

Harvard Council on Aging  
Board of Directors Meeting  
March 18, 2013  
Hildreth House

Present: Pam Frederick, Connie Larrabee, Sharon Briggs, Carlene Phillips, Hank Fitek, Fran Nickerson, Bruce Dolimount, Suzanne Roberts, Debbie Thompson  
Absent: Katie Petrossi

The meeting was called to order at 4 pm

The minutes of the February 25<sup>th</sup> meeting were reviewed but not approved pending revision of the survey paragraph. The board will approve the minutes at our April meeting.

There was no treasurer's report

**Director's Report**

**Tax Work-off Program:** Sixteen people have signed up for the program and are being assigned to jobs. They understand that they might not be able to earn the full \$1,000 allowed due to the program's overall \$10,000 cap. Debbie will track participants' hours closely and re-allocated hours if they are not being used.

**St. Patrick's Day event:** The March 14 St. Patrick's Day event at St. Theresa's was a great success, thanks to the many volunteers who helped make it so. The Lions Club produced a hearty feast for nearly 60 seniors, including some who are homebound. Brownies and Girl Scouts made the placemats and table decorations, and elementary school kids charmed everyone with their world-cultures presentation. The event was funded by grants from the Nashoba Valley Medical Center and the Harvard Cultural Council.

**MART mini-grant:** We have been awarded a \$750 MArtap grant and used to buy a new computer and printer for the MART dispatcher and a portable GPS for the van.

**Ebay Class:** On Friday, March 15, Ed Sterling conducted an Ebay class at Hildreth House, assisted by Mike Peters and Adam Miller. Ten people attended the class.

**Program Director vacancy:** Bill Herbert has given his notice and is leaving at the end of May. Board members agreed this would be a good time to redefine the roles of both the program director and the MART dispatcher /receptionist, given that Marna will have five more hours a week starting July1. Sharon, Fran, and Suzanne agreed to serve on a subcommittee to work on this.

**Lions Club grants:** Debbie is applying for three Lions Club grants totaling \$2,100: \$1,000 to buy food for special events as we did this year with the NVMC grant; \$500 to pay for homecare services for people waiting for services from Minuteman to start; and \$600 to buy two new computers for the computer lab.

Upcoming events:

March 19 – Wellness clinic with blood sugar and hearing testing

March 21 – Wang Theater trip

April 2 – Tour of WCVB TV Channel 5

April 10 – Theatre III “Little Shop of Horrors”

April 19 – Boston Public Library (postponed from March 8)

April 25 – Dinner at 4:30 at Bromfield with students and Chef Paul

May 11 – Hildreth House porch sale (tentative)

### **Committee Reports**

Programs: Pam, Carlene, and Katie proposed a series of programs on end-of-life topics, such as estate planning and related financial matters, a Life Review program, and a Hospice panel, which could include a Five Wishes component.

The board briefly discussed its role in regard to such programs, and agreed we need a fuller discussion at our meeting next month. The issue is: Are we primarily an advisory board or do we encourage members to take a more active role in running programs and events.

Board members also expressed their views on what the COA’s focus should be, and reached a general consensus that outreach is our first priority, followed by meals and exercise, both of which encourage social interaction. We also agreed that transportation is a crucial need for seniors and that MART’s scheduling restrictions are problematic in that we can’t schedule rides for evening or weekend activities. It was further suggested that we focus our efforts on serving the most vulnerable townspeople, reaching out and pulling them into COA programs and services.

HHIC Update: Connie and Fran updated the board on the Hildreth House Improvement Committee’s progress. The architects are refining the design and will meet with Building Inspector Gabe Vellante on March 25. The main issues are code compliance in regard to the elevator and stairways.

Board members briefly discussed whether a commercial kitchen is necessary and the consensus seemed to be that it’s not a practical option.

Survey: The committee discussed whether it makes sense to distribute the COA survey at Annual Town Meeting, soliciting voters’ input on programs and renovation plans. There was general agreement that the HHIC should have a suggestion box next to its display of the latest building plans and printed handouts, but not surveys.

May 11 Porch Sale: Pam, Suzanne, Sharon, Connie, and Deb agreed to help out with the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Hildreth House Porch Sale on May 11, but it’s still unclear who would run it. The COA is prohibited from fundraising so the FCOA should be doing it. The board discussed yet again the need to reactivate the Friends group, or just to locate the list of people who have donated to the Friends in the past.

The next COA Board meeting is scheduled for April 22, 2013.

Respectfully submitted, Connie Larrabee

