

Harvard Council on Aging  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Tuesday, December 15, 2015  
Minutes

Present: Sue Guswa, Bruce Dolimount, Hank Fitek, Deb Thomson, Pam Frederick, Fran Nickerson, Katie Petrossi, Suzanne Roberts, Beth Williams  
COA Director Debbie Thompson, recorder Connie Larrabee, FCOA liaison Sally Steele

Co-Chairwoman Fran Nickerson called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

The minutes of the November 17, 2015 meeting were approved.

The treasurer's report was accepted as submitted. Bruce reported the current balances as follows:

Revolving Funds \$13,115.48

Gift Account \$17,290.73

Formula Grant \$10,000 (approximately) still not received. \$2,348.43 has been spent on payroll.

Otherwise, expenses are tracking on target.

The Artisans Gallery Show and sale netted \$2,000 for the COA, and a generous Hildreth House regular donated \$5,000 to the FCOA. The donor wants the latter gift earmarked for a commercial-grade dishwasher, while the artisans' gift is for kitchen renovations or appliances.

### **Director's Report**

The outreach effort continues to find seniors in need of services. Eight residents are now getting Meals on Wheels and a new meals driver has volunteered for Thursdays. So far this year, we have contacted 248 residents over the age of 60, and are working with five people under that age.

Fifty people have signed up for the holiday celebration on December 17 at noon. The staff is planning a dinner for delivery to homebound seniors who have nowhere to go on Christmas. A Bromfield student will prepare and deliver the meals on Wednesday or Thursday before Christmas.

The COA has been awarded a \$600 MCOA grant for a one-day "Live Your Life Well" workshop. The event will include a round-table discussion, luncheon, and afternoon wrap-up. It must take place between January and June and will probably be held on a Saturday to encourage broader participation.

Coming events:

Wednesday, December 16 Girl Scout tea at St. Theresa's

Thursday, December 17 Holiday party at Hildreth House

Monday, December 21 Last minute shopping at Solomon Pond Mall

### **Hildreth House building project update**

LLB Architects has been selected to do Phase 1 design development. Financial details are still in the works. The construction timeline calls for work to begin in May and end in November, much later than expected. There is some concern that the project is not big enough to attract many qualified bidders.

The replacement windows have been delivered to the Moore's warehouse. Wade Holtzman says the work will begin in January.

The Community Preservation Committee and Hildreth House Improvement Committee are jointly responsible for submitting a town meeting warrant article extending the sunset date for window replacement funding to June 30, 2017.

The selectmen will decide whether to keep Phase 2 on the town's five-year capital plan, and will forward their recommendation to the Capital Planning and Investment Committee.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Program/Housing:**

Sue and Katie met with Town Planner Bill Scanlan to discuss the COA's mission to promote the construction of senior housing for Harvard residents. They also attended another meeting of the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust, which seems willing to support our efforts but not take the lead. The MAHT was vocal about the desirability of either selling or leasing part of the property to a developer to minimize construction costs. Sue said the COA housing committee's first job is to gather information about the property to determine how much housing it would support.

Katie suggested having a housing brainstorming session at the January board meeting to better define COA objectives.

The next housing program is scheduled for January 24 or 25 – a "lunch and learn" with a speaker from Harvard University's Joint Center for Housing Studies. Board members agreed they would prefer Monday, the 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **Historical District expansion**

At the Historical Commission meeting December 2, the commission voted to exclude the Hildreth property from its proposed expansion plan. Hank and Bruce attended the meeting to represent the COA.

### **Alternative office space**

Sue and Pam investigated possible space options in both the Catholic and Congregational churches. They agreed the downstairs space in the St. Theresa's rectory is not suitable for COA offices and activities. But there is suitable space in the Congregational Fellowship Building, whose minister, Greg Schmidt, was enthusiastic about making it work. The church would not seek to make money on the space but would need to cover expenses. Debbie and Joan will look at the rooms and report back.

Connie said it's unlikely the Finance Committee would approve a reserve fund transfer for this expense because it's not unforeseen and there is likely to be town-

owned space available. But if the cost is minimal, the board could pursue other funding sources.

**Transportation study update**

Sue Guswa reported that the study committee is talking about parking and pedestrian pathways in the town center. One option under consideration is creating up to 20 parking spaces at the sharp curve instead of the planned six.

**New Business**

Deb has been talking to John Osborn, editor of the Press, about initiating a new educational column concerning senior issues. The board agreed with the concept and suggested an introductory column about COA staff.

The next Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 19, 2016 from 4 to 5:30 p.m. at Hildreth House.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Connie Larrabee, recorder