

**Belmont Council on Aging**  
**Board Meeting**  
**January 8, 2007**

Board Members Present: J. Semuels, P. Solomon, H. Kazarian, N. Niv-Vogel, J. Horner, N. Hegarty, J. Kantor, E. Hamann, J. Bruschi, A. Lougee

Absent: B. Miranda, H. Dvorak, A. Verrilli

Visitor: Barbara Brown

The minutes of the December 4, 2006 meeting were accepted as written.

Senior Citizen Concerns: Nava mentioned that she has received requests to have some sort of check-in-system for seniors. The social work intern is working on having the COA provide a match up service for a buddy system at the Hill Estates. Nava has left a message for the new police chief about possibly purchasing the "RUOK Program". Waltham has it and really likes it. Nava will check into this further and find out costs and explore the possibility of coordinating this with the police. Several board members stated that this project is important enough that perhaps the Friends organization might be interested in supporting it, depending on what the cost ends up being. A buddy system for the general senior community was suggested. A list of vulnerable seniors and disabled adults might be compiled through a mailing in the electric light bill in conjunction with the Board of Health.

General Announcement: The Chronic Disease Management course will start this week and has 14 participants. It was suggested that some newspaper press coverage should be done once the program is underway to help interest other people in a future program. Also a follow-up should be done in several months to see how these participants are using these newly learned skills.

Springwell: Governor Romney reversed the **Protective Services** cut and restored about \$22,000. Pilot program – **Project Bread** initiative has \$4000 to increase understanding of food stamps and how to access them. A **Home Repair** focus group was formed using BC students to help identify needs of senior. They found that there were significant problems finding contractors to do small jobs. **Virtual Center**, an aging and resource disability center, was formed to help clients walk through available programs to make choices that would enable them to remain in their homes. Boston Center for Independent Living and Metro West Center for Independent Living are looking at ways they may work together to maximize available services.

Director's Report: refer to report sent out with January board package. Nava mentioned at the Board meeting that Belmont is joining a couple of other Springwell area COAs to put on a legislative breakfast. The Town budget for FY'08 is due the end of January. There is still confusion over the discount for cable. It is the same as what is offered by Comcast. Only one person has pursued this. This needs to be followed up more. Henry will check with 2 friends – one in Watertown and one in Waltham to see how they

qualified for a similar discount. Not as many people showed up for the holiday party again this year as previous years. Changes need to be made such as offering more substantial food and better entertainment. ***A reminder should be put down to discuss and plan for this December 2007 event at the September board meeting.***

FY'08 Budget Task Force: The transportation program and how programs and trips are funded was studied in 5 communities – Arlington, Lexington, Needham, Watertown and Winchester. Belmont appears to provide more than the other towns in terms of transportation, except for Arlington where more study is needed.

Senior Center Building Committee: The committee is working on how to keep the building within the budget without having to make significant cuts. They are being proactive.

The next COA Board meeting will be held Monday, February 5 at 7:30pm

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ethel Hamann