

To: Select Board Members

From: Juli Brazile

Date: February 18, 2020

Subject: Warrant Article for 2020 Town Meeting

The Standing Committee is submitting a Warrant Article for the 2020 Annual Town Meeting to redefine the “Town Goals” as value statements to clarify their purpose and to make them more inclusive. Please note that this will not remove “goals” or goal-setting from the work of Envision Arlington and its Task Groups. Instead, it clarifies the following relationship:

Values lead to Goals and Goals lead to Action steps.

For example, under education:

Value statement: We value learning.

Goal: Hire and retain excellent teachers.

Action step: Perform a salary study to determine if adjustments are needed in future contracts to make us competitive with other Towns.

Importantly, this would mean that our town values remain relatively constant, whereas the goals and action steps could change, *e.g.* as the Task Groups accomplish their various goals and set new ones. This brings Envision Arlington's wording more in line with documents like the Master Plan or the Arts & Culture Action Plan which all stem from our overarching values, describe a focused mission, lay out current goals and specify a plan to meet the goals. Our historic use of the word "goals" can be confusing in this context.

The Warrant Article:

To see if the Town will vote to amend Title I, Article 15 to change the name of “Vision 2020” to comport with its current name “Envision Arlington”; to revise the Bylaw’s articulation of “Goals” as a “Statement of Community Values” or similar term; and to modernize the “Goals” as set forth in the vote of the 1993 Town Meeting (Article 19) with more inclusive language; or take any action related thereto.

(Inserted at the request of the Envision Arlington Standing Committee)

This is how the amended bylaws would read after Town Meeting approval.

Article 19 (1993). Town Adoption of ~~Vision 2020 Goals~~ Envision Arlington Statements of Community Values

To see if the Town will vote to accept, endorse and adopt the following nine ~~vision~~ statements as statements of our community values ~~goals for the Town~~; or take any action related thereto.

The ~~Goals~~ Statements are:

Article 1. Community ~~and Citizen Service~~

We value Arlington's geographic neighborhoods, common interest groups, and the sense of community in our Town. We value ~~an~~ active and compassionate ~~citizenry~~ volunteers and programs delivering services in our community. We will be known for the vitality of our neighborhoods and as a community of people helping others.

Article 2. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

We value the diversity of our population. Our Town's mix of ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds, as well as economic and personal circumstances, enriches us. We will be known for the warm welcome and respect we extend to all.

Article 3. Education

We value learning for all Arlington residents ~~citizens~~. We are responsible as a community for educating our youth and providing all ages with opportunities for educational growth. We will be known for demonstrated excellence in public education and our commitment to life-long learning.

Article 4. The Environment and Sustainability

We value the physical beauty and natural habitats of our Town – parks, ponds and wetlands, dramatic vistas and tree-lined streets – as they contribute to the well-being of our community. Recognizing the fragility of our natural resources, we must ensure that Arlington's residential areas, commercial centers, and infrastructures are developed in harmony with environmental concerns. We will be known for our commitment to the preservation of Arlington's beauty, limited open space and resources, as well as our place in the regional and global community.

Article 5. Culture & Recreation

We value the many opportunities to meet, play, and grow in Arlington while treasuring and preserving our unique historical resources. Our social, cultural, artistic, historic, athletic, recreational, and other community groups strengthen Town life. We will be known for the breadth and richness of our resources and activities available to Arlington residents ~~citizens~~.

Article 6. Communication

We value public dialogue. Communication and information-sharing build trust. Our goals are true openness and accountability. Arlington will be known as a community that thoughtfully searches beyond divisive issues for the opportunities that bind us together.

Article 7. Fiscal Resources

We value Arlington's efficient delivery of public services providing for the common good. The benefits from these services and the responsibility of taxation will be equitably distributed among us. We will be known for our sound fiscal planning and for the thoughtful, open process by which realistic choices are made in our Town.

Article 8. Governance

We value our representative Town Meeting system and the community spirit it fosters. Participatory governance is both responsive and innovative. We will be known as a community where government provides effective and efficient services, insures open two-way communication, promotes the lively exchange of ideas, and encourages active ~~citizen~~ participation of all residents.

Article 9. Business

We value Arlington's diverse and accessible mix of merchants and service providers. We will be known for our vibrant, attractive commercial centers supporting the primarily residential and historic character of the Town.

VOTED:

That the Town hereby accepts, endorses and adopts the nine ~~vision~~ statements as statements of our community values ~~goals for the Town~~ as same are printed in Article 19 of the Warrant for the 1993 Annual Town Meeting and amended by any future Town Meeting.

Article 20 (1993). Amendment to the Town Bylaws

VOTED:

That the town does hereby amend the bylaws by ~~adding a new article~~ replacing Title 1, Article 15 with the following:

Article 15: Consideration of Envision Arlington Statements of Community Values ~~Vision 2020 Goals~~

All Town officials including, but not limited to the Board of Selectmen, Town Manager, School Committee and Superintendent of Schools shall consider the Envision Arlington Statements of Community Values ~~Goals of Vision 2020~~ as delineated in Article 19 of the 1993 Annual Town Meeting, or as same is subsequently amended by any future town meeting, in establishing their respective policies and in performing their various functions.