

MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 15, 2023, ASSOCIATION MEETING
Northampton campus, Lathrop Community

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

Staff Members present: Holly Smith-Bové, CFO; Kathi Brown, Director of Human Resources; Sarah Gauger, Director of Resident Services; Rob Olmsted, Director of Wellness and Care Coordination (on Zoom).

Opening: Chris called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and asked for a moment of silence.

Gratitudes: Chris praised Donna King for all she does to make our community run smoothly. Marlisa commended Audrey Bernstein for her efforts to strengthen our community through leadership of three groups—Caretakers, Bereavement, and Aging with Grace. Barbara Walvoord commended Gary Roodman for his leadership of the Country Dance group, and Rowena Roodman for pinch hitting in his absence. Pamela White also praised Donna's efforts, in particular her *Friday Notes*, and Claire and Jillian for our success at the Spelling Bee. Jack Hjelt praised anonymous donors for funding additional trees on campus and the work of Dale LaBonte and Barbara Walvoord for their efforts to add trees to the landscape at Lathrop. Elly commended Claire Frierson for initiating the Thursday Café, which has proven quite successful.

Treasurer's Report Nancy Chamberlin presented the Treasurer's report below:

The north Campus Florence Bank account has a balance of \$4839 (one check for \$37 was issued since mid-October). The Lathrop administered North Association account has a balance of \$13,743 (one check for \$135 was issued, for Butterfly Garden work, since mid-October).

Old Business: Sarah Gauger reported on the progress of improvements to the Meeting House sound systems, which should be completed soon. She noted that the new intranet system, "Touch Town," will be initiated in January. Volunteers

are needed to help test the system before it goes live for the entire community in February.

Approval of Minutes: The proceedings of the last Association meeting, August 16, 2023, were approved.

New Business: The group discussed the request of Barbara Walvoord for \$1,000 in matching funding for removal of invasives on campus. Concern was expressed at the last Council meeting that this would affect the detention pond behind Goldenchain. It has been clarified that maintenance of this pond is the legal responsibility of Lathrop. The requested grant would not affect the pond area so that is not an impediment to proceeding. The request for funding was approved.

Additional gratitudes: Chris added that Marlisa Parker and Carol Neubert are “vital members of the Board,” noting their valuable service on the Philanthropy Committees and the DEIB Committees, respectively. They were also actively involved in the presentation and hiring of our new CEO, financial consultant, and permanent Development Officer.

Board Reports: Peter van Pelt reported on the activities of the Board’s Philanthropy Committee. Jennifer Kinsman has been hired for the new position of Development Officer. She will be responsible for fundraising and for *The Lamppost*. The departing consultant, Sharon Ballen, is meeting with Jennifer to develop future plans.

One challenge is harmonizing Lathrop’s records of contributions with those of Kendal. Marlisa noted that 65% of the Board has already contributed to the Annual Appeal, and 100% participation is expected by the end of the year.

Jennifer, on Zoom, said she is happy to join the staff and is looking forward to getting to know the residents. Sharon, also on Zoom, described plans to expand the annual appeal and to initiate a legacy program for deferred giving such as bequests, planned giving, and annuities. Noting that we “all have different realities,” she applauded Peters efforts for many years of hard work on the Board.

Carol Neubert described the current activities of the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee of the Board. The committee has developed a

statement of intent, which has received provisional approval by the Board. Since then it has been reviewed by residents on the Northampton campus and will be sent to Easthampton for further input before sharing the evolving written draft.

Management Reports: Holly reported that occupancy in Northampton is 100%, in Easthampton is 95%. The Inn has the biggest change and is up to 98% occupancy. There is a 3 – 6 year waiting list for town homes. The planned increase in monthly fees for 2023 is 4%. A new van has been purchased and is being driven up from Tennessee by Chris Hague. A new tent will be installed next spring over the expanded Meeting House patio.

Rob, on Zoom, discussed current covid concerns. A group of residents chaired by Fran Volkmann has developed a “Best Practices” flyer intended to be kept easily visible such as on refrigerator doors. This flyer will summarize voluntary guidelines for minimizing the spread of respiratory disease. Holidays, in particular, are “mass spreaders,” so individuals who have travelled should assume they have been exposed and should mask for five days. If residents don’t feel well, they should stay home and use a covid home test. The Best Practices statement is attached.

Kathi reported on current human resources events. She expects to hire a part-time concierge and a CNA shortly and they should start in late November. The new CEO, Patrick Arguin, is scheduled to start November 27.

Announcements: Chris noted the Staff Appreciation Fund was underway. This tradition at Lathrop provides end of year bonuses for the staff. The amount is based on the number of hours worked, not their pay rate. Monte’s March is soon, and will benefit Western Massachusetts Food Bank. Checks can be given to Donna. A Thanksgiving luncheon planned for the Friday preceding Thanksgiving has proven very popular and there is no more space. The staff will be serving residents. December 5 is the date the Meeting House will be decorated for the holidays, and on December 7 a menorah will be lit. On December 20 there will be a potluck holiday party. There will be a potluck Thanksgiving celebration on Thanksgiving day, with food provided by the residents.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35.

Respectfully submitted: Alaire Rieffel, Secretary

Attachment: Best Practices for control of Respiratory Illnesses

COVID SEEMS TO BE OVER FOR MOST AMERICANS

In our area, the incidence of covid is low (according to wastewater measures). Mask mandates are lifted, even in hospitals (Mass General Brigham/Cooley).

Levels of covid immunity are rising in the population, thanks to vaccines. Most people are no longer masking anywhere.

BUT NOT FOR US

The major dangers from covid are age-related.

Most severe covid cases, including long covid, are in elderly patients.

Vaccines are less effective in our sluggish immune systems.

In our lifetimes, we will never develop high levels of immunity.

---- LATHROP NORTH BEST PRACTICES RE COVID/RESPIRATORY ILLNESSES

Listed below are best practices for reducing the incidence of covid on our campus. Knowing that each person will make their own decisions about what to follow, we hope those decisions will consider the well-being of the whole community.

TO PREVENT INFECTION

Mask in all moderate- or high-risk indoor public spaces, including performances, supermarkets, restaurants, and most family gatherings. Use an N95 or equivalent mask that fits well.

Use your best judgment regarding masking in the Meeting House. Consider where you've been, who is there, and the size of the gathering. Consider both yourself and your neighbors.

Keep up to date with vaccines, and don't forget to wash hands frequently.

IF YOU HAVE OR MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXPOSED

If you return from a trip, a concert, a restaurant, a family gathering, or some comparable situation, in which you were not masked:

Mask in all shared indoor settings for 5 days. Then take two at-home tests a day apart. Minimize contacts and tell your frequent contacts about your possible exposure. Consult your doctor about your eligibility for Paxlovid and know how to get it if you test positive.

IF YOU GET SICK

Take an at-home test immediately; if negative, repeat on three consecutive days. Mask around others. If all tests are negative, isolate for 5 days and mask around others until symptoms are gone.

IF YOU TEST POSITIVE

Notify the Wellness Office, people you've spent time with in the past 3 days, and Donna. Donna will notify all residents.

Isolate for 5 days, then wear a mask around others for 5 additional days or until you test negative for 2 consecutive days, whichever is longer.