

Draft Minutes  
Northampton Residents Council Meeting  
September 4, 2019

Jack Hjelt opened the meeting with a moment of silence — thinking of those in the Bahamas impacted by hurricane Dorian. He also noted 5 quotations of Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Specific Lane concerns were added to the agenda

**Comings and Goings** – Anne Yarnall has moved in at 31 Crabapple Lane. Helen Armstrong has moved to Linda Manor Assisted Living, in Hospice Care

**Shout Outs** — Jack expressed appreciation for the work of the ad hoc tree committee as well as three active committees: program, fitness and meeting house planning. He said Brenda from Spring Valley has proven to be a great asset. The success of the retirement party for Michael Todd relied on Lathrop staff and resident volunteers. A letter has gone to the Northampton police department praising their consideration in managing traffic in and out of Shallow Brook Drive during Bridge Road repaving. He noted Arlene Jennings’s fine minute-taking but that she is away for this meeting and Dale LaBonte is filling in.

**Minutes of the August 7 Association Meeting** were approved as amended to correct a typo from the Treasurer’s Report: the checking account ending balance was \$6,613.15.

**Treasurer’s Report (Dale)**

Free Business Checking

Beginning balance	\$6,613.15
Income	\$7,025.00
Expenses	\$57.09
Balance	\$13,581.06

Income: community fund; Expenses: Mahjong set

15 Month CD: Interest \$9.69 (2.3%): Balance: \$5,180.11

The 2018 Fund Fitness Account balance of \$1,331.89 has been allocated for a recumbent bicycle (\$800) and subsidies for yoga and Tai Chi

**Management Report (Thom)**

1. Master Plan

- a. The process has begun to place 75 acres in Conservation Restriction, prior to finalizing the master plan, in fulfillment of Lathrop’s commitment to Easthampton.

- b. Thom is working with Berkshire Design to identify the acreage and will work closely with Barbara Walvoord and the Land Conservation Committee to review the plan, application process and selection of the CR land management agent (e.g. Kestrel Land Trust)
  - c. Thom and Mike will be scheduling meetings with construction firms to discuss cost to build 36 units and a Commons building. The goal is to reduce construction costs and long-term debt, while providing capital reserves and positive operating cash flow.
2. Sales & Occupancy
    - a. Occupancy continues to remain high on each campus with an average of 99%.
  3. Goldenchain Detention Basin
    - a. Berkshire design has met with town to discuss and are creating a proposed plan for review by the end of September.
  4. Emergency Communication System
    - a. Singlewire, an internet-based emergency communication system has been purchased that will allow Lathrop management to send mass communication about urgent matters to each campus or subgroups, including residents and staff.
    - b. The system will send simultaneous email, text and phone calls.
    - c. Residents and staff will be asked to update/confirm contact information.
    - d. The system will go live October 1; expect test messages.
  5. Budget Process
    - a. Frank is forming a Finance Advisory Committee to meet and discuss Lathrop finances on a routine basis.
    - b. Capital Budget priority projects: anything large looming?
      - i. Lens of safety, preventive maintenance, and improvement/enhancement to service, program, aesthetic/functionality of environment/spaces.
  6. Updates from Mike
    - a. Lower Level Completion- Transition strips are on order and due to arrive soon.
    - b. Guest Suite
      - i. Flooring will be installed before the end of September.
      - ii. Sarah will publish the reservation process and guest suite price.

#### Updates for Mike

- a. Shallowbrook Planting at the Corner of Goldenchain
  - i. Residents request that Spring valley indicate where trees will be planted.

#### 7. EPOS Update

- a. Awaiting quote for door card swipe readers- Sarah following up. The system will be compatible with bracelets, key fobs or cards.

#### Discussion:

Cameras: Council members questioned the need for security cameras and the process of deploying them. Thom said it was a management prerogative. It is intended to provide office staff with a way to know who has entered the building, but also includes the ability to monitor residents for safety while working out. While main floor cameras are pointed toward doors, basement cameras include the fitness area and the art room. The videos record and these files are kept for a "short" time, allowing them to be of forensic value to review incidents. At present the cameras are only monitored during hours when staff are present but could be routed to the Inn for 24-hour surveillance. **Lane feedback is invited.**

Budget process: There is a resident slot open on the Board. An advisory committee on the budget process would again be composed of a mix of residents. Joan Bernardini served on it last year and was asked to check with others who participated to gauge their interest.

Thom anticipated that the budget would shoot for a 3% increase in the monthly fee. For the last 4 years capital expenses have been \$1.5 million, making up for deferred maintenance.

### Update from committees

- Alaire Rieffel, the **Program Committee** Chair, asked the Council to approve an increase in the customary honorarium to \$150. The Council instead **approved an increase for up to \$200**, based on Alaire's information that speakers often request \$200 or more. On a case-by-case basis the Program Committee may request higher amounts of the Council / Association.
- Dave Morrissey reported on the **Ad Hoc Meeting House Committee**, which meets monthly on the first Tuesday. The major renovations to the basement level are nearly finished. The committee has been exploring furniture options for the lobby (outside the gathering room), window treatments and painting in the gathering room, and furniture and painting on the porch. The options will be presented to the whole community. A new computer and setup will be coming--cost is \$800.
- Dave also reported that the **Fitness Committee** plans a **Grand Opening** of the Lower Level on **October 15th**. The next meeting is Oct. 1 at 3:00 pm.  
Minutes of the Fitness and Meeting House Committees will be available.

### Discussion:

Council members requested an open house of the guest apartment in the Blue House in October when work is completed.

**Actions:** at the end of the meeting Jack asked for approval to spend Association funds in the amounts of:

1. \$179.55 for folding bar stools for the puzzle table
2. \$195.29 for mats for the fitness area
3. \$217.40 for a barre and brackets

The Council **approved** the expenditures.

Update on the **Tree Project**. Chris Hjelt said Hans Van Heist is working on a solicitation for bids for tree planting. The committee members toured Village Hill to visualize the potential growth illustrated by the development's sequential planting cycles. The committee chose to group tree types together to create a sense of harmony. Placement is shown by the stakes, which are numbered and indicate the tree type.

**Residents can note their comments** generally or on specific tree placements in the book in the mail room. Deadline is September 19th. The bids call for irrigating the trees for one year. Chris congratulated the members (Hans, Rowena Roodman, Ed Shanahan, and Daphne Stevens) for their efforts.

**David Jones will hold a training session** with Council members on Friday, September 27, 1-3:30. There is room for a second person from each lane in addition to the elected reps.

### Lane Concerns:

**Transportation to Easthampton.** Residents would like more options for Lathrop van trips to Easthampton for dinners as well as extended hours for rides to medical appointments. Thom will develop a pilot program of

scheduled trips to coincide with the later (6 pm) seating in the dining room. Some of the drivers have flexible schedules for other trips. Contact Shannon to see if a time is available.

**Work order follow up.** When a work request has been “completed” but hasn’t solved a problem, first try another work request. If that doesn’t satisfy, send an email about it jointly to Mike Strycharz and Thom Wright.

**Weeding of gardens.** Residents who want their gardens weeded by Spring Valley can submit a work request specifically referencing Brenda, who is also available for consultation. SV will hand weed and/or apply herbicide. Residents unhappy with their neighbor’s cottage gardens are a different matter, which might be worth a Council discussion.

**Community clothesline.** Many council members like the idea but don’t see a likely location.

**Clogged gutters.** Hawthorn gutters are persistently clogged from tree detritus. Thom will review the issue with Mike.

Communal space for a lane. At one time Lathrop made a nominal amount available for lanes to use but that has been discontinued. If a lane wants to plan something, residents can consult with Spring Valley to consider a plan. They may want to submit a request for Association funds.

**Sprinkler system.** Mike said the system is old and unreliable and no further work will be done on it this season before winter shut-off. This warrants a larger discussion about discontinuing the irrigation and planting for the climate.

Postponed until the next meeting:

Consideration of how memorial gifts will be recognized—book or plaques

Should the Council establish a Landscape standing committee? **Representatives will poll their lanes.**

### Summary

#### Actions Taken:

- Increase customary honorarium for up to \$200 for Program Committee events
- Approve \$592.24 for meeting house expenditures

#### For next Council meeting:

- Poll lanes regarding cameras in the meeting house, need for a standing Landscape Committee

#### Committees seeking members:

- There is a Lathrop Board seat, Frank’s budget advisory committee, and Association committees. Contact Jack and Chris Hjelt for details

Respectfully submitted by Dale LaBonte, Treasurer