

Harvard Council on Aging  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Tuesday, January 17, 2017

Present: Hank Fitek, Sue Guswa, Beth Williams, Victoria Hayao, Katie Petrossi, Fran Maiore

Absent: Bruce Dolimount, Deb Thomson

COA Director Debbie Thompson, recorder/alternate Connie Larrabee, selectmen liaison Lucy Wallace, Pam Frederick,

Minuteman Senior Services representative

Friends of the Council on Aging board members: Ginger Quarles, Sharon Briggs, Doug Lee, Heidi Siegrist, Sally Steele

The meeting was convened at 4:05 p.m. in the old library (temporary senior center)

The minutes of the December 19, 2016 and January 10, 2017 meetings were approved as submitted

There was no treasurer's report

### **Director's Report**

The move back to Hildreth House is set for Tuesday, January 31. Several board members volunteered to help pack the week before the move; Debbie and Katie will coordinate the packing. The COA submission for the 2016 Town Report is due Monday, January 23. Debbie asked board members to review the draft and look for ways to shorten the report so people will be more likely to read it.

### **Survey – Katie Petrossi**

The survey closed with 287 responses, mostly women in their 60s and 70s. Seventy-four percent of respondents said they want to stay in town and 78 percent indicated they would support the proposed Phase 2 renovation project. Katie plans

to break the results down by age, gender, and level of COA program participation. The goal is to mine the survey results for ideas about activities and programs the COA should implement or strengthen.

Lucy suggested a new “foster grandparents” program that would match Harvard seniors with young families who don’t have grandparents living nearby. Board members agreed it would be a good intergenerational program to consider. The board will discuss the survey results and ideas at its February 21 meeting.

### **Housing @Hildreth House Committee – Sue Guswa**

The housing committee is waiting for bids to do a general site plan and is still discussing whether affordable units should be included in the proposed senior housing development. Lucy explained that the decision is complicated and the group has to weigh the importance of maximizing income from the sale of the land with other criteria, such as affordability.

### **Building Project Update – Connie Larrabee**

The architects and contractors are working to address last-minute issues, including several building and access code issues. These issues may result in a delay in getting an occupancy permit.

Going forward, the COA will need to keep track of needed repairs and maintenance work that is not part of the Phase 1 project, such as new gutters and downspouts and other porch renovation. These repairs could be part of Phase 2 construction but should not wait more than five years.

### **Minuteman Senior Services Report – Pam Frederick**

Minuteman’s monthly meetings provide valuable insight into how other communities cope with problems similar to Harvard’s. Pam said that Stow has three vans, but has a lot of

businesses to support them. The much bigger town of Arlington, however, as a very small budget and can afford to run only one van, although it has two.

In Harvard, the most important services provided by Minuteman are meals, home care, and protective services.

The COA Board of Directors meeting was adjourned at 5 p.m. and was immediately followed by a joint meeting with the Friends of the Council on Aging Board of Directors.

The next regular meeting of the COA Board of Directors is scheduled for Tuesday, February 21, 2017 at 4 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Connie Larrabee

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Harvard Council on Aging Board of Directors  
Friends of the Harvard Council on Aging Board of Directors  
Joint meeting minutes  
January 17, 2017

### **Program Planning**

Board members discussed various joint programming possibilities modeled on successful programs in previous years. Suggestions included:

- An intergenerational program series
- Practical informational series, such as Living Alone and Making Accessible Improvements
- Night-time programs on topics for younger seniors
- Repeat successful previous programs, such as game night, dance party, and Meals with Memories

Beth, Heidi, Sue, Katie, and Sharon volunteered to work on a joint program committee.

## **Fundraising**

### **Celebration after-party, May 21**

Pat Jennings and Willie Wickman are leading an effort to create an opportunity for seniors to use the after-prom Celebration extravaganza for their own gathering the following day. This would be a fundraising effort and would require a number of volunteers to run it. The FCOA board is looking for volunteers.

## **Housing Tour**

Modeled after the popular Garden Tour, this fundraiser would be a tour of senior-friendly houses in town.

## **Capital Campaign**

The FCOA board reported that a big capital campaign is beyond its present capabilities. Sharon argued that the COA is a town department and the town should support the Hildreth House renovation and expansion necessary to provide services.

## **Political Action**

Katie said that someone from the COA or FCOA should appear at every selectmen's meeting to make some sort of public comment about or invitation to a COA activity.

Ginger added that one-on-one meetings with the selectmen, Finance Committee members, and Capital Planning and Investment Committee members are just as valuable. All agreed on the importance of establishing "talking points" so every COA-FCOA representative is presenting the same information. Ginger, Katie, Victoria, Sue, and Sharon will work on compiling the talking points.

The joint COA-FCOA meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m. Members agreed that quarterly joint meetings would be useful.

Respectfully submitted, Connie Larrabee

