

Harvard Council on Aging  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Tuesday, November 17, 2015  
Minutes

Present: Sue Guswa, Bruce Dolimount, Hank Fitek, Deb Thomson, Pam Frederick, Katie Petrossi, Suzanne Roberts, Beth Williams  
COA Director Debbie Thompson, recorder Connie Larrabee, BOS liaison Lucy Wallace, FCOA liaison Doug Lee  
Absent: Fran Nickerson

Co-Chairwoman Deb Thomson called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

The minutes of the October 20, 2015 meeting were approved with two corrections.

The treasurer's report was accepted as submitted. Bruce reported the current balances as follows:

Revolving Funds \$13,823.71

Gift Account \$14,252.16

Formula Grant \$10,000 (approximately) Not received yet.

Otherwise, expenses are tracking on target.

FCOA treasurer Doug Lee announced that the Friends has received a restricted gift of \$250 to be used for the upgrade and renovation of Hildreth House. Doug said the FCOA took in \$1,300 in contributions in the first week after the fundraising letter went out.

### **Committee Reports**

Program/Housing:

Katie updated plans for the Housing Expo on Saturday, November 21. The event has been well-publicized through fliers, Nextdoor Harvard, and an article in the Press. Several board members volunteered to help set up.

MAHT update: Sue and Katie attended the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust meeting and reported that MAHT is interested in helping, but not in leading the effort to build senior housing on the Hildreth property. After some discussion, the board voted unanimously to support the concept of senior housing on the Hildreth property and to collaborate with the MAHT to explore options for such housing. Sue emphasized the need for moderate-priced housing that Harvard residents would qualify for when they need to down-size to smaller living quarters.

### **Building project update – Connie Larrabee**

Two architectural firms have submitted proposals to do design development and see the Phase 1 building project to completion. They are LLB Architects of Pawtucket, Rhode Island and GRLA(Gorman Richardson Lewis Architects) of Hopkinton. After reviewing both proposals, the Town Hall and Hildreth House Construction Committee will recommend one to the selectmen for approval.

The rough schedule calls for construction to begin in late April and end in mid-September.

Windows: Delivery of the windows to the Moore's warehouse is expected during the third week in November. When they are in, Wade Holtzman will begin scheduling volunteers for installation.

Phase 2: The selectmen voted at their October 20 meeting to remove the proposed Phase 2 addition and renovation from the town's 5-year capital plan. They might reconsider that decision at their December 1 meeting and COA board members are urged to attend. The Capital Planning and Investment Committee is scheduled to consider the COA's Phase 2 request at its meeting on Monday morning, December 14. If possible, board members should attend that meeting, too.

### **Director's Report – Debbie Thompson**

The COA's fiscal 2017 budget has been submitted to the Finance Committee and will be reviewed by the selectmen on November 17. The selectmen are considering tapping various town funds to make a greater OPEB contribution in FY17. Debbie will be ready to defend the COA's gift and other accounts if necessary.

Outreach: Increased outreach activity has identified a number of seniors with unmet needs. Joan and Maria have been in touch with more than 200 elder residents so far this year, and made home visits to several new clients.

Thanksgiving – the annual Thanksgiving feast will be held Thursday, November 19 at noon. At least 50 people have signed up, which is about the most we can handle with overflow seating in the living room.

The staff also plans to cook a turkey dinner for homebound seniors, which will be delivered by Girl Scouts on Wednesday.

Upcoming events:

December 8 – Beauty Day at Nashoba Tech

December 10 – Holiday movie at Hildreth House

December 11 - Tower Hill lights trip

December 16 – Girl Scout tea at St Theresa's

December 17 – Holiday party at Hildreth House

December 21 – Last-minute shopping at Solomon Pond Mall

The COA will be closed Thanksgiving Day and the day after, and on Christmas and New Years days.

Thank you gift : The board voted unanimously to approve the purchase of a \$300 Market Basket gift card for Anna Mason, who makes delicious desserts for COA lunches twice a week. The money will come from the gift account.

### **Historical District Expansion**

The Harvard Historical Commission appears committed to expanding the historic district to include Hildreth House, despite the COA's opposition to the plan. The board had been under the impression that the HHC wouldn't proceed without COA support. Hank Fitek and Bruce Dolimount agreed to see if they could confirm the HHC's position so the board can discuss its next move. If necessary, the board might ask for a place on the agenda for the next Historical Commission meeting.

**Alternative office space**

Pam, Deb, Sue, and Lucy met and agreed to investigate the possibility of moving COA offices (and meals) to the Congregation Church during construction at Hildreth House. Lucy said there are three unused classrooms in the church's lower level. Pam and Sue will meet with the minister, Greg Schmidt, to see if moving there is an option.

Bruce Dolimount said he would speak with the priest at St. Theresa's to see if COA offices and meals could move there temporarily.

There is no money in the Phase 1 budget to cover relocation, but Lucy said the COA could ask the Finance Committee for a reserve fund transfer.

Another option would be to move COA offices to the old library and hold meals elsewhere. Katie said it would be much better to have all the existing HH activities in one place to provide continuity of service.

The working group will report back in December.

**Communications protocol**

The board voted unanimously to approve a new communications protocol for board members and the COA director.

Sue Guswa will give an update on the Town Center Transportation Study at the December meeting.

The next Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 15, 2015 from 4 to 5:30 p.m. at Hildreth House.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Connie Larrabee, recorder