

**Belmont Council on Aging  
Board of Directors Meetings**

March 1, 2004

Present: M.Ahearn, J. Brusch, E. Hamann, J. Horner, J. Kantor, H. Kazarian, A. Lougee,  
B. Miranda, P. Solomon

Absent: N. Hegarty, T. Morabito

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

The February minutes were approved as read after several spelling errors in board members' names were corrected.

Phyl Solomon asked for assistance in identifying senior volunteers for the Chenery Middle School and the Habitat Intergenerational Program (HIP). Nava Niv-Vogel, COA Director, suggested that a press release be written and placed in the Senior Notes and in the senior section of the Belmont Citizen Herald.

Barbara Miranda stated that she had been approached by a woman who noted that the prices in the Belmont Shaw's Market were higher than other Shaw markets in the area and felt this negatively impacted on seniors with fixed incomes. After a board discussion the decision was made to have Nava and Barbara draft a letter to the Shaw's management from the COA Board urging them to consider the implications of the higher prices on seniors and perhaps offer some positive suggestions as to how to remedy it. (eg. Senior Discount Day.) The letter will be circulated among the board members for approval before it is sent.

Springwell Report: See attached.

Director's Report: See attached.

Additions to Director's Report: Nava stated that the COA receptionist will now be taking reservations for Senior trips. In the past this was handled by the Recreation Department and now is the responsibility of the COA. Nava will closely monitor and assess the effectiveness of this procedure. It was reported that the newspaper doesn't always list all of the trips offered. Karen Nichols, Program Coordinator, has followed up with the problem.

Nava offered the candidates running for Housing Authority an opportunity to speak at the Senior Center but a date could not be agreed upon by the candidates.

Friends of the Senior Center: Barbara stated that several persons in the Belmont senior community have offered their time, expertise and contacts to the Fund Raising Committee to facilitate fund raising efforts.

Senior Center Building Committee:

Phyl Solomon stated that the Senior Center Building Committee has selected the architect and is in contract negotiations. The architectural firm is John Catlin & Associates Architects, Inc.

Nava reported that she had spoken with staff to review space needs for a new Senior Center. The following recommendations were made:

The space allotted for a game room in the original drawings was too small and should be 25-30% larger.

Private counseling rooms that are separate from other offices are essential. These would be used by the social workers and home care coordinator with her clients.

The office space should be separate from the counseling rooms but homecare and social work offices could be connected or made into one since communication between the two departments is very frequent.

Indoor and outdoor light should be maximized in the building.

Jack Kantor stressed the importance of designing a center that is flexible enough to address the needs of both current and future seniors

Nava also reported at the Department Heads meeting that department managers felt it was very important for them to be kept in the communication loop during all phases of the Senior Center process so they knew what was happening before the fact rather than after. The Board was in agreement.

A discussion about the use of the second floor resulted in a recommendation that this space be kept as a priority for Senior Center expansion options. Phyl Solomon reported that when doing reference checks on some of the architects, people said again and again that they wish they had designed more space as the Centers' use greatly increased right after opening. A letter will be drafted and approved by the Board stating the Board's concerns about maximizing the space in the schematic drawings before building the Senior Center to make sure there will be enough room over time. The letter will be sent to the Building Committee and the Board of Selectmen as soon as possible.

The meeting was adjourned at 9 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Phyl Solomon

