

## BrooklineCAN Steering Committee

### *Notes*

June 21, 2017

**Attendance:** Ruthann Dobek, Karen Fischer, Susan Granoff, Susan Krinsky, John Seay, Ruth Seidman, Molly Turlish, Roberta Winitzer; guest-Peter Ames.

**Election of offices and Steering Committee members for 2017-18.** The slate proposed at the May meeting was elected unanimously:

- **Officers:** The two Co-Chairs (Ruthann Dobek and Frank Caro), Vice Chair / Secretary (Molly Turlish), and Treasurer (John Seay) are serving terms that continue until 2018.
- **Founding Partner representatives:** Council on Aging (Roberta Winitzer) and Jewish Family & Children's Service (Marsha Frankel) have terms that continue until 2018; representatives of the Senior Center Board, Goddard House, and Center Communities of Brookline are either vacant for now or to be confirmed.
- **Committee representatives:** Terms ending in 2019 – Susan Krinsky, Education; Susan Granoff, Livable Communities Advocacy (LCAC); Karen Fischer, Membership; Alberta Lipson, Member Volunteering; and Renny Harrigan, Service Referral. Term continuing until 2018 – Elenore Parker, Communications.
- **At large:** Ruth Seidman and David Trevvett [new], 2019; Matt Weiss, 2018.

**Connecting with businesses.** The first meeting of the task force on business connections to BrooklineCAN is scheduled for Thursday, June 29 at the Senior Center. Lance Chapman, Chobee Hoy and perhaps other business representatives will participate. Molly expressed a concern that the invitations extended to the business people did not include a reference to financial support of BrooklineCAN. Ruthann said that she and Frank could make it clear through the agenda prepared for the meeting.

**BrooklineCAN 2017 (Annual Meeting).** Molly drafted a email "Save the date" using the usual flyer format and incorporating a "word cloud" image for the theme, "The Power of Engagement." She sent it to members of the annual meeting planning committee. After their feedback, she will send it to the Communications Committee for review. Committee chairs have been asked to send accomplishments to Kathy Burnes for the program booklet.

**TRIPPS update.** The 2017 requests for grant proposals to fund the third year of programming came far later than in previous years, and the deadline was very tight. The hope is that these facts indicate that the grantors (State passing on Federal dollars) are happy with the programs they have been funding and are not seeking additional grantees. TRIPPS is sponsoring an event (with ice cream) focused on summer get-a-ways without driving on June 28, 1-3 pm at the Senior Center.

**Invitation to attend EOEI Discussion of Creating Communities without Walls.** Susan Krinsky wrote to the contact person at the Executive Office of Elder Affairs to say that BrooklineCAN is

interested in the June 21 State-wide meeting, but unable to attend. She asked for notes and any follow-up. Since the initial meeting was happening at the same time as the Steering Committee meeting, we have not yet heard anything in response.

**Fund raising strategy.** Ruthann outlined conversations she and Frank had about possible new projects to present to members (and perhaps others) as part of a request for donations. Molly said that her long experience with fund raising suggests that if we present new ideas donors will expect the funding to go almost entirely to the new initiatives. Since we need to raise \$5,000 or more each year to fund our current activities, she recommends that we put together a compelling “case for support” of our ongoing activities and services to present to potential donors. Once we have a history of completely funding what we do, then seeking funds for new initiatives is appropriate. Ruthann will convene Roberta, John, and Molly to craft a strategy and case for support.

Ruthann shared a letter received on the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the HELP program praising the connection made between the writer (a BrooklineCAN member) and the Home Care Worker, who has made it possible for the writer to live independently and to resume activities that she is passionate about. The letter expresses the writer’s gratitude along with tremendous pride in the accomplishments of the worker she has been matched with.

**Treasurer’s Report.** The past month has seen positive cash-flow. The prepared report detailed expenses for the spring membership event, including food, liquor license, bartender, etc. In-kind contributions to the event from the Senior Center included the cost of wine, beer, and cups. Reserves total \$15,856.

### **Committee reports**

**Service Referral.** Forty new businesses, referred by members and checked for licensure and lack of public complaints, have been added to the website. John anticipates adding a similar number once the current review is complete. Once the whole group is added, publicity about the revival of the list and including a request for additional referrals will be appropriate. The revised process for adding businesses to the list results in more vendors listed with somewhat less information about each.

**Member volunteering.** The Senior Center is hosting an event July 24 focused on volunteering with youth-serving organizations. Gen2Gen and Encore Boston Network are working with Deirdre Waxman on the event. The Communications Committee has been reluctant to publicize the event because a number of the opportunities are available in Boston, not Brookline.

**Membership.** Today we have 350 active (paid) members and 275 former members. Molly thanked the members of the Steering Committee who assisted with the spring membership event May 18. She said that the Committee felt that the event was very successful. The flyer and email blasts, the many contributions of the Senior Center, and the careful planning and execution of the event were positives. Issues include the higher than expected cost of the event and the large time commitment needed from the “party group” that planned the event. Molly indicated that the Membership Committee, which has just seen the final expense numbers this week, will consider

the impact of serving beer and wine – which sent the event over budget - when they next meet July 10. Members of the Steering Committee who attended the event said that they felt that – especially given the hot day – promising cold beverages would have been enough.

Steering Committee members who attended praised the organization and planning of the event, the food, the way the program was presented, and how enjoyable the evening was. “On message” was one of the ways the event was summarized, and the Steering Committee expressed thanks to the planning group for a successful event. Seventy people attended, including 35 current members (a very high percentage of attendees compared to other events throughout the year), seven former members (including three who renewed within days), and 28 non-members (one of whom joined that night).

**Communications.** Publicizing the Annual Meeting on September 14 has been a focus of planning. The July/August newsletter will include a brief article, a press release is planned for early August, email blasts are expected, and a longer article will be included in the September newsletter (distributed August 31 and September 1). Newsletters will carry the “Power of Engagement” theme through the year. The summer issue of the newsletter, to be distributed June 30/July 1, is nearly finalized.

**Education.** About 40 people recently participated in training to lead the Hello game, which is designed to prompt discussion of values related to selecting a health-care proxy and providing guidance to that person. The game features a small booklet with both light-hearted and more probing questions along with tokens of appreciation that game players can present to others at an individual table. The training at the Senior Center was organized by Laura Baber of Center Communities. A grant received by Hebrew Senior Life is supporting a Town-wide initiative to encourage residents to name and empower health-care proxies. The Education Committee meet the week of June 26 to plan 2017-18 programs.

**Livable community advocacy / Age friendly city.** All five of the warrant articles endorsed by BrooklineCAN passed at the May Town Meeting. The committee is preparing to update the restroom listing on our website and plans to discuss bicycle/pedestrian issues in preparation for a future joint meeting with the Bicycle Advisory Committee. The Pedestrian Advisory Committee will begin meeting in the fall. So far, there has been no action on the illumination of sidewalks after dark. LCAC anticipates a 10-12 percent over-ride vote next winter, making it urgent to put programs in place to assist seniors in dealing with a total increase in property taxes in the range of 12-14 percent. The committee meets in late July.

**New business.** Roberta announced that Karen proved to be an excellent bartender during the event honoring the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth (in Brookline) of President John F. Kennedy. Roberta also announced an October date for a contra-dance at the Senior Center.

**Next meeting.** Wednesday, July 19, at 3:00 PM. Future meetings (third Wednesdays at 3 pm) are August 16 and September 20.

Notes prepared by Molly Turlish