

**BELMONT COUNCIL ON AGING  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING- OCTOBER 7, 2003**

Present: M. Ahearn, J. Bruschi, N. Hegarty, E. Hamann, J. Horner, J. Kantor, H. Kazarian, A. Lougee, B. Miranda, T. Morabito, N.Niv-Vogel  
Absent: P. Solomon

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by Barbara Miranda (Chair).

**Minutes from September meeting** - Ethel Hamman noted corrections to new nominations. Ethel's own name is to be removed as one of the secretaries while Neil Hegarty's name is to be added to the secretaries. Also, an "e" was incorrectly omitted from Anne Lougee's name. The minutes were unanimously approved with these corrections.

**Springwell Report, Board meeting of September 25, 2003.**

The meeting started with a presentation by Amy Hunt from the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Project (LGBT). She reported that gay seniors don't have as many resources and help as other seniors. Between 3.8 and 7.6% of all seniors are LGBT. Over 70% are wary about using AAA (area agency on aging) services, as they feel they would not be welcome unless they hid their sexual preference. The next decade will see an increase in numbers and expectations as the baby boomers mature. They will expect more equality. The LGBT Coalition works with and offers training to any organization that wants to pursue and support their initiative.

Sue Temper expects that the area agencies will be in front of the legislature a lot this year as they try to make sure they are aware of elder issues and needs. Fran Walsh is leaving the agency and returning to practice social work. Sue will take over his advocacy role.

The Caregiver Education Series started a new set of programs for professionals this month and on November 6 will start programs for the general public at the Wellesley Library.

Senior Care Organizations are trying to provide one vendor who will service people who are on both Medicare and Medicaid. They hope to have worked out an agreement with a single vendor in the next two weeks.

The yearly public meeting will be held on October 3 at 1 pm in the William F. Stanley Senior Center in Waltham. On Oct. 1 Idea Transportation will become the new server for medical transportation on Belmont. Sallye Bleiberg was voted in as a new member for the Advisory Council.

Six of the Springwell materials have been translated into Chinese and Russian.

**Director's Report –see attached.**

**Additions to director's report** - Computer club has been started. The training program for teens is going well; they will be matched up with seniors. Nava will be giving a talk explaining the program at the annual MCOA conference next week. Students will make their own arrangements with seniors as to work hours. Another relatively new program is ESL. There has been a good response from teachers. More challenging is taking over Recreation trips. The prices for buses have gone up and the town previously paid bus cost. The budget is \$7000 less this year than last year.

The office internet service was down for two days. The Town has hired a new information manager to help town departments and the connection has been restored.

Final design plans for the new senior center will not be ready until May at the earliest. The COA sponsored a meeting on September 10, 2003 to get feedback for the needs in the new center. Some of the material is contradictory but it is what different people requested. The Friends of the COA met today, October 7.

They discussed putting out a newsletter showing list of 420 members. Barbara Miranda mentioned that most of the Board Members will get a newsletter and she hopes the selectmen and other important people would also receive it. The newsletter will mention a social to be held when the design is ready. LWV is also doing a survey of seniors' needs.

As part of the director's attempt to plan for savings on staff time given the reality of the tight budget, she is evaluating the Meals on Wheels program and the possibility of transferring the administration of it to Springwell. She and Michael Salvo attended a meeting with Springwell today to have a preliminary discussion about it. Some other communities are currently using Springwell for this program. Another advantage of a transfer would be that a caseworker would do an assessment of each senior referred to the program. Springwell cannot charge, can only request a donation, so many more people will sign up. However, all aspects of such a program change would be evaluated fully before any consideration of a transfer would be made.

Barbara Miranda heard about a new transportation vendor providing rides for Springwell and asked the director about whether the new company could accommodate new routes, and particularly a route to Davis Square, Somerville that several seniors requested. Nava's understanding is that nothing will change when the new bus company gets going. The volume does not justify rerouting trips, but there may be flexibility at a later date.

#### **Building Committee Report:**

Neil Hegarty reported that the community needs a sense of what should be accomplished. A standard "cookie-cutter" design is not necessarily appropriate for a given town. Each community has different requirements. The new senior center will be designed with as many "green" features as possible. Funding impacts the finishing of the center. A. Lougee requested that the committee ascertain the future needs of younger citizens of Belmont. Expansion needs will have to be included. Storage is also very necessary.

B. Miranda. said the decision to put a second floor on center is important for our future. The Historical Society has already asked for space on the second floor. We understand that the space must generate some income to the town but the COA is interested in retaining the possibility for expansion. Mel Kleckner said we can only act as a gathering point for informal requests from future tenants. We cannot choose or make commitments but can only refer information on interested parties to the Town.

T. Morabito commented that the Friends money raising efforts should not be connected to the second floor money funds.

#### **Update on request for use of senior center by the Youth Commission:**

B. Miranda said the Acting Police Chief is supporting the use of the Senior Center by teens on Friday nights in a supervised program.. Parents and members of the Youth Commission are being asked to sign up as chaperones at a meeting tonight. The Youth Commission will then go to the neighborhood to explain and advocate for the use of the Center on Friday evenings.

#### **New Business:**

The Nominating Committee presented the slate of officers for the coming year and a vote was taken. The following slate was unanimously elected:

Chair: Barbara Miranda

Vice-Chair: Ethel Hamann

Treasurer: Joe Horner

Secretaries: Phyl Solomon, Mary Lou Ahearn, Neil Hegarty..

Nava told of the will of Barbara Jack who died recently and has left a bequest of \$10,000.00 to the Council on Aging. The stipulation of the bequest is that the COA board would have discretion on how the funds would be used.

Jack Kantor asked about the status of the Friends' idea of putting on a fashion show fund-raiser. Nava reported that the Friends' board voted to wait until the schematic design for a new center is ready.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Lou Ahearn