



Envision Arlington Standing Committee

Date: December 11, 2019
Time: 7:30 - 9:00 PM
Location: Town Hall Annex, 1st floor meeting room

Minutes

Attendance: Juli Brazile, Sue Doctrow, Elisabeth Carr-Jones, Scott Lever,
Guests: Jo Anne Preston, Beth Melofchick

1. Introductions
Names around the table in case people hadn't met.
2. Approve November minutes
Minutes approved as amended to add a missing word and clarify the attendees.
3. Discussion: Survey 2020 topics
Juli reviewed the insert for the town census mailing. Kelly can edit that document to create a flyer suitable for posting in apartment lobbies or local shops in January to remind residents to take the survey. Juli had approached Sustainable Arlington and the Diversity Task Group about helping with volunteers to post flyers and with ideas for groups in town that can help spread the word. Sustainable Arlington says they think volunteers will be able to help. Elisabeth believes the Open Space Committee may also be able to help. Jo Anne will reach out to the Martin Luther King Jr Dinner planning committee about our having a poster at the event in January. Elisabeth said she can design a poster. Scott will ask all the school principals to include a reminder in their weekly email updates. Juli will write a blurb for that. Jo Anne and Beth asked how we are planning to support residents who aren't comfortable with computers. Our plan is the same - to offer volunteers with a laptop or iPad to work with a small group to take the survey online. Jo Anne will ask staff at Chestnut Manor if they would announce some specific times for that sort of help. Sue has edited a press release that is ready to go as soon as the survey goes live. We discussed announcing in advance but decided that was more confusing. We can plan on a second release at the end of January with more reminders and possibly updates on whether our numbers are up or down. That can contain another ask for volunteers to help.
4. Discussion: Candidates Night planning
Juli is not comfortable planning Candidates Night this year. Elisabeth has worked on the event before and can take the lead this year. Sue will be able to attend that evening to work our info table. Kelly suggested that Elisabeth create a checklist of tasks so that it's easier in the future for new people to manage the event. Juli will help with creating that list. Juli will email Carolyn Parsons with the League of Women Voters to let her know and to check on their preferred date.
5. Discussion: Proposal from Environment Task Groups
Juli reviewed the funding request that came from the Town's Recycling Coordinator on behalf of volunteers doing organized weeding on the bike path and some other walking paths. Concerns were raised that this was more money than we have, not clearly connected to our existing volunteers and task groups, and possibly too fancy

a solution than necessary to solve the problem. We might be open to contributing some money at the end of the fiscal year. Juli will report back to Charlotte that they should explore approaching other groups who could help with the purchase.

6. Discussion: Goals vs staffing

We reviewed the list of annual projects or routine tasks that the Standing Committee must do as the hub for Envision Arlington. Currently Juli manages nearly all of these projects with help from various members. Since Juli is stepping down as chair, it seems prudent to spread the work out in the hope that makes it easier to recruit a new chair. One idea we can explore is creating small sub-committees of 1-2 members or a member and a volunteer who is interested in supporting our work if they aren't able to commit to becoming a formal member.

Publicity - identify one person to coordinate Town emails and webpage with Joan Roman so that requests from task groups can be reviewed first and details worked out to save Joan time. In general, this committee would be a resource for organizing events or publicizing.

Treasurer - a person who can keep track of spending, assist task groups with reimbursements and monitor spending plans throughout the year.

Survey - coordinate the entire project in three phases: writing, publicizing, reporting. We have a small group now who have help with the writing. Recruiting volunteers and networking to build lists of partners in publicizing. Many of the writing volunteers have expertise in actually managing the data and doing detailed analysis, but we still need people to write the report. And some of this work is clerical - typing the questions into Word and then into Survey Monkey.

Town Day - big project and no identified volunteers yet.

Other items on the list are once-a-year tasks for one person.

Annual Report - Kelly can collect all the pieces and edit into a single document. We will need to identify someone to write our section of the report every year.

CDBG Application - edit the previous year so the chair can sign.

Report to Town Meeting - the chair usually presents to Town Meeting. The written report typically summarizes the survey results, reports on warrant articles submitted by Envision Arlington task groups or the Standing Committee.

Elisabeth suggested that keeping track of the terms of our members or recruiting new members. Juli thinks that falls under the routine tasks that a committee chair would expect to manage.

Juli suggested that January would be the last meeting she would chair. In January we will talk more about what next steps would look like. We discussed finding interim co-chairs to manage things until a new, permanent chair can be found. Juli reminded people that the Chair is appointed through a complicated process: Standing Committee members approve a nomination by the Town Manager and School Committee and the Select Board approves the candidate. Juli will ask the chairs of Diversity and Sustainable Arlington for thoughts on volunteers who might be good fits for the interim position. Elisabeth suggested Juli reach out to the Town Manager and elected officials for leads. In the short term, someone needs to be ready to step up and chair the February meeting.

7. New Business

Juli provided some quick updates from task groups.

Spy Pond Committee would like to set up a Facebook page. Jenny Raitt has approved it and Juli will forward the request to Joan Roman.

The Diversity Task Group is considering plans to bring in speakers to talk about issues around housing.

Scott reported on the Education Task Group, which is currently dormant. They have not been able to talk with the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent about ideas the group had. Scott has approached Sean Garballey about doing a presentation on how the new school funding bill impacts Arlington.

Scott is working on a warrant article to propose a committee be formed to study the concept of a police review board in Arlington. He would like to present more on this in January so we can vote on whether Envision Arlington will endorse.

Sue had a few questions for the group about a warrant article we might want to bring to Town Meeting. She will email Doug Heim to ask for his assistance accomplishing our goals: present the lightly edited Town Goals for approval, change the bylaw that references the Town Goals so that Town Meeting adopts the new concept of calling them Town Values. Sue will prepare a memo about this proposal to email to the task group chairs and the Advisory Board members so they have time to comment before we file. Ideally all concerns are raised and dealt with at our January meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:58 pm.