

MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 18, 2024, COUNCIL MEETING  
NORTHAMPTON CAMPUS, LATHROP COMMUNITY

Officers Present: Sue Bastek, President, Presiding, Richard Hutton, Vice-President; Alaire Rieffel, Secretary.

Council Members Present: Joe Kulin (Aspen), Nancy Felton (Butternut), Rowena Roodman (Crabapple), Michael Schwartz (Dogwood), Joan Bernardini (Firethorn), George Teter (Goldenchain), Martha Cushman (Hawthorn).

Staff Present: Rob Olmstead, Donna King, Erin Curtin, Paul Kane

After a moment of silence, Sue opened the meeting with an expression of gratitude to Donna “for all she does for each and every one of us daily.”

Comings and Goings: We express our sincerest condolence to the Middleton family for DeWight’s passing in August.

Minutes: The minutes of the last Council meeting (June 19) were approved.

Treasurer’s Report: Nancy Chamberlin submitted a written report as follows:

*Our Florence Bank account remains unchanged from last month’s report, at \$4072.72. Our Lathrop-administered North Residents Association account reflects two changes from last month’s total of \$19,325.81.*

*-the final tally of last spring’s Community Fund drive added \$395 to the \$7030 previously reported.*

*-\$359.88 paid out for North Neighbors annual website fee.*

Old Business: Sue asked for feedback from the lanes about the future use of the flagpole, whether it should be kept or not.

Management Report: CEO Patrick Arguin submitted a written report. He is out of town for a Kendal educational program designed to embrace the Quaker values of Presence, Connection and Listening. His report is summarized below.

*This quarter management has focused on our Strategic Plan, review of an expansion of the Inn, and infrastructure needs. A final draft of the Strategic Plan will be available in November. The Inn expansion is in initial design review.*

*In the interest of time, Council meetings will have a reduced staff presence. Unless additional staff is requested by the CEO, one or two senior leadership representatives will attend Council meetings. All senior staff will be present at Association meetings.*

*Wellness: "Dementia Friends" learning sessions are planned for both community and staff to raise community awareness about dementia. Clinics to provide both flu and Covid vaccines will be this fall. In October there will be a follow up to the VNA program on falls prevention. "Talking Wellness Together" will be held on zoom on October 10, a program on Scam Safety on 10/15, as well as a Community Volunteer Fair with RSVP and North Neighbors.*

*Safety Issues: A consultant has assisted in development of plans for evacuation of the Inn in the event of a fire.*

*Efforts to identify an optimal location of a cross walk on Shallowbrook near the Blue House continue. The proximity to Bridge Road poses potential hazards from cars speeding as they turn into the Lathrop campus.*

*Facilities: A contractor has been working on replacement windows on both campuses. There are ongoing meetings with a siding contractor to complete siding needs on both campuses.*

*Development/Philanthropy: Five staff training sessions will be held through the Massachusetts Department of Workforce Development. The Lathrop Annual Fund has raised over \$21,000 to date. An Alzheimer's Awareness Walk will be held on both campuses in October.*

*Finance Report: The August financials are not yet finalized. Staff is working on the 2025 budget and continues to work on software upgrades and replacement. They have worked with the dining staff to implement a point-of-sale system for dining room orders.*

New Business: Sue has been asked by one resident to keep residents better informed, which she will do. There is concern that the homeless encampment near the loop trail might be growing, and concern about a fire there recently, possibly a campfire. This has been reported to authorities.

#### Lane Reports:

Martha Cushman reported that Hawthorn Lane has asked about completion of the landscaping project at the Meeting House, which looks bare. A number of comments were

made about transportation services provided by Lathrop, which some residents feel have declined. Rob noted that transportation is not an item in the contract between Lathrop and residents. An increase in transportation services would entail an increase in the monthly fee for residents. There is a transportation task force, but it is unclear what the outcome of its work is.

Joan Bernardini on behalf of Firethorn requested clarification of transportation policy, which “seems to have dwindled. Some residents cannot or should not drive, and the availability of transportation is a marketing selling point. Rob responded that transportation services are not included in the contract that residents sign, and to include it would cost residents a higher monthly fee. There is a task force on transportation, but its outcome is unclear.

Rowena Roodman, on behalf of Crabapple Lane, asked about the speed bump planned for Shallowbrook near Bridge Road. Paul replied that they continue to study options. Speed bumps were installed in Holyoke but were so problematical that they have been removed.

George Teter noted that when an ambulance arrived on Goldenchain recently there was a 5- or 10-minute delay because the resident had left the screen door locked. Residents are requested to avoid locking their screen doors as there are no standard keys. Sue asked that lane reps bring this issue up to their lanes.

Maintenance: Paul King noted that roofing, siding, patios and lane signs are being inspected for possible needed repair. Fall décor will be placed in mid-October. The location of a new elevator is still under discussion. The most likely site, given structural constraints, is near the mailroom, as indicated by blue tape. The cost will be about \$100,000. As an alternative, installing a stair climber is problematical. The stairs are narrow, and the landing is a complication.

Wellness : Rob announced that a covid clinic is planned. Rowena asked about communication between staff and family in the event a resident is unexpectedly hospitalized. Rob replied that neighbors should notify Donna during business hours and the Easthampton office at other times. In response to a question, Rob recommended tht lane residents not crowd the medics during an ambulance call but limit the persons who approach them to one. Other residents should stand back so as to avoid getting in the way.

#### Committee Reports:

Dave Morrissey described current efforts of the Meeting House committee. The exterior trim is scheduled to be replaced. A new dishwasher/sanitizer has been ordered. Future projects include furniture upgrades, a library upgrade, new lighting, new shades, and a bike rack.

The Program Committee has organized a wine and cheese event and planned a welcome reception for new residents.

Barbara Walvoord reported that work on invasives removal will begin soon. Gardens of residents will not be affected. Poison ivy and oak are not invasives and cannot be removed with public funds, but residents can let Paul know so maintenance can address the issue.

Joe Kulin asked if there is a way to bring butterflies back. Planting of native plants was recommended to alleviate the “insect apocalypse.”

Respectfully submitted, Alaire Rieffel, Secretary