone, text, and email before, during, and after emergencies or to relay important information. The system reaches approximately 19,000 phone connections when making a Town-wide call. In 2017 the system was utilized for APD and AFD ALICE training (2), snow emergency / parking ban (5), Arlington CCA (1), Senator Donnelly Wake (1), and the Patriots Day Parade (1).

Town of Arlington Notices are official notifications sent by the Town via email. 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.

Subscriptions to Town Notices increased 2%, Arlington Alert email subscribers increased 6%, and text subscribers by 20% (see chart next page). Although the increases are modest, the overall reach to residents via these channels remain strong.

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| Online Communications                        | 2013  | 2014  | 2015  | 2016  | 2017  |
|----------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| <b>Town of Arlington Notices Subscribers</b> | 4,422 | 4,372 | 4,944 | 5,103 | 5,210 |
| % of Growth from previous year               | -3%   | -1%   | 13%   | 3%    | 2%    |
| % Compared with # of households (19,000)     | 23%   | 23%   | 26%   | 27%   | 27%   |
| <b>Arlington Alert Emails Subscribers*</b>   | 3,795 | 3,981 | 4,507 | 4,710 | 5,015 |
| % of Growth from previous year               | 57%   | 5%    | 13%   | 4%    | 6%    |
| % Compared with # of households (19,000)     | 20%   | 21%   | 24%   | 25%   | 26%   |
| <b>Arlington Alert Text Subscribers*</b>     | 3,310 | 973   | 1,875 | 2,301 | 2,876 |
| % of Growth from previous year               | 81%   | -340% | 93%   | 19%   | 20%   |
| % Compared with # of households (19,000)     | 17%   | 5%    | 10%   | 12%   | 15%   |

Cross-department meetings and workshops continue in 2017 and have greatly improved content workflow and quality across-departments on all channels, with an emphasis on News and Social content.

Arlington continues its efforts to improve communications and customer service while cultivating positive relations with residents. The Town also strives to maximize technology for staff efficiencies. We put a lot of effort into making sure we provide accurate and timely communications through these multiple channels. Performance and security of these channels is also of great concern. We constantly evaluate all our channels so we can maximize service delivery and staff efficiency, plus be prepared in an emergency. It is important to note that 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 channels, we continue to help residents get connected and stay connected to Town Hall.

### Acknowledgements

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 sixth year as Town Manager. I am also very grateful for the professionalism, knowledge, and support provided by Deputy Town Manager, Sandy Pooler, and Assistant Town Manager, Jim Feeney.

Ruthy Bennett and Laura Wiener left the service of Arlington in 2017. Ruthy Bennett, Facilities Director, came to Arlington as our first Energy Manager and led

the charge to develop and implement Arlington's many sustainability initiatives. As Facilities Director, Ms. Bennett led the Department in providing quality custodial services, maintenance, and improvements to its public buildings and facilities, while increasing operating efficiencies of 39 public buildings.

Laura Wiener, Assistant Planning Director/ Director of Housing, provided 17 years of excellent service to the Town. She worked closely with the Housing Corporation of Arlington, to advance initiatives designed to increase housing affordability, implementation of the Master Plan, and transportation planning initiatives.

The Town thanks Ms. Wiener and Ms. Bennett for their service to Arlington.

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.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not express my warmest appreciation for my office staff, Kristen De-Francisco, Amy Fidalgo, 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. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Joan Roman for her tremendous efforts serving as the Town's Public Information Officer, and, in particular, for her work on this Annual Report. Joan's passion for communication with the public, attention to detail, and design capabilities make her a great asset to the team. Her efforts lead to the compilation of this report as well as year round excellence in providing information to the public.