

RESOLUTION:
Protocols for Deliberative
Collaboration in Town
Government Initiated Citizen
Committees

Article 83

Subject Matter: Enhance the Quality of Outcome and the Productivity of Participants in Town Government Initiated Citizen Committees

To see if the Town will vote to endorse a resolution in support of directing at least one member of each Town government initiated citizen committee to have formal training or certification as a “Facilitator” in order to help ensure that the committee is a place where all members and participating guests are respected, feel safe, are allowed to speak, are not intimidated and that agendas are developed that lead to productive outcomes.

The Town should arrange to reassess the productivity and purpose of every Town sponsored committee at least once every five years to re-authorize the committee’s purpose and continuity; or limit the number of Town government-initiated committees to no more than seven per year; or take any action related thereto.

Notes:

It seems that the last couple of years in Arlington's town civic affairs have been witness to a growing amount of divisiveness including personal attacks and insults. This behavior has slowed down the progress of citizen deliberations in Town affairs. Some citizens find it difficult to participate in meetings that routinely include hostile behavior of other citizen participants.

Arlington has always prided itself on its high level of citizen involvement in civic affairs. There are ways to conduct meetings that respect the need for disagreement but also provide emotional safety for participants and lead to consensual solving of problems and creation of new visions for the Town.

Training in Meeting Facilitation Skills by a significant number of citizen committee members can have great positive results for the Town.