

RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF THE LATHROP COMMUNITY, NORTHAMPTON

ASSOCIATION MEETING

November 4, 2015

The Meeting opened with the customary moment of silence, with concern for ailing residents Ann Hartman, Joan Maiocco, Janet Buratti and Stephen Janofsky. Carol welcomed and introduced new residents Helen Engeseth, Helen Armstrong and Judy Hyde, Fran Volkmann and Joan Cenendella, Sharon Rulf, Cynthia Stanton, Telle Zoller and Arlene Jennings.

Minutes The Minutes of the Association meeting of August 5 were accepted as corrected. A CD interest rate recorded as 4% was actually .4%

Treasurer's Report The Treasurer's report was accepted as presented, and is appended to these minutes.

By-Laws A revision of the Association Charter and By-laws, prepared by an ad hoc committee of Bev Bowman, Audrey Bozzo, Stacy Carmichael and Joan Davis, was presented for Association approval. Three-quarters of the membership was necessary for approval; agreement of over that number was achieved.

Residents Handbook Jeanne Ammon, Audrey Bozzo, Judy Buhner and Mary Parker have prepared a revised residents' handbook. Carol announced a plan for distribution of the new handbook. She asked **residents to find their current handbook and return it this week to Sarah in the Meeting House office**. Two meetings for distributing new handbooks will be scheduled before Thanksgiving.

Management Reports: Thom Wright

Thom presented an update on the Master Plan. Lathrop has recently hired a construction manager, whose task will be to advise on feasibility of construction proposals, should they emerge from the planning process. Local expertise is desirable for this function, and we have hired Cutler Associates of Worcester in this role. They most recently have advised on the assisted living facility under construction at Village Hill, and are hired on a retainer with us. Audrey Bozzo asked if there was a conflict of interest if Cutler worked on assisted living at Village Hill and for Lathrop as well. Thom explained that the Village Hill construction would be completed this month, and thus would not be in conflict with us.

He described the charette to be conducted over two days next week by DiMella Schaffer, architects. They will brainstorm with a wide group of about 50 residents and staff about overall concepts about our wetlands, building sites, etc. and some design alternatives to fit our needs. We should at the end have a clearer picture of what is possible in our future.

Kendal at Home was invited to make a presentation at the Board Meeting last week. They are currently studying the regulatory issues facing them in a state new to them, and discussing the types of services to offer. These are not yet concrete, but are in an active planning phase.

The budget for 2016 was presented to Northampton to a fairly small audience last week, so Thom briefly communicated the budget parameters presented at that meeting. A copy of the information presented there are available in the Resource Book, or Thom will provide copies to those requesting it.

Management reports: Deborah Parry

Deborah provided a financial update as of September 30. Details are in the attached information. Basically, the report was positive, with entrance fee activity minus refunds showing a positive net cash amount of \$1,574,551. This is an unusually high number which won't last as we have fewer units to sell, but is a bottom line we want to be positive.

We have achieved an operating margin of 2.1% -- not as high as budgeted, but a cushion nonetheless. We are bringing ourselves back to where we were several years ago. The recent information on Lathrop in the Kendal Annual report distributed recently to residents was very grim, but is now out of date. We have passed that low point and are on an improved trajectory.

Management Reports: Michael Harvey

Michael reported first on the outstanding marketing results. He thanked residents for their assistance in this effort. Our reservation list stands at 66, an increase of 22% over last year at this time. There are 27 net total deposits; 15 of these are on the Northampton campus. The conversion ratio (inquiries which turn into qualified leads) is between 90 and 100 %; the industry standard is 50%.

Turnover rates are high, however. We compare sales against turnover to achieve occupancy rates, and these in turn indicate whether we will break even, or show positive results. We have had 19 so far this year, with 5 more anticipated. Ten of these have been in Northampton. Next year, there may be more in Easthampton than on our campus.

The Inn remains a major concern. The following initiatives may improve the occupancy situation there: All print advertising now refers to the Inn; we are offering a different contract called a "community fee" which is a form of rental agreement; a part-time salesperson position has been approved to improve community outreach; the lobby of the Inn will be refreshed and redesigned; a one-bedroom and a studio apartment are being combined to form a two-bedroom apartment. If this is successful we can build more of these. The fee increase at the Inn for 2016 will be 1%, in order that we do not price ourselves out of the market.

Transitions from townhomes to the Inn are being encouraged through three temporary measures: an offer of an allowance to help defray cost of moving; a special apartment monthly fee offered between November and February only; a new transfer policy which will refund when the transferee's townhome is sold the difference between the original entrance fee for the townhome and the current entrance fee for an apartment. This is usually worth about 2 1/2 years of the increase in the monthly fee occasioned by the move to the Inn.

Don Levitan inquired if there was a time limit between deposits and move-ins. Michael explained that there was no time limit on the \$2000 deposits made for the reservation list. Once the \$10,000 deposit on a unit is made the time limit is six months.

Frank Bruder inquired about the possibility of fireplaces. Michael explained that codes would not allow them in wood-framed buildings, but that the two artificial fireplaces at the Inn were much appreciated.

Committee and Activities Reports

In addition to the reports included with the agenda, Carol noted that Hiking with Hans has been exploring Lathrop's property and has been well attended. The weekly hikes will continue while the weather holds. Peg Rasmussen has had to resign from the two-campus Art Committee, and a replacement must be found. Carol commented on the exciting Nor'Easter, and noted that Dave Morrissey and Andy Walsh will be seeking biographical statements from new residents in the next few weeks. There was consensus that the butterfly garden be reinstated next growing season. Finally, a scrabble game will be forming in the Library on Fridays at 10:00.

Lane Representatives' Survey

Carol presented the results of lane representatives' survey of their residents on a number of proposals. There was insufficient interest in developing a composting program to proceed.

The proposal to transport residents to the Inn for meals three nights a week had no takers at all. An alternative suggestion was to offer a midday meal when transportation is available, which unfortunately does not fit the kitchen schedule. A soon-to-be-formed transportation committee will be doing some creative thinking about the food delivery situation. The bottom line is that we want meals delivered to town homes when we want or need them, at a reasonable price. In the meantime, Carol's research has turned up a local business called Delivery Express, which will deliver meals from 24 local restaurants for a fee of \$3.80. Residents attending the meeting received a list of the restaurants in this program. Also, meals-on-wheels is available in this area, but availability of this service is limited.

The current policy in the Resident Handbook states that mailroom cubbies shall be used for internal Lathrop communications only. The pros and cons of this policy were

thoroughly discussed, and ultimately residents overwhelmingly favored leaving the wording in its current form.

The question of personal privacy versus caring concern revealed that a majority wanted neighbors to know if they were hospitalized or in rehab, but many questions arose about how that might happen. Thom explained that Federal privacy law limits Lathrop to telling where, but not why, a patient is hospitalized. Rob said that individuals must develop their own web of care. It is up to the individual or someone in his/her web to let Sarah or Rob know when hospitalization occurs. Rob will track you down once he has the information. There is also no standard procedure for what is to be shared. The individual must decide, e.g., would you like visitors? It really is up to the residents themselves to call the Office or Rob to let them know what has happened and what the patient's wishes are.

Open floor for the good of the community

Dogwood has suggested that the community buy a communal garden cart to facilitate transport of garden waste to the dump off Hawthorn. After some discussion, it was agreed that such a purchase was a good idea.

Don Maiocco expressed thanks for the inclusion in the call for a moment of silence the names of residents who are ill. This concern is very much appreciated.

Don Levitan requested that a member of the Board of Directors attend meetings of the Association.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Davis, Secretary