

Belmont Council on Aging

Minutes

Meeting of February 5, 2007

Present: Jack Kantor, Henry Kazarian, Ethel Hamann, Neil Hegarty, Anne Lougee, Barbara Miranda, Joel Semuels (Chair), Phyl Solomon, Anne Verrilli, BHA Liaison, Joe Horner, Nava Niv-Vogel, Director, Jacalyn Boucher, Social Work Intern

Call to order: Meeting called to order by Joel Semuels at 7:30 p.m.

- Motion to approve minutes of 01-08-07 by Phyl Solomon. Seconded by Anne Lougee. Unanimously approved.
- Discussion of COMCAST Senior discounts by Henry Kazarian. Availability will be noted in the Senior Notes.
- Senior concerns: Reference to off-hours call to Nava for assistance in an individual case which was handled expeditiously and for which the Board expressed its gratitude to Nava and the staff. This is one of the areas that is somewhat 'hidden' in terms of the services that are provided by the COA and for which there is little public awareness. Another such example was cited in which the Director is working on the issue of safety for senior Asian residents whose awareness of traffic conditions is limited and may have been a contributing factor in the recent fatal accident on Cross Street. Nava is working with Asian residents and the Police Department to address this issue immediately by coordinating a pedestrian safety seminar in the Chinese community center in town.
- Announcements:
 - Discussion of COA Board support for continued funding for the staff position from Springwell that supports Housing Authority residents.
 - Discussion of support for efforts to provide the Senior Housing with an elevator. The Chair will communicate the Board's interests in letter to Representative Brouwnsberger and Senator Tolman.

Springwell Report, Phyl Solomon, attached below.

* Director's Report: Budget discussion. Although the COA may be asked to prepare a 0 based budget the Town Administrator has not contacted the director about whether the COA will in fact be asked to produce one this budget cycle. It is anticipated that transportation will be questioned as a possible area that warrant committee may look to for regionalization opportunities and cuts. Belmont is hosting the area Legislative Breakfast to be held at Town Hall on March 28th at 8:30.

The “Buddy-match-up-system” was discussed whereby Seniors would be available to each other on some regular basis for occasional contacts/phone calls, etc., for safety and to avoid emergencies from isolation. The Hill Estates has been contacted by the graduate intern but has been unreceptive to joining such a program.

The Friends report indicated that there will be a Membership Drive in the Spring and there will be a “Meet the Friends” auction/social held on March 28th as a fund-raising event. The Friends are discussing a number of possible fund-raising events.

The Chronic Disease Self Management Program is now underway and has seven attendees, a drop-off from the first session. However, the feed-back is very good at this point. It is the first offering in Belmont and will be a learning process for the COA. It was noted that the trainers are from the State Department of Public Health and therefore not an expense for the town as is the case in other towns in which the program is offered.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Submitted by:

Neil Hegarty

Springwell Report, meeting of January 25, 2007

1. New partnership has been formed with Whole Foods to help support Springwell, e.g., on a given day specified by Whole Foods markets would designate 5% of a shopper’s purchase to go to Springwell upon request of the shopper. This was tried and raised over \$11,000.
2. Kathy Barrett, Coordinator of Springwell’s Money Mgmt. Program gave an overview of the program to the Board. The program, using trained volunteers, helps seniors balance their checkbooks, write checks and to overall money management to maximize their independence. There is a flat fee of \$30.00 per month but the fee is negotiable.
3. The Personal Care Attendant Program is up and running. Clients are evaluated and recommendations for services will be developed. MA Health makes the final decision of how many services will be funded.