*Approved, with corrections,*

*at the March 21, 2024, Council*

*Meeting.*

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 17, 2024, COUNCIL MEETING

Northampton campus, Lathrop Community

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

Lane Representatives Present: Pamela White, Aspen; Nancy Felton, Butternut; Rowena Roodman, Crabapple; Jean Krogh, Firethorn; Chris Hjelt (for Sarah Ismail), Goldenchain; Richard Hutton, Hawthorn.

Staff Members Present: Patrick Arguin, CEO; 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.

Gratitudes: Residents expressed gratitude for efforts of many people: To Rob for the New Year’s Eve party, to Donna for shouldering the added burden of increased social events, to the Handbook Committee for their hard work, to Pamela White for her “Child’s Christmas in Wales” production, to the organizers of the memorial luminaria, to Patrick for his home visits, to Jeff for all the good music, to Donna for “all she does” especially the weekly newsletters, and to Lathrop for the use of the van, particularly on a recent evening when a large group was downtown.

Approval of Proceedings: The proceedings of the previous Council meeting were approved, with corrections, and became “Minutes.”

Treasurer’s Report: Nancy Chamberlin reported that:

*The North Campus Florence Bank account has a balance of $4771 (one check for $30 was issued since December’s report). The Lathrop-administered North Association account remains the same, with a balance of $13,630.*

New Business:

Elly reported that the Nominating Committee for the coming term has been formed, and consists of Gary Roodman, Pamela White, and Sue Bastek. She noted that she and Chris will both be “termed out” and are not eligible for reappointment. Nominations are completely open and residents can nominate themselves by letting the Nominating Committee know of their interest. Pamela asked if some of the other officers were continuing and was told that some were.

Elly reported on the Aging in Community Committee. Topics under consideration include what the community might look like in the future. Many residents remain in their own homes and hire outside assistance as needed, while others move to have access to more care. The committee is considering what changes might be appropriate.

There was a discussion of the need for more help, especially for events involving moving of furniture or carrying heavy boxes upstairs. Currently Donna does much of the moving of items from downstairs, although maintenance staff helps when they are available. Chris Hague encouraged contacting maintenance for help. Donna added that it would be a help if we knew that a maintenance person would be here every Friday, for example, so we could schedule events to coincide with their availability.

Environmental Sustainability: George Kriebel reported on current efforts within Kendal, led by Kendal’s new CEO, to increase sustainability. An organization, SSAFE, for Senior Stewards Action for the Environment, is providing support for this effort, so different Kendal affiliates can benefit from the experience of the others. Elly encouraged the Lane Representatives to take back to the lanes a request for suggestions of things we can do ourselves.

Gifts for First Responders: Chris noted that she learned that the Easthampton campus provides thank you gifts to the Fire/Rescue and police departments. After discussion, this topic was referred to the Executive Committee.

Lane Concerns: No lane concerns were submitted in advance for the agenda. Pamela reported two minor Aspen concerns: the water in the cooler is being provided by a different supplier and doesn’t taste as good as formerly. Jen Davis is looking into this and meanwhile has brought some different water to replace what is there. Another concern is that residents prefer “Half and Half” to “CoffeeMate.” Donna has already made that change.

Rowena described a concern raised by a Crabapple resident about the use of masks at Meeting House gatherings. Elly noted that we have options to continue unmasked, or always wear masks except when we can’t (functions involving food and beverages). Jean Krogh wondered if individual choice about masking is the best approach to preventing the spread of the super contagious variants; she suggested considering the good of the community as a whole. Patrick noted that one option would be substituting a single masked server for self-serve buffet at functions. Jeff said that a more effective way of dealing with masks is for the Council, rather than individual committees, to ask people to wear masks. Shelley, on behalf of the Program Committee, agreed with Jeff.

Council Committee Reports:

Program Committee: Shelley reported on the current activities of the Program Committee. She expressed her thanks to all the people who made sure we have great sound technology, especially Sarah Gauger and Donna. She also thanked Claire and others who have stepped up to help with programs. The highly successful global salon series has resumed, and several exciting programs are planned, including a presentation by Jillian Hensley about her book, a speaker about the new emergency room at Cooley-Dickinson, and a documentary entitled “Writing a Woman’s Life.” Shelley emphasized that “none of these programs could happen without Donna.”

Dale presented a new initiative of the Land Conservation Committee. The committee is proposing to undertake a project to introduce hybrid blight-resistant chestnut trees to the campus and a planting of a group of native shrubs near the patio. It was agreed that while the proposal needs vetting, the committee should go ahead with the next step. Jack added that the anonymous donor(s) who contributed to earlier tree projects is excited about this one and is willing to contribute to this effort.

Safety Committee: Virginia Irving said that a current concern is the lack of exterior lighting between the Meeting House and the parking lot, which presents a hazard. Chris will investigate.

Music Committee: Jeff Mitchell reviewed upcoming concerts and described the committee’s method for prioritizing performers. Funding is a constraint due to inflation, and he hoped that in the next fundraising event residents will be more generous.

Fitness Committee: Joe Kulin announced that the committee is circulating a questionnaire about residents’ interests. Future programs will be based on the interests expressed.

Meeting House Committee: Dave Morrissey reported that the committee hasn’t met in the last year because projects identified earlier are still underway. They will be meeting with the library committee to look at potential upgrades. The ladies’ room has required significant work following a leak in the ceiling.

Board Committees: There was one Board Committee report, from Jack Hjelt, who has been appointed to the newly formed Health and Wellness Committee. They have found the Aging in Community report to be very helpful as they revise the language of relevant portions of the 2012 Charter.

Management:

CEO: Patrick reported that he attended a Kendal leadership conference recently and enjoyed meeting the new Kendal CEO. In addition, since he started, he has had 25 in-home visits, but as his schedule fills up it is getting harder to schedule these visits. He hopes to spend full days on Wednesdays in Northampton.

Finance: Holly presented slides of our financial situation as of the end of November and will be conducting a roundtable next week on financial topics. Occupancy is high on both campuses and in the Inn, and we have exceeded our budgeted goals. We have 184 days of cash-on-hand, up from 4 or 5 days a few years ago. Holly clarified that the process for approval of financing for an elevator for access to the basement is that the initiative starts with the Buildings and Grounds subcommittee, goes on to the Finance Committee and then to the full Board.

Chris Hjelt on behalf of Goldenchain residents expressed confusion about modifications to the billing system to reduce how monthly payments are skewed. Holly responded that she will address this more fully at the next financial roundtable.

Resident Services: Sarah Gauger noted a new delay with respect to the installation of our Touch Town system due to the departure of the project manager for our system. A new project manager has been assigned to complete the project.

Wellness: Rob stated that currently the Meeting House thermostat is locked to prevent individuals making repeated adjustments, but they are looking at a way to provide access to Dave Morrissey (for movies) and Jeff Mitchell (for concerts).

Facilities: Chris Hague reported that the current policy is if there is a power outage of more than two hours, an on-call person from maintenance will come to campus to start the generator. He is investigating adding a new generator and said that the Fire Department has told him that propane would be a suitable fuel. A lock box has been installed at 59 Goldenchain to prevent misuse of the vacant building. This house is currently being shown and is expected to be occupied soon. Maintenance staff has cleared out drains clogged by fallen oak leaves, which enabled “Lake Schieffelin” to drain. With respect to elevators, Chris noted that he has been told that to install a traditional elevator will cost over $1 million, a chair lift in the $17,000 to $20,000 range and an exterior “Lula” elevator in the $60,000 to $70,000 range. Rowena, at Shelley’s request, praised the quick and effective work done on the drains near their house to address the flooding problem there.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00.

Respectfully submitted:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Alaire Rieffel, Secretary