



Arlington County Civic Federation

Adopted ACCF Committee Charges and Year-End Reports for FY2023

Task Force in Governance and Election Reform (TiGER)

TiGER was established by a [ACCF resolution \[PDF, 69 KiB\]](#) approved 20 Oct 2020.

FY2023 Report

Chair, Allan Gajadhar; Report submitted by David Schutz

TiGER has had a productive period after its report and resolution passed CivFed membership and was presented to the County. The TiGER was established as a time-limited task force and the report and resolution completed the tasks it was given. This report suggests two resolutions to the membership: one to direct the TiGER's work to continue as a special committee within the CivFed Legislation Committee and one to request the County Board to include the ability of the Board to implement some or all of the TiGER's recommendations as part of its wish list for the upcoming Virginia legislative session.

In completing the tasks it was set by CivFed, TiGER wrote a report, and the Federation passed a resolution backing its conclusions, and we presented them to the County Board. Broadly, they are:

- Size of the Arlington School and County Boards should be increased to seven members each to recognize the increased complexity of our government and number of citizens.
- Pay level for members of each Board should be increased so fewer people are excluded by their finances from undertaking the jobs.
- Arlington School and County Boards should be elected by ranked choice, and in alternating groups of three, then four, members to enable broader representation and greater proportionality.
- To enable greater consistency and connection to other regional office holders Chairs of the School and County Boards should be elected by their peers for two-year terms when each new Board is seated and should be able to be re-elected.
- Current system of partisan primaries and party caucuses results in a far smaller electorate than participates in the general election and in a uniformity of outlook which does not reflect the spectrum of Arlington opinion.

As well, the TiGER held a Forum on Arlington County Governance and Ranked Choice Voting, Thu 18 May 2023 with US Rep Don Beyer [D, 8th], Virginia Del Patrick Hope [D, 47th], and Arlington Registrar and Director of Elections Gretchen Reinemeyer. Video footage of the 18 May 2023 forum is available at: <https://vimeo.com/828522858> [1h 07m 51s]. We think this was a very useful event. As noted in earlier discussions of the TiGER proposals, there are statutory restraints on what Arlington can do. Our Form of Government (FoG) is more tightly constrained in the Code of Virginia than are the forms of many other local governments. Delegate Patrick Hope, who has been asked many times by the County Board to patron minor changes in Arlington's FoG, tasked the legislative research group to identify the areas in which Arlington has less authority than do other Virginia polities, and his talk in the Forum discussed the ways we are more constrained than are others.



Arlington County Civic Federation

Adopted ACCF Committee Charges and Year-End Reports for FY2023

Partially in response to the TiGER's work, County Board decided to make the just-past primary a ranked choice vote, and it has resulted in a proportional result, selecting one nominee from each of the current major opinion clusters among County voters.

TiGER suggests that CivFed should continue working to improve Arlington's form of government – by making a permanent TiGER successor subcommittee in the Legislation Committee. Text for that Resolution would be:

Resolved, that a new subcommittee be established within the Federation's Legislation Committee for the purpose of continuing the work of the TiGER Task Force in considering improvements to the form of government of Arlington County and to report on its deliberations to the Federation and to the public. President shall appoint its members, who will number between three and fifteen, and it will report on its deliberations not less frequently than annually to the Federation.

As well, TiGER suggests that CivFed consider a resolution encouraging Delegate Hope's work on Arlington's necessary authorities, and requesting that the Arlington County Board include in its annual list of legislative requests that changes in the FoG which would give Arlington's Board discretion equivalent to that held by other Virginia jurisdictions to make changes in its FoG putting in place the reforms sought by the TiGER Task Force on Arlington's FoG. Language for that Resolution:

Resolved, that the Arlington Civic Federation warmly supports the work of Delegate Patrick Hope to identify the areas in which Arlington has less authority than do other Virginia polities and in addition the areas where Arlington's authorities need to be expanded to enable the County to amend its own Form of Government, including but not limited to the changes called for in the report of the Civic Federation's TiGER Task Force on Form of Government. Civic Federation requests that the Arlington County Board include a request for legislative changes to so enable the County in its legislative wish list for the coming session.

[Table of Contents](#)