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Belmont Council on Aging Board Minutes

Date: December 4, 2017

Venue: Beech Street Center

Present: M. Scali, chair, C. Bunyon, E. Hamann, P. Solomon, T. Dukas, J. Semuels, J. Singler, M. Cahalane, C. Qiang-Li

Absent: T. Olson, J. Staton

Call to Order: 7:00pm.

Minutes for November 8, 2017, amended and approved.

Senior Citizens Concerns

- As a senior citizen and as chair of the Board, Maryann Scali designated Phyl Solomon to go to the Board of Selectman or Acting Town Administrator to look into the functionality and sufficiency of Beech Street Center parking lot lights, and report back to the Board.
- Cambridge at Home presentation: the Center Director, Nava Niv-Vogel, introduces Barbara Selwyn, Executive Director, who described her organization: as of 1/1/18, the name of the group will change to Cambridge Neighbors. It is a membership based non-profit that people join for services and community. The Group currently has 250 members, 17% from Belmont, who expect "concierge" services. The Group would consider ways to partner with the Belmont Senior Center, but Barbara questions whether or not people from Cambridge will drive to Belmont for events. Barbara asked Nava about relations between the Center and Mount Auburn Hospital regarding discharge planning when needed. Nava indicated that there was definitely a need for better communication. Barbara described a program at a similar organization, Newton at Home, involved with discharge planning. The program consists of volunteers trained to assist people who are discharged from the hospital. The volunteer maintains contact with the person to whom they are assigned, arranges for and monitors support services, and works to prevent social isolation. Discussing membership, Barbara made several points: complete individual membership is \$1,000.00/year; however, there are a number of membership classifications or categories that cater to people with who are in a range of economic and social situations, which are described in the organization's brochure. Membership offers free transportation to appointments; some members view this service as an "insurance policy;" members feel they are a part of a community where people know one another; volunteers offer companionship where they call other members once a week and visit twice a month. Single women, living alone, constitute 60% of the Groups membership. Barbara ended her presentation and handed out brochures to Board members, also leaving some with Nava.

Friends

- Joel Semuels reported that he Thanksgiving Craft Fair had over 500 people attend
- The Friends will organize a fashion show next year.
- Nava asked the Friends to support a "Senior Prom."
- The Friends applied to the Tufts Foundation for grants from the Gerontology Group for a focus group project.
- There are currently two open Board positions.
- There will open rehearsals for the Belmont Community Orchestra.

Director

- The Search for a Town Administrator is coordinated with a consulting group led by Rick White, former Lexington Town Administrator. The heads of town departments interviewed the two final candidates.
- Nava submitted Part I of her budget; however personnel salaries have not yet been finalized. Nava is asking for a part time housing social worker (19 hours/week): she will meet with other department heads and groups involved to line up support.
- "Honoring Choices" is an organization that trains people having health care proxies and advanced directives. The survey was done to gauge seniors' satisfaction with the Center. The results: 90% of the people who took the survey were satisfied.
- A new French conversation group at the Center had 13 seniors attending.

Springwell

- The Springwell ride program asks for donations from participants. The transportation contract was put out for bids last month; however no bids were received.

Tax Deferral Program

- Nava asked for the tax work off program to be increased from \$900.00 to \$1,500.00. The Town's Assess or will discuss the Board.

Long Range Planning

- The group will report in January, 2018.

Parking Lot Stickers

- Joel Semuels will look into program of discount parking lot stickers

New Officers

- The Board voted unanimously to keep the same officers for another year: Maryann Scali, Chair; Michael Cahalane, Vice-Chair; Jim Staton, Treasurer; Tomi Olson, Managing Secretary.

Adjournment, 8:20pm

Next meeting, Monday, January 8, 2018, 7pm

Respectfully submitted,
Ted Dukas