

COUNCIL ON AGING

2019 JUL 25 PM 2:10

Board Minutes Monday, April 6, 2015

Present: M. Cahalane – chair, J. Singler, P. Schafer, Jim Staton, Maryann Scali, E. Hamann, T. Dukas, C. Q. Lai, T. Olson, C. Bunyon, and Nava Niv-Vogel, director

Absent: J. Semuels

The meeting was called to order 7:35 pm

1. Corrections on Board Minutes Monday, March 2, 2015 were amended and accepted

2. Senior Citizens' Concerns:

Maryann Scali asked how seniors can find out what services are provided by the senior center, like how someone can get a ride from the center. Nava pointed out such information can be found on the Senior Note, website, and brochure. But the seniors who live without access to the internet or the Senior Notes won't know about such services. A possible solution to this problem is placing this information on the light bill—everyone gets the light bill.

Judy Singler asked if BCOA would sponsor and support "Many Faces of Homelessness", Sunday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, 1:30-3:30 pm, at St Joseph Parish Hall, 130 Common St., Belmont, for the communities of Belmont, Watertown, and Waltham. Motion passed to sponsor this event. One of the flyers will be posted on the window downstairs in the center.

3. Nava's update on annual report:

(1) Nava did not have the formal report recording all seniors who used the service throughout the whole week exercise yet, since Marie, the staff member overseeing the process, is sick. However, Nava observed the process of two-days, an exercise on Tuesday. 310 participants came through the door, but only about 200 signed in, indicating a big discrepancy between the number of people who attend the activities at the center and the number of people who sign-in. Many come in and out of the center without signing in. A solution to this problem has been to take information from instructors on who attend the classes. This may reduce the discrepancy to 50. Nava will have the full report on this next month.

(2) Report on a meeting chaired by Nava calling for a Housing task force today to address unsafe and unhealthy housing in Belmont. Arlington has established a very well-funded and coordinated task-force and protocol, and there is a by-law in place to allow intervention before the situation worsens. This is an important interest for our community, as there is a good proportion of the population that rent. Hoarding and unsafe housing conditions are of great concern to the town. Right now, our town doesn't have a protocol to enter someone's house and check on unsafe and hoarding problems yet. We don't have resources to identify and address such problems, which are currently usually identified and brought to attention while the house was checked for something else. Belmont is still in the planning phase. The purpose of the meeting is to collect information and communication before taking actions. How should we define hoarding and unsafe conditions, and at what level should intervention occur? These issues should be addressed. Tomi suggested we should focus on outreach programs, like inviting more seniors to lunch and educate them about hoarding and unsafe conditions (at home). Based on the discussion, the

board agreed that we should invite an expert on hoarding to write an article (to be published in a newspaper) to address the following questions: (1) how to determine if hoarding is occurring (the difference between cluttering and hoarding)? (2) What is a scale for hoarding (from 1 to 9) and when should intervention be taken? (3) Who should be contacted for potential hoarding? (3) Hoarding is an issue that a broader audience needs to know about, not just seniors.

(3) Sidewalk– the plan is to pave the area behind the building (on our property) so that snowblowers can get access and it's easier to get on the roof. Penny pointed out that one issue that should be brought to Gerry's attention is that water or snow from the roof can cause damage to the soil or ground. Ethel pointed out there are several spots on the ceilings of the women's bathroom.

Maryann pointed out the grass behind the Bocce Court needs to be cut and cleaned, and the Bocce Court should be cleaned up for use. Nava has already placed a work order to clean up the Bocce Court.

There was no detailed plan for gardening and landscaping around the building yet. A meeting was held for this issue and a report was filed to Gerry Boyle; next step was to retain a landscape firm to do a feasible study on what should be done and can be done to improve the landscape of the building.

4. The center will have an open house on May 26, Tuesday, 4:00 PM to introduce programs about various programs and service in the center.

5. Friends of COA: meeting is scheduled on June 4 to approve the idea of planned Fashion Show.

The company named Bonworth has agreed to fund the Fashion Show, June 16, 2015.  
The Town Day is on May 16, Saturday, 2015. Nava will send out signup sheet for everyone's two hour shifts.

Nava indicated a translator for SHINE (**S**erving the **H**ealth **I**nsurance **N**eeds of **E**veryone) counseling is now available for Chinese seniors. They are trained by the state and knowledgeable about medical care and medical insurance.

6. Springwell (Judy):

- (1) The new website of Springwell is up. One can find very comprehensive information on many programs, for example, qualifications and requirements for meal program.
- (2) Ombudsman program is fully housed in Springwell.
- (3) Ruth Beckerman-Rodau, the CEO of Springwell, visited our center and was very impressed with the center. Belmont is the first place she visited. She is so happy to see things working out this way. Nava mentioned Springwell initially did not believe Thanksgiving meals would be so popular, and sent someone to check and found that it was indeed the case.
- (4) Springwell got additional funding from the state this year for nutrition and protection.
- (5) The CEO (Ruth) is impressed that Barbara managed it so well - she is impressed with the whole thing. She gave a lot of praise on our site and kitchen.

7. Budget FY2016: Nava put together a spreadsheet of our additional funding. Phyllis Marshall from the Town Administration is reviewing the accuracy of the budget. Nava will send it to over to Bob McLaughlin, who is the head of budget sub-committee. He wanted such information to show

how big our operation actually is. The town appropriation does not reflect the magnitude of the actual impact the center has.  
We may get what we ask for custodial service

The weather was warm and the snow was melt. There are a few parking issues now.

8. Resident roofing is an issue for winter. However, we cannot put up a list of roof and snow shovelers. In October, Nava will add to the Senior Notes to remind seniors to look for roofers and snow shovelers. But we can put out a list of questions to ask when seniors look for roofers and snow shovelers. Volunteer students cannot use snow blowers because of liability issues.

9. Separate campaign policies at the center concern different political campaign groups at the building: during campaign season, many different parties/groups/candidates may come to use the center. Some COAs have separate policies on handling political campaigns. What is the town policy? Just follow the rules from the state. No program can be interrupted at the center due to any campaign. No solicitation and campaigning at the center. Should the center make a policy for such situations? We shall create a working group to establish guidelines to accommodate political discussion: Mike (Chair), Ethel, Chao, Judy.

Next COA meeting is scheduled for May 5, Tuesday, 2015

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Chao-Qiang Lai