

BrooklineCAN Steering Committee

Notes

February 19, 2014

Attendance: Kathy Burnes, Carol Caro, Elenore Parker, John Seay, Peter Ames, Laura Baber, Molly Turlish, Ruthann Dobek, and Frank Caro

1. **Publicity for Age-Friendly City program.** Frank provided a rationale for BrooklineCAN to play an active role in disseminating information about the Brookline Age-Friendly City initiative. The age-friendly initiative came about as a result of BrooklineCAN effort. BrooklineCAN is strongly represented on the Selectmen's Age-Friendly initiative. Good publicity about the Age-Friendly initiative strengthens BrooklineCAN. The Age-Friendly committee has just finished a report on its activities in 2013. The committee wants to publicize the report. We have a stronger public relation's capability than does the Town. Matt Weiss has approached the Communications committee for assistance in publicizing the report. We will seek a more prominent place on our website. We will have an item about the report on our newsletter. Carol suggests that we place information in the Senior Center newsletter. Laura recommends that we make use of BIG (formerly Brookline Access TV). Kathy wants to disseminate the report to organizations in other cities. (Frank reported that there is almost no communication among municipalities who participate in the WHO Age-Friendly Cities program.) The Brookline report, however, is modeled after a report disseminated by the NYC age-friendly program.
2. The **Massachusetts Senior Action Council** will collaborate with the Education committee on a program to be held at the Senior Center on April 16 at 1 PM. The program will have a Medicare policy focus. We will publicize the event in our newsletter. Mass. Senior Action is an aging advocacy program that has enjoyed recent success in persuading the MBTA to reduce fares for those who use "The Ride."
3. **Proposal for Monthly Meetings for Members.** Karen Fischer has proposed that we hold monthly meetings for all members that would combine information about BrooklineCAN, a presentation on a topic of general interest, and a social gathering. The program content would overlap with topics considered by our education committee and Livable Community Advocacy committee. We agreed that Karen's idea is very attractive. The obstacle is finding volunteer leaders who will organize the initiative. We agreed that we should organize a pilot before we commit ourselves even to quarterly events. We need a planning committee. We will ask Karen to participate. We will check with membership of our

Membership, Education, and Livable Community committees to see if we have members who will volunteer.

4. Progress with **membership data base**. John Seay showed how the membership data base is set up. We discussed the fact that the membership data base is now a useful resource not only about membership status but communication with members. The data base has been used recently to obtain telephone contact information and to send an e-mail to the full membership.
5. The **annual meeting** will be held on Wednesday, September 17 from 5 to 7 PM.
6. **Planning committee for annual meeting**. Laura, Kathy, Ruthann, and Frank volunteered to serve on the planning committee for the annual meeting. Molly will see whether some members of the Membership committee want to serve on the planning committee.
7. **Informing members about opportunities to participate in a research project**. A recent request for assistance in recruiting subjects for a research project informs us of the need for policy about handling requests of this kind. For now, we agreed to handle these requests on a case by case basis. In this instance, Frank screened the request and then sought advice from the Steering committee by e-mail. With full support from the Steering committee, Frank sent a dedicated e-mail message to the entire membership. In the future we will probably not be as active in informing members about study opportunities. If we get requests regularly, we may provide members with a way to opt out of information about research projects.
8. **Discount committee transition**
 - a. Merchants have been informed by mail that the Discount program has been terminated.
 - b. We have not received complaints from members about termination of the program. Ruthann receives occasional questions about whether we have a discount program.
 - c. We need a chair for a future discount committee.
 - d. Frank needs to work with Lloyd Gellineau of the Health Department on a possible age-friendly business initiative that might include discounts.
 - e. Laura recommends that we enlist the Chamber of Commerce through its new executive director, Celinda C. Shannon.
9. **Communications**
 - i. Two hundred extra copies of the February newsletter were printed to promote membership. Some are available at Eastern Bank. Others may be distributed at Citizen's Bank.
 - ii. Elenore reported that she has issued a press release on the Education Committee's March program on drugs and alcohol. Elenore needs another volunteer to help with press releases.
 - iii. The web site is stable.

- b. Membership.** The membership committee is working on three initiatives: an “elevator speech” to urge people to join, an e-mail message encouraging Town Meeting members to join, and options for multi-year memberships. We are now down to 270 members. The dip in membership (from 300) is attributable to modification in the membership renewal process that has affected the timing of renewals.
 - c. Education.** The committee is working on 3 events:
 - i.** Alcohol and drug abuse by seniors (March)
 - ii.** Collaboration Massachusetts Senior Action on an April 16 event at the Senior Center to strengthen Medicare Policy
 - iii.** “Everything that you want to know about Elder Care, a forum on Elder Care in May.
 - iv.** The committee is also planning another event to simulate family discussions of end-of-life issues.
 - d. Finance.** Our income is now well above expenses. Income totals \$8,200. The expense total is \$5,489.
 - e. Livable Community Advocacy Committee.** The committee has been busy monitoring winter sidewalk conditions. Committee members are skeptical about the effectiveness of the Town’s enforcement practices.
At the suggestion of Selectman Nancy Daly, the committee is examining the Fire Departments’ capacity to respond quickly to emergencies. The committee hopes for a presentation by Chief Paul Ford at its next meeting.
 - f. Repair and referrals.** The Council on Aging has employed a new social worker, Jamie D., who will assume major responsibility for the Repair and Referrals service.
10. Next meeting: Wednesday, March 19 at 3:00 PM

Notes prepared by Frank Caro