

BELMONT COUNCIL ON AGING
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
December 1, 2003

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

Barbara Miranda (Chair) called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Acceptance of Minutes

The minutes from the November meeting were reviewed. Joe Horner noted that the Director's report refers to the COA vehicle as having "close to \$90,000 on it." After correcting this to read "90,000 miles" the minutes, along with the Director's report, were unanimously approved.

Spring Well Report

The Spring Well Board meeting held November 13, 2003, consisted of a short business meeting and the annual meeting. The highlights of the year included the introduction of a new name ***SPRING WELL*** instead of West Suburban Elder Services. All the advocacy efforts were well rewarded as Health and Human Resources were restructured. Help will be needed again this coming year. Fundraising is under one position, that of Director of Development. Confidentiality of client information has been upgraded.

The next year will see a client focus, developing programs that include the whole family, advocacy for dollars (a lot will be needed this coming year) and development of housing programs.

Ethel Hamann reminded the board that another board member should be appointed to fill the slot she has vacated because of the term limit requirement. This appointment will be made at the January 2004 meeting.

Director's Report (see attached)

Additions to the Director's report: Approximately 225 people are expected to attend this year's holiday luncheon, to be held December 4th at the Senior Center. The Bel Aires and the Navy Band Northeast's Brass Quintet will provide entertainment at the event. This is the first year that the COA has coordinated the luncheon, which was previously managed by the Recreation Department.

The COA's preliminary FY '05 budget is due in the town administrator's office on December 12th. In light of the COA Director's upcoming vacation (to start 12/4), budgetary information will be presented to the COA Board for its review at the January meeting.

Old Business

Senior Center Building Committee report: Phyl Solomon reported that 13 design firms responded to the town's Request for Proposals re. the design of a new Senior Center. Committee members will individually review the qualifications of each firm and rank the proposals accordingly. These rankings will be discussed at their upcoming meeting on December 8th at the Chenery Middle School. The meeting is open to the public.

The Building Committee is in the process of developing a survey form to be used at on-site visits of other senior center facilities. Neil Hegarty requested (through Barbara Miranda) that COA board members review the form and bring any changes to the COA January meeting. It was noted that the form has already been modified to provide a more in-depth review of the quality and types of handicap accessibility at other sites.

Youth Commission report: Barbara Miranda reported that approximately 20-25 abutters and other neighbors attended a recent meeting sponsored by the Youth Commission to discuss the proposed use of the Senior Center by teens on Friday evenings in a supervised program. Voicing their objection to the proposal, some neighbors cited an informal agreement between (then) town administrators and the neighbors in 1998 that no evening activities would take place at the Center.

John Bruschi expressed concern about a letter sent to the abutters/neighbors by the Youth Commission notifying them of the above-referenced meeting because of the possibility that the handling of the proposed use could (mistakenly) be connected to the COA and that such a view might hinder its efforts to utilize the new center for occasional evening events.

Barbara Miranda stated that she has sent a letter to the selectmen at the Youth Commission's request stating only the contents of the board motion of September 8, 2003: If all the stipulations of the COA board concerning building security and condition are met, and if all other parties agree, then the COA board has no objection to the use of the upstairs space as a Youth Center.

New Business

The board discussed its desire to formally recognize and celebrate Bill Morris' many years of service to the COA. A potluck dinner, at the Center, has tentatively been scheduled for January 12th. Invitations will also be extended to individuals who have recently left the COA board.

The board reviewed a questionnaire drafted by the League of Women Voters to survey seniors living in Belmont. Suggestions were made. The Board would like to convey its thanks to the League for getting this project off the ground.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Lougee