

NORTHAMPTON COUNCIL MEETING
December 4, 2019

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Council members attending

Chris & Jack Hjelt, Co-Presidents

Audrey Bernstein, Vice President

Dale LaBonte, Treasurer

Arlene Jennings, Secretary

Eddie Denney, Aspen

Nancy Nowak, Butternut

Shelley Schieffelin, Crabapple

Shelia Lyford, Dogwood

Joan Bernardini, Firethorn

Elly Rumelt, Goldenchain

Bob Comerford, Hawthorn (Jack acknowledged Bob for attending his last meeting as lane rep.)

Staff attending

Mike Strycharz, Director Facilities

Rob Olmsted, Director Wellness & Care Coordination

Sarah Gauger, Resident Services Coordinator & Executive Assistant

Visitors

Dave Morrissey

Bob Buhner

Moment of Silence

Co-President Jack Hjelt called for a moment of silence to open the regular monthly meeting at 10:00 a.m. He then read the preamble to the charter and detail on council's mission.

Comings & Goings.

- Helen Armstrong died November 17, 2019.
- Herb Paston is moving to Armbrook Village Assisted Living, Westfield, Massachusetts.
- Stacy Carmichael will move to Applewood in Amherst on January 13, 2020.

Gratitude and Thanks.

- Lathrop staff for our Thanksgiving Feast

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- All who assisted with the Thanksgiving Day meal at the Meeting House
- Patti for her friendliness and energetic housekeeping
- Bonnie for all she does and her patience
- Lane Reps and Committee Chairs for their stewardship
- Lathrop for Thursday dinners at the Inn. Jack Curley, our new Director of Dining Services met with Northampton residents yesterday and announced that 12 would now be able to come on Thursdays on the van and he will be able to add another day for Northampton once he has a new employee.
- Fran, Jen, Susie and all responsible for Fitness Grand Opening

Minutes from the Association Meeting on November 6, 2019 were approved as corrected.

Treasurer's Report. Dale LaBonte.

Free Business Checking

Beginning balance	\$9,494.26
Income	\$75.00
Expenses	\$296.36
Balance	\$9,272.90

Expenses

- Library computer setup
- Butterfly garden stipend and bulbs
- Party supplies

Income

- Room donation.

15 Month CD

Interest 2.3%	\$9.42
Balance	\$5,209.61

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WELLNESS INPUT. Rob Olmsted, Director of Wellness & Care Coordination. Rob turned his presentation over to our questions, asking, "What do you want to know?"

Jack asked, as an example, what happens if someone falls in the street? Sarah manages the pendants, and she explained that they do indicate location although not always very precisely. She is exploring other options, but this one and the pull cord system are tied into our other systems. The protocol is to check the home first, then to call 911. The system is functional in the woods only to the first bench (just shortly after the beginning of the trail before it goes downhill.) Some residents prefer a wrist pendant, and that is available from Bonnie. Sarah encourages residents to wear the pendant, emphasizing that it is no good by the bedside or in a drawer.

Mark Peterson, a resident at Easthampton, recently gave a well received presentation at the Meeting House on end of life planning. He may return for another session. His ebook, *Your Life, Your Death, Your Choice: How to Have Your Voice to the End of Your Life*, is available at Amazon.com.

UPDATES FROM MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

- First Suite Guest in the Blue House. Feedback has been useful and addressed, e.g., outside light and location of coffee pods. Patty is scheduled to clean. We can visit if we haven't yet seen the suite. Bonnie has the key.
- The Meeting House porch opening on the side to the lawn has been completed.
- The Meeting House pump work is also complete.
- The speed bumps have been removed to enable snow plowing.
- Under Thom's guidance, Berkshire Design is making a plan for the Goldenchain retention pond, for spring action. Any changes will require city approval.
- Demolition of the houses, barn, and shed on Bridge Road will happen this winter.

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UPDATES FROM STANDING AND AD HOC COMMITTEES

Ad Hoc Meeting House Committee. Dave Morrissey.

Update on work accomplished and future:

- A portion of the porch railing was removed to the new patio area.
- In the spring there will be a shed for trash receptacles.
- Have suite bookings for December at the Blue House.
- In order to improve air quality in the basement two air purifiers have been placed in the art room. A new larger one is being installed now in the larger room. Bob Buhner studied the specifications to ensure the system is adequate. If it does not reach 1000 sq ft. it may not be adequate. Arlene offered to loan another. Bonnie will control the settings, and others are asked not to adjust.
- The reverse 911 system for informing residents of an emergency is being tested now.
- The informational display monitor is now in use in the mail room.
- There is a 50K capital budget for 2020 with priorities for use yet to be determined. The committee will make recommendations. The Council will process their recommendations. Rob reminded that management makes the final decisions on using the capital budget.
 - A new card keying system is being considered to resolve the difficulty residents have with keys.
 - The condition of the roof of the Meeting House will be studied.
 - A soda stream (carbonated water) might be purchased after testing a loaner and checking interest at Wednesday's panini luncheon.
 - The porch work will be completed next year.
 - A Wii system may be tested. The one we have did not work. An update would cost \$70. Joan Bernardini reminded that the application is outdated already. And we have no data on resident interest.

Landscape without Watering System Update. Chris Hjelt. Twelve people attended a meeting where they resolved to refer to themselves as the Grounds Guild Gathering. Interests listed were based on various, sometimes conflicting points of view. Work will begin with looking at the space around the town homes, open spaces, and lane signs seeking a unified approach to take to Mike for discussion and implementation. The EAT committee, the Cottage Garden Committee, Butterfly Garden, Tree Committee, and the Land

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Conservation Committee were represented. They are beginning to investigate options and will meet again on December 13 with the co-presidents to plan for discussion at the next Association meeting. Work so far is described as just a beginning but a good start. Members hope to evolve into a landscape committee with all sub-groups present moving toward a unified approach.

Program Committee. Jack Hjelt for Alaire Rieffel. The committee is open to receiving suggestions. They are for an expert to present on energy efficiency. If anyone has a contact, let the committee know. They will be preparing a mandate and scope of work using Fitness Committee scope as a model..

ACTIONS AND/OR DISCUSSION NEEDED IN THIS MEETING

Invasive weed removal proposal. Dale LaBonte. Japanese knotweed and Japanese stiltgrass are threatening the forest of our campus and areas of the Easthampton campus. To date the Land Conservation Committee has invested \$1500 to spray Japanese knotweed and pull Japanese stiltgrass. They are alien invasives that take over and crowd out all flora around them, even preventing young trees from taking root. The situation is so dire in England that a property cannot be sold without eradication of existing stiltgrass. Here we can see the intensity of the threat along route 9 by the river in Haydenville. There is a quote for future work of \$5,775 for a 3 year project to remove the plants. It is also recommended that we take out some other woody invasives in the woods along Pine Brook, much of it in areas not accessible by residents. Dale recommends Council approve \$2,000 for the three year project, \$1,000 this year and another \$1,000 next year. Jack wants to be sure bucket definitions for the Community Fund are clear this year when we make contributions. Sheila expressed a concern that people won't contribute to land conservation if the Association makes this contribution.

Asked whether the committee had funds to handle the issue, Dale stated that there are already plans for which they need any funds now available. Elly asked if we should wait to see if these payments are needed. Dale replied

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that the committee recently become aware of the urgency of eradication of these invasives after committing the funds that are now available.

Speedbumps. Shelley stated that the speedbumps were not effective and the sign placement inappropriate. She argued that electronic warnings, as at Smith College on Elm Street would be more effective. The electronic system in Easthampton was funded by a donation from a resident.

Visitors to the campus appear to be most guilty of ignoring the posted speed limit. That observation led to the question of communicating our expectations to home care aides. Rob could help to prepare an information sheet to give to aides.

Other possibilities to consider are a stop sign inside the entrance or larger speedbumps. Arlene noted we need to prioritize safety over other costs.

Chris stated that we will take up the question again in the spring after snow plowing season. Jack will prepare a summary of our suggestions for Thom.

Audrey pointed out that any single intervention does not carry a guarantee, and we may need to apply various solutions to gain improvement.

Ongoing community discussion on security cameras and safety. Dale expressed her concern that Thom does not have removing cameras on his list of possible resolutions. Shelley reported that on Crabapple the cameras were seen to raise the anxiety level. As for other lane feedback, Aspen, Butternut Dogwood, Firethorn, and Goldenchain did not oppose the cameras. Some felt it was management's prerogative. There was no report from Hawthorn, although Arlene saw the cameras as appropriate. There was strong expression that the cameras were an answer to a problem not perceived by residents. For most lanes, cameras were not an issue.

Where to give surplus furniture moving in and out. Jack said that several residents have raised the issue of providing excess furniture to those in need. This could include refugee families. Jack said the provisions of furniture for refugees has become complicated with fewer refugees arriving

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and a very fragmented refugee process. There are the issues of storage and transport. There are furniture needs by other people. A list organizations that can be outlets for excess furniture will be compiled and kept at the office. Two were suggested.

- **Homeward Vets**, a "local non-profit organization providing free home furnishings to veterans in need throughout Massachusetts" (<https://homewardvets.org/>, 413 203 1479).
- **Service Net**, "a non-profit human service agency that provides essential services to people living with mental illness, developmental delay or disability, brain injury, homelessness, addiction, and other challenges (<https://www.servicenet.org/>, TEL: 413-585-1300).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Decorating the Meeting House, Thursday, December 5. Volunteers welcome.

Employee Appreciation Fund contributions due by Monday, December 9.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00.

COMING EVENTS

Panini Lunch, Wednesday December 11, followed by the Quarterly Birthday Party.

Association and Council Meetings

Council Meeting, Wednesday, January 8, 2020, 10:00 a. m.

Association Meeting, Wednesday, February 5, 10:00 a. m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Arlene Jennings.

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