

Approved at
November Association
Meeting

MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 16, 2023,
ASSOCIATION MEETING
Northampton campus, Lathrop Community

Officers present: Elly Rumelt, Co-President; Nancy Chamberlin, Treasurer; George Teter, Vice-President; Alaire Rieffel, Secretary.

Lane Representatives Present: Pamela White, Aspen; Nancy Felton, Butternut; Rowena Roodman, Crabapple; Sue Bastek, Dogwood; Jean Krogh, Firethorn; Sarah Ismail, Goldenchain; Martha Cushman, Hawthorn.

Staff Members present: Holly Smith-Bové, CFO; Kathi Brown, Director of Human Resources; Sarah Gauger, Executive Assistant; Chris Hague, Facilities Manage.

Gratitudes: Elly called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.. She expressed gratitude to George Teter for recommending using the term “proceedings” for minutes that are not yet formally approved. Residents expressed gratitude for the new crosswalk and sign at Goldenchain and to Bob Solosko for setting up the electronics for the meeting.

Treasurer’s Report: Nancy Chamberlin reported that “as of 8/10/23 the North Campus Residents’ Association account administered by Lathrop had a balance of \$14,251. Our Florence Bank account had a balance of \$5,195.24; one check was issued for \$50 as a donation to Edwards Church in exchange for use of their labyrinth.” No other checks were issued. The report was approved by the membership.

Board Report: Elly introduced Larry Hunt, co-chair of Lathrop’s Board of Directors. Larry noted that Board members have agreed to rotate attendance at Association meetings to provide improved communication between the Board and residents. Larry was the Director of Human Relations at Smith College for 15 years. He reported that the work of the Search Committee for a new CEO is well underway and he looks forward to helping Lathrop thrive.

Approval of Minutes: The Proceedings of the last Association meeting, on May 17, 2023, were approved without correction and thus became the “Minutes” of that meeting.

Old Business:

Human Resources: Kathi reported that the Search Committee for a CEO met recently and hopes to interview candidates later in August and to have a new CEO in place by January 2024. Interviews will take place next week for a new Development Officer position, and in the interim a consultant will be retained to begin to build the foundation for development. Larry added that the new Development Officer, in addition to fundraising, will apply for grants and pursue other sources of funds.

Finance: Holly presented an update on the Strategic Plan, which was distributed two weeks ago. The plan now contains the Goals and Objectives, not specific task lists, which are continuing to be fleshed out. The CEO interviewees will be interviewed about their experience with Strategic Plans.

Administration: Sarah Gauger reported that a contractor is coming this week to look at the Meeting House Gathering Room acoustics. He will present two quotes: one for acoustic tiling and one for a new sound system. Responding to a question from the floor, Sarah said that the acoustic ceiling tile would cut back on the echo in the Gathering Room but would not adversely affect the room acoustics, which have been praised by visiting musicians. Additionally, Lathrop is developing a new residents’ intranet. It will contain such useful information as calendars, events, and access to work orders. Carol Neubert questioned whether wifi problems that Northampton residents are experiencing will be addressed. Sarah responded that a new firewall will be installed soon, which should help. If not, they will consider increasing the speed of the internet service.

New Business:

Human Resources: Holly introduced a new employee, Pat Kirouac, who is our new business manager. She will be on the Northampton campus regularly.

Wellness: Erin reported that she will be distributing an updated handout concerning transportation options. The Northampton Senior Center has contracted with Cosmic Cab to provide transportation for \$1 each way. Lathrop residents are encouraged to use it only if Lathrop transportation is not available. Erin promised to send out a campus-wide email with updated information on non-Lathrop transportation options. Elly expressed gratitude to Erin for “a whole new perspective” of expanding our knowledge of resources in the community as well as of assistance available at Lathrop.

A discussion then ensued about emergency preparedness, especially in light of the recent catastrophe in Maui. Chris Hague stated he doesn't know of a plan, but feels it is a lane or individual responsibility and residents are responsible for getting out if they don't feel safe. Elly added that disaster response has three levels of responsibility: individual, lane, and organization, depending on the situation. Larry Hunt said that Lathrop could develop a formal disaster plan that could include, for example, spaces in the Northampton area that could be used for an evacuation. Holly added that Lathrop has the start of a disaster plan and is lucky that with two campuses, the second campus could provide shelter if the first campus needs to be evacuated. Carol Neubert proposed that this be written into the Strategic Plan.

Land Conservation: Barbara Walvoord provided an update on the Land Conservation Committee. They are moving ahead on a grant to protect wildlife. She noted that if an area is taken over by invasive plants, wildlife is reduced by 75%. Larvae of insects don't eat non-native plants and without them birds die.

Board Report: In addition to information provided by the staff above, Marlisa reported on the July Board meeting. In addition, residents reported on the Board committees of which they are members. Marlisa provided information on the Board Development Committee. The Board is doing a self-assessment survey in an effort to strengthen the Board. Examples of possibilities include more frequent meetings, longer meetings, and revisions to Bylaws.

Carol Neubert added information about the Strategic Plan Committee. The committee held a retreat that led to the current Strategic Plan. She also presented information from the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee. It is developing strategies for greater diversity at Lathrop, starting with review of a

statement on the subject developed in 2008. Elly asked if the search firm for the new CEO had learned from our experience with the past CEO. Kathi responded that the search firm has learned the importance of “soft skills,” such as acceptance of suggestions and being in tune with feelings of staff and residents, for success at Lathrop. Ensuring that the new CEO has excellence in these skills is an important part of the current CEO selection process.

Peter Van Pelt reported on the Board’s Philanthropy Committee. He is encouraged about the new short-term fund-raising consultant. A plan is being developed for an Annual Fund, and later planned giving and possibly annuities will be considered.

Committee Reports: Written reports from Hans van Heyst (Buildings and Grounds Committee of the Board) and Jeff Mitchell (Music North Committee) were submitted and are attached.

Elly reported that she and Alaire are working on a program on how to get to consensus in Association decision making. This program could be presented as an Association meeting or a separate workshop.

The Fitness Committee is taking a “summer hiatus.”

Program Committee:

The Program Committee is supporting the “Doozy Do” parade. This will be held on September 23 at 11 am on Main Street in Northampton, rain or shine. Lathrop residents are encouraged to participate. It is a project of Northampton Neighbors designed to raise funds for their activities in support of older adults in Northampton. Additional information is available on the Northampton Neighbors web site. (Note that this is not the same as Lathrop’s “North Neighbors.”)

Lane Concerns:

Crabapple Lane: Rowena presented two issues: Emergency Preparedness, which was addressed earlier, and a proposal by Dale that leaves be left in specific buffer areas when they are cleared in the fall. She noted that fireflies overwinter in

leaves. In addition, residents can state preferences with respect to their own gardens.

Goldenchain Lane: Carolyn Zavarine reported that Goldenchain has copied the effort on Crabapple to provide short term assistance. She noted that it has gone well so far but has only been needed once. Alaire added that Crabapple has had the good fortune not to need to use their “Crabapple Cares Committee” but it is set up and ready to go. A request was received from an Association member for the template for Crabapples program. The Crabapple Lane representative will provide one.

Management Reports:

Finance: Holly noted that we have a high rate of occupancy and the waiting list is strong. Income from townhouses on both campuses as well as the Inn is greater than budgeted. Jean Krogh asked if more could be done to encourage faster turnover of townhomes when a resident leaves. Holly responded that they are aware of the problem, but in some cases it may be counterproductive. For example, at the current time the Maintenance staff is currently refurbishing three locations in Easthampton and won't be available for new refurbishments until those are finished, whereas houses that have been vacated but not cleared out continue to generate income.

Facilities: Chris Hague provided an update on work orders. On the Northampton campus, 540 work orders have been completed since January 2023 and 22 remain open. 50% of these were completed within two days. Replacement of the Meeting House roof was postponed to August 24-26 due to weather. He is waiting for estimates for work on the Blue House. He is hoping to purchase a new van, but the backlog for new vans is 2 years. Consequently, even used vans are not available. Maintenance is looking at options for improved access to the lower level of the Meeting House. Another project is repairing a pump so the Community Garden can use well water. He expressed gratitude to Cynthia Stanton for her extensive efforts to pull together transportation services. With respect to energy evaluations of townhomes, these haven't been available in the past due to the classification of Lathrop as “commercial,” but those guidelines have changed so evaluations should be available in the future. He urged residents to report any

water leakage, *e.g.*, running toilets, and to stay off ladders. The Maintenance Staff still has one vacant position.

Peter Van Pelt expressed concern about dangers posed by tall trees especially in view of the unusually wet summer. Chris responded that they were inspected recently but he can arrange for arborists to come back.

Chris described problems that the Easthampton campus had experienced with outdoor lighting. They are still fine-tuning their lights, which can be adjusted according to location and time of day. When Northampton lights are replaced, this will be done with knowledge learned from the Easthampton experience.

Human Resources: Kathi described current activities with respect to human resources. There is a vacancy for a part time CNA. Kendal's senior vice-president for benefits has left, but she hopes there will be no problems during open enrollment for Kendal staff.

Adjournment: Elly asked for feedback for the "hybrid" Zoom and in-person meeting set up. Most people had a positive response.

Adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Respectfully submitted: Alaire Rieffel, Secretary

ADDENDA: Committee Reports

August 14, 2023

BUILDINGS and GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Blue house

A cost estimate to redo the 1st floor while maintaining the guest quarters is expected for evaluation this fall. A 2nd floor cost evaluation will be done next, If 1st floor redo is

acceptable. Problems with 2nd floor is egress to it (elevator) and a rebuild of the second-floor porch, which has serious structural problems.

When cost estimates are received a decision will be made to proceed with upgrading the 1st floor, both floors or do a teardown. This decision will be made on a financial evaluation.

Basement access

Evolution is still ongoing about elevator, stair lift, ramp access. No money has been allocated at this time.

Other items discussed were about decision making. Who decides what.

This is an ongoing process.

Also, some discussion about transportation and it was decided to move up the purchase of a new van to this year.

Hans Van Heyst

Music North report for Association Meeting of 8/16/23

Below are listed all upcoming concerts confirmed as of this meeting. Please note that Forest Avenue has been rescheduled for October 29, and that Elizabeth Chang and Jiayan Sun have just been added to the list. Additional musicians are already expected to come in 2024, and others will be asked once dates for this group are settled.

- Banjo Pickin' Gals (with Paula Bradley), 8/20
- The Green Street Brew, 8/27 (postponed from 6/25)
- Katherine First and the Kitchen Party, 9/10
- Windborne, 9/24
- Sophie et Adam, 10/22
- Forest Avenue (with Eveline MacDougall), 10/29 (postponed from 8/6)
- The Layaali Arabic Trio, 11/12
- The PaxSax Quartet, 12/3
- The Green Street Trio, 1/21/24
- Elizabeth Chang and Jiayan Sun, 1/28/24

Choices of performers are based on ideas from residents, consideration by the music committee, and of course questions of time and money. Please don't hesitate to pass on your suggestions to the committee, which also includes Ginny Biggie, Judy Hyde, Martha Cushman, and Nancy Chamberlin. We are most grateful for generous contributions of North residents, generously augmented by Lathrop management, which support all Music North concerts.

Jeff Mitchell