

Harvard Council on Aging  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Tuesday, February 19, 2019  
Hildreth House

Present: Bruce Dolimount, Fran Maiore, Guy Oliva, Beth Williams, COA Director Debbie Thompson, recorder/alternate Connie Larrabee Minuteman representative Pam Frederick, FCOA Treasurer Sharon Briggs, Select Board liaison Lucy Wallace, Finance Committee member Jennifer Finch.

Absent: Victoria Hayao, Carl Sciple, Deb Thomson, Carol Lee Tonge, Cathy Walker.

The meeting was convened at 4:05 p.m.

The minutes of the January 8, 2019 board meeting were approved as submitted.

**Treasurer's Report** - Bruce Dolimount

The account balances are as follows:

Revolving funds	\$	9,170.01
MART		17,888.33
Payroll		64,454.76
Gift account		97,618.14
Formula Grant		6,976.38 (\$11,946.35 total grant received)

These figures include a recent \$20,000 gift from a donor who did not want to be identified and a \$15,000 donation from Columbia Pictures for use of Hildreth House during filming last fall.

**Director's Report**

The Select Board and Finance Committee reviewed the COA's fiscal 2020 budget request on Tuesday, January 15 but made no decision. The Finance Committee discussed the request again on Feb. 13. Our warrant article request for \$25,552 to cover operating costs for an additional COA van was a contentious issue but there was strong support from some FinCom members. The final decision rests with the Select Board. Lucy urged COA

board members to lobby for the second van by contacting Select Board members directly.

There is a possibility that MART would agree to reimburse the drivers' pay, which would mean the COA could reduce its request to around \$10,000 for insurance, fuel, and maintenance. Debbie will confer with the town administrator about approaching MART on this issue.

The outreach department worked with 54 individuals 106 times in January. Maria and Charlotte are working hard to reach seniors they have not already met.

The COA has hired a new program coordinator, Jen Schoenberg, who has been a Hildreth House volunteer for more than a year.

With the hiring of Jeanell Scott and David Burney, we now have four van drivers. A couple of others have expressed interest and Debbie is hoping to recruit them.

#### **Tax Update – Jennifer Finch**

Harvard's means-tested tax relief home rule petition passed the legislature and was signed by the governor early this year. The next step is a vote at Town Election in May, when the measure must get a majority vote. At Beth's request, Jennifer agreed to give a presentation about the tax program at Hildreth House in April to inform seniors about the importance of supporting the ballot question.

#### **Friends of the Council on Aging – Sharon Briggs**

The FCOA is working on the van project and has received \$8,000 in donations so far. They want to raise \$20,000, which they will match. Sharon is confident there will be enough money to buy the van but said it's important to find the right vehicle. She asked board members to tell her if they know anyone who might be willing to help kick-start the campaign with a donation.

As for general donations, she reported that First Night netted about \$6,000 and the townwide mailing raised roughly \$10,000.

#### **Housing @ Hildreth– Carl Sciple (by email)**

Nothing new to report on the housing front. The committee is still talking about how and when to move forward. Carl met with Paul Green to discuss finances – what a unit might cost and what the project might cost the town.

**Program Committee** – Debbie Thompson

About 16 people - mostly seniors - attended the Safe at Home program on February 7<sup>th</sup> in the Unitarian Church Fellowship Building. The program was filmed and will be shown on cable TV.

**Buildings and Grounds** – Bruce Dolimount.

The DPW has installed Hildreth House signs at the Ayer Road entrance and the bottom of Elm Street. The old Hildreth House sign will be sanded and painted in the spring.

**Phase 2** – Guy Oliva

Representatives of three architectural firms toured the building on Thursday, Feb. 14, accompanied by Guy and Assistant Town Administrator Marie Sobalvarro. The tour was not required but is an indication of the firms' interest. Proposals are due February 26 for a Permanent Building Committee review March 6.

**Minuteman update** – Pam Frederick

Elder Lobby Day will be held Monday, March 11 at the State House. Pam will attend and urged anyone who is interested to join her.

**New Business: Devens** – Lucy Wallace

The recent hiring of a new vice president for Devens operations could be an opportunity to renew talks about getting funding from MassDevelopment to provide services to seniors living in the Harvard portion of Devens. Such talks have not been successful in the past.

The Harvard-Devens Jurisdiction Committee is contacting stakeholders in town to determine what issues are of concern if Harvard resumes jurisdiction over the portions of Devens that fall within its historical boundaries. Debbie listed transportation and outreach as two major concerns in providing services to a larger geographical area.

Lucy urged the board to think about what the COA would need in terms of space, staffing, and programming, and what advantages there might be to resuming jurisdiction.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

The next meeting of the COA Board of Directors is scheduled for Tuesday, March 19, 2019 at 4 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Connie Larrabee, recorder

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