**Northampton Council January 18, 2023**

Attending: Elly Rumelt, Presiding, Judy Hyde, Sarah Ismail, Dale LaBonte, Jean Krogh, Peter Van Pelt, Sheila Lyford, Arlene Jennings, Carol Neubert, Chris Hjelt, Claire Frierson, Jean Shackelford,  Sally Ives, Rowena Roodman, Joe Kulin, Virginia Irvine, Dave Morrissey, Jeff Mitchell, John Schiefflin

**Comings and Goings**

-Barbara Walvoord has moved to 40 Dogwood from the Easthampton campus.

-We welcome Erin Curtin in the new position of Wellness Coordinator.

**Gratitudes**

-The whole campus for the inclusive celebrations of the holiday season

-Shelley Schieffelin for organizing another round of Trivia

-Dave Morrissey and the program committee for the New Year’s celebration

-Sing-alongs:Maureen McCarron, Carol Werba, Bev Bowman, Gary Roodman

-Mark Peterson for facilitating conversation on the very important subject of

end of life planning

-Cindy Jerome and Rob Olmsted for creating and filling the new position of

Wellness Coordinator in response to residents’ expressed need

-Chris Hague for organizing the removal of dead trees that threatened our homes

**Treasurer’s report** approved

**Minutes of December meeting**approved

A suggestion was made that residents be informed that minutes appear on the resident website.

Further discussion about the review process for minutes put in question the recent decision that only the officers would review minutes. The secretary asked others to weigh the value of extensive review by  multiple attenders against the need for an efficient process, not unduly burdening the secretary and the president.

**New Business**

Peter Van Pelt wondered about the progress on the idea of a **bench** for the Board president David Stevens who died last year.  He suggested a spot opposite Dogwood along Shallowbrook Lane.  It was pointed out that a bench is already near that spot. Other suggestions were made. Sarah Gauger said that moving ahead on the bench  is on her to-do list.

The officers from both campuses have been meeting to put together a **survey** of needs  for aging in community now and in the future.  Rob and Erin are now looking at the questionnaire and after their additions, it will be distributed. Elly asked lane reps to be supportive of this effort and helpful to residents who may need assistance in filling out the form.  Claire said that it would be important to get responses from people who are less visible, less active and perhaps have more needs to ensure we get complete coverage and a sense of the variety in our community.

**Board reports** - Carol

Strategic planning- 3 layers: goal setting (done), planning, and action. We are now in the planning stage.  Financial implications, what are our needs, who is responsible.  This is a complex fluid process. The survey is an essential help in this process.  The strategic planning committee needs that basic information before moving ahead to planning.

**Diversity,equity and inclusion committee** - John S.

They have added ‘belonging’ to the title.  Working from the Kendal model.  The committee is considering how often to meet and to set goals. A grant of $10,000 came from a Kendal DEI foundation and was used for the virtual dementia tour taken by all staff and some residents and board members as well as for a movie about members of the LBGTQ demographic moving into a retirement community. These funds will also be used for an outside speaker to be brought in.   Joe asked whether there could be suggestions for the use of such funds by residents.  Cindy said ideas are welcome, but decisions are made at management and committee level.

**Lanes**

Aspen: Cross walk signs were removed.  A resident would like those to be kept in place through the winter.  Cindy talked about this with Chris Hague who said that the removal was a mistake and they will be replaced after each snow plowing.

List of maintenance people requested.

Dogwood: Issue with ice going into MeetingHouse porch, a north exposure. Salt doesn’t work that fast.  Chris reminded the Council that there is a salt/sand container on the porch.  Let him know if there’s a problem with sidewalks.

Snow removal from porches?  Yes, Spring Valley should clear porches.

Flag: Virginia reported that the working group for the flag met and wants to install a small flag on a column either on Butternut side or Shallowbrook.  They need to purchase it.

Firethorn:  road salt can be harmful to animals, dog paws and ground water. Are there alternatives?Salt brine? Chris responded  we’ve had many conversations on this.  Spring Valley uses “magic” salt which is not the same as regular salt. They have used brine in the past.  We spend about $20,000 a storm for clean up.

Could the money donated to the land conservation committee be more equitably spent on both campuses?  Dale responded that they are trying to set up a small committee to figure out how to address that.  This is a much deeper question.  LCC is trying to be an expert on biodiversity and species.

Hawthorn: A resident had a close call with a fast car, thought to be a caregiver driving.

Discussion ensued about safety, a perennial issue.  Residents should speak to their caregivers about the speed limit. We should walk on sidewalks, not the road.  Rob said that only speedbumps slow drivers.

Goldenchain- environmental sustainability and aging in community were recent topics. Cindy said that ideas and suggestions on these topics, which arose from the Strategic Planning retreat, should be sent to the relevant committees which are now being set up. An email address for each committee will be created.

**Landscape**

Dale reported that threatening tree limbs near the dog park were cut down.

A proposal regarding the following policy will be forwarded to the Association: “Guideline for Decision-Making and Communication about Resident Proposals that Affect Lathrop’s Unlandscaped Land.”

**Program**

Chris and the program committee will be seeking feedback from residents regarding holiday decor.

Upcoming events: Luncheon next week, energy forum to educate about greener energy, talk on scrimshaw, session on having the “crucial conversation” about end of life planning led by Mark Peterson, Valentine’s Day porch gathering, Truth School program on East campus, sing-along, story telling and music with Peter and Mary Alice Amidon.    Many ideas already rolling in for March.

**Fitness**

Reduced use of Fitness programs because of weather and COVID fears.  Joe is still pursuing the idea of a labyrinth.

**Music**

Two concerts in February.  Jeff listed all the other performers lined up through August.

**Safety**

Virginia reported on agreements with management to create paths in the snow for dogs.

**Management**

**Cindy**responded to a former question about possibility of switching the package deal from cable TV to internet access.  May need to look more closely at the contract with Comcast.

Would North campus consider having association meetings every other month instead of quarterly to give Cindy a chance to communicate more regularly with all residents? This will be taken up by the lanes.

Chats -the next Chat with Cindy  in Feb/Mar will be recorded. The next two chats will be in June and September and can be outside.

Communications from management:  Can Lane Reps ascertain each resident’s use of email? Residents with infrequent email usage will need paper notices,

Strategic plan:  have had several rounds of writing up the results of the retreat, which are now being reviewed by various groups; next week it will go to the Lathrop board.

**Holly** reported on occupancy.  98% Northampton, 95% Easthampton.  91% Inn.

Revenue on housing over budget by $177,000.

Overall operations revenue was also over budget.

97 days cash on hand. Counting the $1,000,000 line of credit (so far not used) Lathrop has 140 days of cash on hand, very close to the target of 150 days.

Cindy commented that the financial situation has allowed us to do deferred maintenance and add to cash reserves.

**Chris Hague**

-A new hire in maintenance

-Battery replacement upcoming, by lane

-Preventive maintenance scheduled

-Tree work done; in good shape, so can skip this year for further pruning.

-Generator  - backed away from training residents;  a tech will start it up if there’s a power failure.

**Rob**

-Latest variant contagious but no cases at Lathrop so far that were  worse than a cold. However, he reminded the Council that even a cold can cause serious complications.

-Erin’s orientation is  underway.  She’s making calls.  Will be able to do more follow up than Rob

-Working on the questionnaire about aging in community.

Meeting adjourned at 11:55

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Hyde, Secretary