

MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 18, 2023, COUNCIL MEETING
Northampton campus, Lathrop Community

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

Lane Representatives present: Sally Ives and Pamela White, Aspen; Nancy Felton, Butternut; Rowena Roodman, Crabapple; Sue Bastek, Dogwood; Jean Krogh, Firethorn; Sarah Ismail, Goldenchain; Richard Hutton, Hawthorn.

Staff Members Present: Holly Smith-Bové, CFO; Kathi Brown, Director of Human Resources; Chris Hague, Facilities Manager; Sarah Gauger, Director of Resident Services; Rob Olmsted, Director of Wellness and Care Coordination.

Chris called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Gratitudes: After a period of silence, Nancy expressed gratitude for the new roof and exterior painting of the Meeting House, Alaire expressed gratitude for the wonderful people present; and Elly expressed gratitude to Carol Neubert for her efforts in choosing a new CEO for Lathrop.

Treasurer's Report: Nancy Chamberlin presented the report of the Treasurer, as follows. The report was approved without changes.

The North Campus Residents' Association Account at Florence Bank has a balance of \$4,876, down \$250 from the last report on September 18. This reflects 2 checks (for a speaker and a gratitude gift) written during the last month. There were no changes in the North Campus Residents Association funds managed by Lathrop. That balance remains \$13,878.

Minutes: The proceedings of the September 20, 2023, meeting were approved without further changes and therefore became the Minutes of the meeting.

Lane Concerns:

Aspen Lane:

Pamela presented several concerns related to safety. It was agreed that speed limit signs should be installed facing the lane of drivers departing Lathrop as well as those entering Lathrop. Pamela noted that Bob Buhner has collected data on speeding on Shallowbrook. She has studied the data and concluded that it is sound and that the entrance to Lathrop is "very dangerous."

Rob as chair of the Safety Committee stated speeding has been a long-standing safety problem and that Lathrop will be installing speed tables (not bumps). There is still a problem with safe access to the community garden and the dog park. As a result, people are walking in the road. (The campus layout was designed prior to the addition of these areas.) The addition of a sidewalk isn't practical. The plan now is to install a large SLOW sign about the speed limit this fall and to add at least one speed table with a crosswalk in the spring near the start of Shallowbrook and Aspen.

Elly emphasized that cross walks provide a false sense of security. A stop sign on Shallowbrook near Bridge Road would create additional hazards from cars backing up onto Bridge Road behind cars stopped at the stop sign.

An additional Aspen Lane concern is inconsistency of dates in the monthly calendar, in *LampPost*, and on announcements attached to the door of the Meeting House. Sally and Pamela agreed to work with Donna on conforming these documents to reduce confusion. It is hoped that the Touch Town system may help with this problem because corrections can be made when problems arise. Donna felt that the biggest problem may be with the monthly calendar which more easily becomes out of date when adjustments have to be made before the event.

Aspen also requested clarity regarding the availability of managers during off hours. Lathrop does not assign a specific manager during off hours. If residents have a problem during off hours, they should contact the front desk at the Inn, identify themselves as a resident on North campus and state their problem. The person on the desk will either contact the appropriate department if the work is urgent or send the information to the appropriate department to be addressed during regular business hours.

Hawthorn:

Richard expressed concern about difficulty in booking transportation. See Holly's comments on this subject below under "Finance."

Continued COVID concerns:

Chris asked for help in building a community statement suggesting generally agreed upon procedures around COVID. Although Rob's office is responsible for Lathrop protocols, she hoped there might be a colorful half sheet we could put on our refrigerators as a reminder of best practices. It was proposed that we look to an earlier COVID group to tackle this issue. Chris agreed to contact Fran who facilitated that group, to see if this would be possible.

Welcoming and orienting our new CEO:

Carol Neubert, on behalf of the Board Search Committee, shared some preliminary ideas for initial welcoming coffees for Patrick Auguin, our new CEO. She also reminded us that he is not familiar with our kind of independent living with a high rate of community involvement. We are asked to think about ways to help him understand who we are and what is important to us as residents.

Committee Reports:**Invasives Removal Project:**

Over the past month, Chris Hjelt has worked with Barbara Walvoord and Cynthia Stanton to more clearly define Lathrop's position regarding the detention pond behind Goldenchain in relation to the Invasives Removal project and the proposed contribution of \$1000 from Association funds in support of that project. The statement follows:

The detention pond near Goldenchain Lane on North campus is an engineered infrastructure required of Lathrup by the City of Northampton to manage storm water. The City exempts this detention pond from wetlands. The pond is particularly important to manage the possible impact of a severe weather event. The Management of Lathrop assume full responsibility for maintaining this structure; as such it lies outside the proposed grant for the removal of invasives.

Music Committee:

Jeffrey Mitchell submitted a written report, which is appended to the end of this document.

Handbook Revision Committee

Sally Ives and Sarah Gauger report that their work is now complete and a revised handbook is ready for distribution.

Comprehensive List of Committees, Groups and on-going activities:

Nancy Felton and Myra Gordon are working on this and plan to have a final version ready for the Touch Town program.

Staff Appreciation Fund.

The Staff Appreciation Appeal will be launched on November 10 with an article in the *LampPost*, followed by letters in cubbies. These items will be drafted by the two executive committees. The deadline for receipt of contributions is December 8 so that the gift can be included in regular checks before the holidays. Please share individual stories featuring our wonderful staff with Elly or Chris so that they can be included in Lamp Post reminders. Funds are allocated to the staff, based on the number of hours worked regardless of the level of pay. The Senior Leadership Team is not included.

Management Reports:**Resident Services:**

Sarah Gauger provided an update on the new Touch Town system, formerly known as the "intranet." Users will have an id and a password. The site will provide announcements such as when there will be tree work, dinner menus, minutes, calendars, etc. The hope is that the staff can provide a demo at the November Association meeting, followed at by training session before the end of the year.

With respect to the Meeting House acoustics, Sarah said that the sound system will be replaced the first week of November and the Gathering Room will be closed November 6, 7, and 8. Acoustic tiles will be installed later, at a date to be determined.

Finance:

Holly presented the draft budget for 2024. One change includes a new schedule of fees for transportation services..

She emphasized that it is hard to staff transportation needs that are requested on short notice. For example, if a request comes in after the close of business hours on a Friday and the following Monday is a holiday, the request won't be received until Tuesday morning. There will be a new charge for drivers who are requested to stand by to be ready to take a resident home if that period exceeds one hour. There will not be free rides for individuals to locations already covered by scheduled rides, such as CVS and Trader Joe's. A contract with Uber is being negotiated to supplement services provided by Lathrop.

An earlier change that provoked discussion is the method for calculating annual increases in the monthly fee. The current system could create a hardship for residents who entered Lathrop under the assumption that fees would increase at a lower percentage rate and therefore presents an ethical problem.

Holly will be holding additional meetings with residents to discuss the planned budget, including at her financial roundtable on Thursday, October 26, at 11:30. In addition, Donna will have copies available of the proposed budget.

Maintenance:

- Chris Hague reported that the Maintenance Department has completed 770 work requests to date this year.
- Work has begun on 62 Goldenchain, which has now been vacated. It will need extensive work, including conversion of the three-season porch to a den. Maintenance is refurbishing five houses in Easthampton plus one apartment in the Inn.
- Chris noted that some windows need to have a strip at the bottom replaced, and if residents have such a problem they should submit a work order.
- There are further delays with the siding repairs. Chris has tried to find outside contractors, but they are not interested in this type of small job. He is hoping to address this issue by using his current staff.
- Improvement of exterior lighting is under consideration. The cost of replacing one light is over \$1,000, and there is a need to strike a balance between safety for residents walking after dark and concerns about light pollution.
- Signs are available for residents who would like the landscapers to leave the leaves in their front gardens. Landscapers will, however, clear leaves from the patio and rear of

houses for safety reasons. Chris asked that residents generally avoid approaching landscapers except on minor matters but work through him to prevent confusion.

- The tent will come down soon, and Chris is ordering a new larger one for installation in the spring.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15.

Respectfully submitted: Alaire Rieffel, Secretary

Music North Council Report, 10/17/23

Listed below are all upcoming Music North concerts for which firm commitments have been made as of today. You'll see several recent additions. All the concerts will take place on Sundays at 3:00pm unless otherwise noted. Additional concerts are now being scheduled for winter and spring 2024.

Jeff Mitchell

October 22: Sophie et Adam

Duo inspired by many traditions—pub songs from England, cabaret chansons from 1940s Paris, 18th century sacred harp singing, Milongas from Argentina, and more.

October 29: Forest Avenue (rescheduled after postponement)

Eveline MacDougall leads a new string band (even including a hurdy-gurdy). They'll offer "high-octane, toe-tapping music of the British Isles and several other parts of the world.

November 12: The Layaali Arabic Music Trio (at 4:30pm)

In a concert of Arabic music including classical compositions by 19th and early 20th century masters as well as popular folk songs and contemporary works.

December 3: The PaxSax Quartet

Sax players who have performed throughout western Massachusetts and beyond for decades, now returning to Lathrop with jazz, blues, Latin, and swing.

January 21: The Green Street Trio

Northampton's beloved jazz kings and mainstays of the Northampton Jazz Workshop: Paul Arslanian, George Kaye, and Jonathan Fisher.

January 28: Elizabeth Chang and Jiayan Sun

The brilliant violin-and-piano duo return for a program of beloved classics (probably Beethoven) and contemporary surprises.

February 11: Jeremy Harman

A cellist, guitarist, composer, and songwriter with a diverse range of stylistic influences, he's performed across the globe in venues ranging from concert halls and art galleries to street corners, carnivals, and clubs.

February 25: Green Heron

Betsy and Scott Heron pair string instruments with vocal harmonies to offer music stretching across the entire folk landscape: old-time, folk, bluegrass, country, celtic and blues.

April 7: Northampton Flutes

Three fine flutists—Sue Kurian, Nancy Janoson, and George Owens—offering music from the Renaissance to today on an array of flutes of all sizes, from tiny (piccolo) to enormous (contrabass).