

**Northampton Council on Aging
Board Meeting Minutes
1/11/18**

Present: Linda Desmond, Bob Montague, Mary Lastowski, Lorraine Weimann, Donna Park, Marlene Marrocco, John Kaczinski Jr., James Spencer, Barbara Fungaroli, Gerriann Butler, Kathy Pekala Service, Heather Cahillane

Excused: Casey Fowler, Deborah Epstein, Mark NeJame

Absent: Theresa Dunn

Public Session – No one from the public was present.

Joanne Brooks showed plaques that were made to be displayed by various items in and around the Center such as the grand piano, the tree outside in honor of Mike Ahearn, Mary Netto's picture, etc.

Approval of minutes from the previous meeting

- Robert Montague called the meeting to at 1:30 PM.
- Motion made by Marlene Marrocco, seconded by Jim Spencer, to approve the 12/14/17 minutes as written. Minutes were unanimously approved as written.

Three Year Review of Revolving Accounts-Linda Desmond handed out a spreadsheet of FY16, 17, and half of FY18 and highlighted the larger revolving accounts such as the Bistro, Building Rentals, Coffee Shop, Fitness Center, Mini Sale, etc. Linda would like to use some of our revenue for scholarships, etc. Chronicle can sell more ads to help make it self-supporting. Expenses very low, but that will come with the budget in February. Income up significantly for FY18 at half year. Linda has a list of capital improvements.

Gift Shop-Heather Cahillane spoke about the Gift Shop. The retail committee tried to revive it, but thinks we should close it. Mary's Mini Sale does great. Heather wanted to bring it before the Board for their thoughts. We will still get the Cedar Chest donation and it can be used for the Craft Fair and some of the items can be incorporated into the Mini Sale. A suggestion was made to use the Gift Shop room for meeting space. Another suggestion made to use the book shelves and categorize books into sections like mystery, fiction, etc. We can make it a room of significance. Add displays. A Memorial Room. Make it a nice, inviting space. Board does not mind not having the Gift Shop close. **Mary Lastowski made a motion to close the gift shop and repurpose it. Gerriann Butler seconded it. It was unanimously approved by the Board.** The Retail Committee will meet to discuss what is left in there and what to do with it.

Proposal Submitted by Marlene Marrocco-For discussion. Marlene works on the state level and is hearing many Senior Centers in the state are changing their name to something else. Research shows that trying to get baby boomers 55-70 years old into a "Senior Center" is difficult due to perception. People don't like to think of themselves as elders or seniors. Some Board Members don't agree with changing the name. John Kaczinski and Jim Spencer said they had looked into that before. The Mayor needs to be asked if it is a possibility. Marlene Marrocco will speak with the Mayor. Linda Desmond suggested inviting Kathy Bowler from the Mass COA's who is in Easthampton to come speak to the Board about this. The Board definitely wants it to be for 55 year olds and up. They don't want it to be a Community Center. Bob Montague suggested the Board read Marlene's proposal, think it over, do research and come back with ideas. Some Board Members were wondering what surrounding towns might be thinking (Hadley?) We

have already had many 55-70 year olds here and they love the building and the Senior Center. The discussion will continue at the next meeting.

Special Announcement-Linda Desmond announced that she will be retiring as of March 30th, 2018. The Mayor knows and will start the hiring process. It will be publicized soon. She met all the goals she discussed with the Mayor when hired. She will still want to help with Age-Friendly Cities, Dementia, etc. The Board thanked Linda for all her good work.

Old Business

1. **Update on Mary's Bistro:** Heather said the Bistro is doing very well. Mass Appeal invited her to be on the show January 23rd. They will do a feature on the Bistro. The numbers are good. Heather wants to do marketing to publicize the Bistro to get more people in for lunch. MA Municipal Association Beacon Magazine wants to do an article on the program.
2. **ElderVision-Friends Group:** Elder Vision received the last of the Gala money recently. Doing well...about 27M in funds. Looking for projects to do for the Senior Center. They already paid for larger computer monitors for the Computer Room. High Yield accounts were discussed as a suggestion. Bob will look into it. They will talk about it at their Board meeting today. They still work with Trips & Travel too.
3. **Northampton Neighbors:** Northampton Neighbors has about 300 members now. Retired professionals. Partnership with them is good. Agencies can't do everything for elders, so Northampton Neighbors program helps. There are 40-50 volunteers vetted now. Two or 3 new people a day. They may be moving to VNA. Google Village Movements to learn more.
4. **Writers Conference:** Planning a 2-day writing conference here next spring on May 4 & 5, a Friday and Saturday night. There will be a ticket charge of about \$50 per day. Elks Club reserved. At least 18 book sellers will attend.
5. **EARN:** They will hold their second employment fair in the spring. Community block grant 4M. Suzanne Beck will be at their next meeting. Hopefully, the Chamber will become involved.

Highland Valley Elder Services Report by Kathryn Pekala Service

Kathy had to leave early to attend another meeting. No report this time.

New Business

1. **Gift Shop:** Heather discussed it above.
2. **UMASS Interns:** There will be interns helping in Fitness Center. They will monitor stats for people if they want. Ongoing research project for them. Health Presentations may happen. Linda is meeting with supervisor next week.
3. **Elms College Nursing Intern:** Karen Faszca's daughter is coming next week as an intern. She will be introducing seniors to hospital portal and will be able to help them interpret results.

4. **St. Patrick's Day Dinner:** Sunday March 11th - Corned Beef Cabbage. Chef Barb & John. Lots of Board Members volunteered. It will be from 11:30-1:30. Cost in town \$10, \$15 out of town. There will be entertainment. Barb Fungaroli will ask for FSB votes for Senior Center.

Other Business

1. Jim Spencer: Any news on genealogy seminars? Linda said it looked like the Library was taking on more of it. Linda will check with them. Talking about changing where our information is.
2. Update on Theresa Dunn. Email came back. Linda will write a letter to her. Barb Fungaroli asked her neighbor about her. They thought she may be on the Cape with her son. Formally follow the process.

Adjourning the meeting

Lorraine Weimann made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Marlene Marrocco seconded it at 2:55 PM. Motion was unanimously approved.

Announcements

- Next NCOA Board Meeting: Thursday, February 22nd, 2017 at 1:30 PM at the Northampton Senior Center. (Date change requested due to Dementia Meeting on 2/8. Board approved.)

Respectfully submitted by _____
Linda R. DeMercurio