

**MINUTES OF THE BELMONT C.O.A. BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
October 28, 2013 AT THE BEECH STREET CENTER**

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Present: P. Schafer, Chair, M. Cahalane, T. Dukas, M. Dumont, E. Hamann, T. Olson, C. Qiang-Lai, Scali, J. Semuels, Judy Singler, J. Staton, Nava. Niv-Vogel, Executive Director.

Absent: None.

1. Call to Order: P. Schafer (chair) called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. She introduced new Board member Judy Singler. The other Board members introduced themselves.

2. Senior Citizens' Concerns: 1. C.O.A. volunteer John Demeret, who authors the C.O.A. E-mail newsletter to the community addressed the Board. He announced that he was discontinuing providing this once a week service. He currently sends out the newsletter to 626 e-mail addresses, including Board members. He suggested that a volunteer or C.O.A. employee be recruited to provide this service. The Board thanked him for the excellent services he provided. Nava praised his long volunteer service starting when the C.O.A. was at Our Lady's Church. She also praised his work in getting the word out when our budget was threatened as well as his attention to detail in updating the names of new addressees. She stated that she will following up with the Town's Information Technology (I.T.) office. It is likely that a C.O.A. employee will be taking over responsibility for the E-mail newsletter. 2. C. Qiang-Lai reported that he met with Chinese seniors on October 10th regarding their concerns. He stated that Chinese seniors cannot understand the "Senior Notes" Newsletter. Nava explained the C.O.A. ESL program which is in English. Nava stated that the E.S.L. program does not distinguish between languages spoken. If no English is spoken, the person gets a tutor. He stated that the Chinese wanted their own class. Nava noted the need to bring together, not separate communities. We also have a conversation class, "English At Large" on Wednesday mornings. She pointed out a new Chinese culture class at the C.O.A. taught by a bi-lingual High School student teaching people Chinese words. Nava noted the Springwell grant several years ago for a Chinese Social Worker at the Center and the development of the E.S.L. class. Mr. C. will continue to keep us informed on issues from Chinese seniors.

3. Acceptance of Minutes: The minutes of the October 7, 2013 meeting were reviewed. The minutes were approved upon motion and second with the following amendments: a. page 1, correct spelling of Michael Liebersen, as chair of Warrant Committee to Michael "Libenson"; b. On page 2, third paragraph, delete the first two sentences and insert therein the following: "There is an A.C.O. run by Mt. Auburn Hospital." c. page 3, cut and paste Director's Goals for 2013-14 into the minutes as adopted at the October 7th meeting; d. The Housing Working Group mentioned on the last page of the minutes should be called the "C.P.A. Working Group."

4. Updates and Correspondence:

A. Director's Report: Nava reported that she had met with Gerald Boyle, Head of Combined Facilities for the Town of Belmont to ask for more custodial help in the Beech Street Center due to the increased usage of the building. She asked for 40 hours which is more than the 16 hours we currently receive. She asked for a dedicated full-time person for the building. She also cited the lack of custodial help during vacations last summer. She had checked with the Lexington Community Center which receive more custodial hours per week than we currently do. Mr. Boyle's response to her was that he does not believe in dedicating one custodian to a particular building. Mr. Semuels suggested that Nava draft a written narrative for Mr. Boyle citing the increased use of the Center and its expanded custodial needs. The Board concurred in this suggestion. Nava reported that the Brain Health course is successful with 17 participants. It has 25 people on the waiting list.

B. Recreation Department Requests: Nava reported that Joe of the SPORT program wanted his trainer trained by Susan Barbuto. This is O.K. She also reported that Sue Wiener of SPORT is applying for a grant to cover the SPORT costs incurred on Saturdays at the Center. The extra insurance costs depends on Susan's time. There are ongoing concerns on the safety issues of SPORT participants using the fitness room on Saturdays when the Center is closed.

C. Springwell: New Board member Judy Singler stated that she is an at-large representative to the Springwell, Inc. Board and is not the Belmont designee required by law. She stated that under the new Springwell Director, the Springwell Board is to be more centered on supporting programming. Nava cited progress with Springwell in getting more people who receive home delivered meals to come to our meal site instead. It was noted that state subsidies don't cover the real meal costs of some special meal types. Ms. Shafer noted that at the next meeting, we will take up the issue of appointing Belmont's representative to the Springwell, Inc. Board.

5. Old Business:

A. Director's Goals for FY '14: Discussed in 3 above.

B. Snow Shoveling By-Law Proposal for STM: Discussed in 6A below.

C. Recreation Department Requests: Discussed in 4B above.

6. New Business:

A. Position on Snow Removal Bylaw: The Board discussed the residential snow shoveling by-law which has been proposed for the November 4th Town Meeting. The Chair sought to determine if the Board should take a position on the bylaw as it concerns seniors. Ms. Singler stated the need for such a bylaw with children walking to school in

the street near cars with snow clogged sidewalks. Ms. Hamann cited her concerns with the need to clear one's sidewalk to the width of the sidewalk. Mr. Semuels noted his concerns about the bylaw's potential costs to property owners and the town taxpayers. Its wording causes required work or expense for clearing ice after the initial storm by 8 p.m. the day after and each day after freeze and thaw thereafter. It establishes a bureaucracy requiring a town employee (police, D.P.W. or other) to give out tickets with possible fines over \$100 and appeals to potentially up to 5000 dwellings which do not comply. It allows the Selectmen to establish exemptions for obligated persons who are physically unable to perform the obligations themselves and have a bona fide financial hardship. Exactly whom this covers is not known. Since this cuts both ways for seniors, possibly greater costs and obligations for senior homeowners, but also potential cleaner sidewalks and possible exemptions for some low-income frail seniors, the Board did not take a position on the proposed bylaw. Several members expressed the need for the Town to take expanded action for plowing residential sidewalks and corners where snow collects in large piles. Residential sidewalks are legally town property.

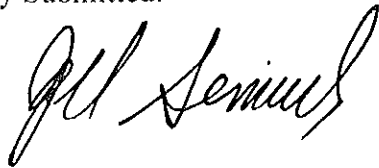
B. FY '14 Budget Schedule: The Chair noted that the Budget Working Group (Penny, Tomi, Mary Ann, Joel and Mike) will again be monitoring the Town's Warrant Committee budget process which will soon begin on Wednesday nights. This will require one rotating Working Group member to attend Warrant Committee meetings through the winter to monitor C.O.A. budget issues. Liz Grob is our Warrant Committee contact. The Working Group will also assist Nava in budget submittals and meetings in the Spring.

C. Appointment of Board's Springwell Representative: See 4C above.

7. Next Meeting: The next C.O.A. Board Meeting will be at the Beech Street Center Conference Room on Monday December 2, 2013 at 7:30 p.m. Mary Ann Scali will be Revolving Recording Secretary.

8. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Joel Semuels". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the "Respectfully Submitted:" text.

Joel Semuels, Revolving Recording Secretary

