

RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF THE LATHROP COMMUNITY, NORTHAMPTON

COUNCIL MEETING

March 1, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 by the President, Carol Neubert. She welcomed a number of observers in attendance, who joined the Council in a moment of silence.

Minutes. The minutes of the February 1, 2017 Association meeting were accepted as presented.

Treasurer's Report. Beverly Bowman presented the Treasurer's Report, which was approved as presented. We now have a balance of \$5,151.78 as of February 28, 2017. The \$5000 CD has been rolled over. The full Treasurer's report has been filed with these minutes in the Library. Michael Schwartz initiated a discussion of donations to Lathrop from outside users of our facilities. Sarah Gauger explained the a \$25 donation is recommended but not required. Non-profit organizations are not charged, but some donate anyway. Michael asked about Learning in Retirement. We require LIR seminars held here to be led by a Northampton resident, and do not charge a fee.

Management Report

Thom Wright reported that the search for a successor to Deborah Peavey is reaching completion. The life enrichment coordinator position has been accepted by Heather Tillman, who will begin work here in early April. She is currently employed by the Beavan Home, run by the Sisters of Providence, loves programming, and is good at fundraising.

Occupancy figures continue to be robust. Townhomes are 100 percent sold on both campuses; 67.3% of units at the Inn are sold. The total occupied plus deposits is 91.4%.

Thom provided an update on the progress of the Master Plan. The architects will present specifications for the common spaces (the Meeting House on this campus) to the Task Force at its March 8 meeting.

Ongoing Business

Carol discussed progress on ongoing goals of the Association. New cushions for the bench and chairs in the entryway and mailroom have arrived, thanks to the efforts of Judy van Heyst and Joan Davis, and this completes that project.

The Earth Friendly Organizers have been focused on the Meeting House. They have cleaned out and sorted the kitchen. Unneeded items are on display for the taking in the sitting room. A napkin project is underway, transforming old tablecloths into cloth napkins. Signage for recycling/trash and for energy conservation has been installed. The group also hopes schedule an Earth Day event in April.

A “sub-sub-ad hoc committee,” consisting of Bob Buhner, has begun to study gas and electric consumption in town homes. Any resident gas and electric bills received in his cubby will be welcomed.

Regarding our goal of improved communication, Carol announced that in the future changes in the big calendar will be written in red. This was very effective during our snowy period when there were many last minute changes in events. She noted that Easthampton is preparing a booklet describing committees and activities on their campus, and asked if we should consider having one, too. Although it was agreed that such a publication would be useful particularly to new members of the community, there was a variety of suggestions about the most efficient format for distributing this information. Because we have so many activities, and because we rely so heavily on ad hoc committees, inclusion in the Handbook is less than desirable, unless it is a periodic tuck-in for the Handbook. The resident website is a natural location for this information. There appeared to be agreement, however, that the most effective way to communicate remains posting, well monitored, on the front door. Audrey Bozzo expressed concern about a webmaster in the future when Carol is no longer president. This is currently unresolved, but Carol would heartily welcome a volunteer.

The Kendal Affiliate grant for trail improvement has been approved. A planning meeting among Conservation Works, Mike Strycharz and the Broad Brook Coalition has set midMarch as a goal to begin work. Broad Brook volunteers will be helping, and if we can gather Lathrop volunteers as well there may be enough money left over to work on the “chasm” which has appeared in the blue trail, to make it safer. The work should be finished by the second week in April. (n.b., just in time for the spring ephemera)

Dave Morrissey reported on organizing consensus-building forums, as approved by the February Association meeting. He has had difficulty finding a facilitator, for he was turned down by two residents and two suggested moderators from Smith College. He turned to Kendal, and found there David Jones, who has experience in moderating this type of meeting, but who is skeptical about this one and feels it should be handled locally. Dave Morrissey has done some research on other Kendals: 5 of the 10 have policies about pets. Most are formed by management and encourage pets, even in assisted living.

Carol remarked that we are in a procedural bind. We don’t follow Roberts’ Rules of Order, yet we did at the last Association meeting. The matter should either go back to the Association next month, or ask that the person who made the motion withdraw it, and go back to square one. Thom said that we are looking for a collaborative *process*. Other communities have handled this issue, and we can, too. All Kendals have the same general guidelines, e.g., leashes, pick up after dogs.

Dave read the motion from the February meeting, as follows:

I move to table the discussion of this item and will make the same motion to table discussion of the next item until a time certain, until after at least one or more open forums are held, modeled on Quaker practices and consensus building, in which residents try to build solutions that will contribute to a better quality of life for all Lathrop North residents. Jack Hjelt seconded the motion.

Stacy Carmichael said that the issue was resident safety in the Meeting House. Carol felt that the issue is broader than that, and asked if clarifying the issues is the appropriate next step. Bev Bowman voted against the motion in February because she thought such issues should be addressed by the Association as a whole, not in small groups. She still feels that way. Thom concurred, for he believes we need a broader discussion about how we treat each other, and this requires a whole group discussion. Audrey Bozzo hates to see division, and will go along with whatever brings peace to the community. Helen Armstrong said that the Quaker idea is to discuss an issue, guided by the spirit; to seek a common interest; and then build alternatives. We can probably substitute common sense for “spirit” in this instance. She warned that to understand an issue fully takes time and effort.

Carol then proposed an all campus meeting, to hear what people have to say. She asked Thom if he would moderate. Thom demurred, suggesting that a more neutral moderator might be needed. Carol thinks that dogs are not as important an issue as how we treat each other; Sarah hoped that if we solve the dog problem the rest will fall into place. Carol then suggested that we ask David Jones to moderate an all campus meeting, and asked Joan Laird, who made the February motion, if she would concur. Joan Laird did so. Dave Morrissey will try to schedule the meeting in March or early April. Helen Armstrong noted that Audrey has changed her position already, and this is what Quaker process can produce.

New Business

Carol reminded the Council that last year, because the April and May Association meetings often have a slim agenda, (involving not much more than presenting the slate of nominees in April and voting on them in May) she invited staff to describe their functions at the April meeting and residents to describe activities in which they are involved at the May meeting. She asked if we should repeat this practice again this year. There was agreement that this was a good idea.

Lane reps were reminded that they are required to report the Carol the name of their representative for next year by March 22, and if the lane rep is new, have the responsibility for orientation of the new rep to the role.

For the Good of the Community

Rob Olmsted announced that he has scheduled a nutritionist to discuss inflammatory foods next Tuesday, March 7 at 2:00 in the Meeting House. Carol noted that we really have improved communication. The information *is* out there. Stacy Carmichael said that there are 4 ways at least where information is posted. It might be preferable if there were just one.

Dogwood: Michael Schwartz returned the recurring concern about LIR’s use of Lathrop facilities. LIR takes space that is in conflict with resident activities, he said. Sarah said that the seminars were scheduled in the mornings, when resident demand for spaces was low, and that seminars usually required use of the AV equipment in the meeting room, so they couldn’t be scheduled elsewhere. Some LIR events held here are open to all residents. Intangible benefits of our association with LIR, especially to marketing, were also noted. Bev Bowman thought we should

do some outreach to new residents, to acquaint them with LIR. Information about open LIR events should be in the Lamppost, website and Handbook.

Aspen: Judy Buhner expressed concern about preventative maintenance – what is done and on what schedule is this maintenance done. She asked that residents be given this information. Mike Strycharz said that the property committee will work on this project.

Hawthorn: Bob Comerford had four items of concern to his lane: 1) a request for weekly recycling, given the infirmity of some residents and the heft of the biweekly load. (Strycharz will investigate price of weekly pickup.) 2) availability of window washing (the Lamppost will publish the name of the company who will do this, at residents' expense.) 3) replacement of dead shrubs (it is too early to do this, but they will assess this need later in spring) 4) suggestion that marketing include a floor plan of townhomes in their advertising. Also some concern that the fireplace in advertising is misleading.

Firethorn: Stacy Carmichael hoped that there was a fireplace in the new plan for the Meeting House. She inquired about insulation in the ceilings, and if we need more. Mike Strycharz replied that they are insulated up to code, and if residents desire more they can install it at their own expense. There will be an energy audit this spring or summer, for which residents can sign up. Stacy also thanked Strycharz for the excellent snow removal in February.

Helen Armstrong, for the Earth Friendly Organizers, asked residents who use the kitchen to please leave the labels where they are and put things away in reference to them.

There will be a Fireside Chat with Thom on March 23 at 11:00. Nutritionist's talk on inflammatory foods, March 7 at 2:00.

The April Association meeting will be Wednesday, April 5 at 10:00 in the Meeting House; refreshments compliments of Hawthorn Lane.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Davis
Secretary