

October 18, 2023

Attendees: Ruthann Dobek, Janet Gelbart, Susan Granoff, Bea Mikulecky, Yolanda Rodriguez, John Seay, Carol Seibert, Ruth Seidman, Tom Smythe, David Trevvett, Sonia Wong. Staff: Jessica Milley-Gee

1. Postpone discussion of BrooklineCAN priorities until October

- a. October: Develop elevator speech to communicate the purpose and scope of BrooklineCAN
 - i. Review paper on “Elevator Speech” for next meeting.
 - ii. Send out any suggestions for change or an additional one sentence speech prior to next meeting.
 - iii. Recognize this was 5 years ago so please update.
 - iv. New items such as role in increase of Senior Center budget and election forums.
 - v. Note BrooklineCAN website first page describes relationship among Senior Center, BrooklineCAN, Counsel on Aging and Age Friendly Cities Committee.
- b. Ongoing discussion of BrooklineCAN’s goals (see Susan Granoff’s document)
 - i. Agreed to use this document with minor changes,
 - ii. Need to communicate these goals to members and public.
 - iii. Newsletter will reaffirm commitment to BrooklineCAN goals.
- c. Discussion of BrooklineCAN priorities vs. Steering Committee priorities
 - i. Need focus.
 - ii. Need to identify which goals we want to focus on in coming year and what we want to accomplish toward those goals.
 - iii. Need to identify what Steering Committee needs to accomplish to support the organizational accomplishments.
 - iv. Need to have older adult issues listed on the website.
 - v. Pedestrian issues – Need to identify activity/goal for year.
 - vi. Pedestrian issues – Street lighting has been largely ignored.
 - vii. Advocacy issues – Identify one or more issues coming up in Town Meeting and/or Senior Center related.
 - viii. Advocacy issues – Consider broader issues for older adults.
 - ix. Social isolation issues – Promote programs/engagement.
 - x. Reach out – Conduct focus groups.
 - xi. Transportation – Key issue to focus on.
 - xii. Steering Committee – Membership goals.
 - xiii. LCAC – Attract membership.
 - xiv. LCAC – Expand educational role.

xv. LCAC – Voting should be limited to BrooklineCAN members.

2. Update on Brookline's AARP Age-Friendly application – Brookline accepted Friday September 8, 2023 in AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities

- a. Resources from AARP – Messages re forums and materials.
- b. Priorities similar to BrooklineCAN priorities.
- c. Perhaps have a future meeting to review AARP resources.
- d. Consider speakers from AARPMass such as Director and person involved in age-friendly issues.
- e. Perhaps bring AARP speaker to Annual Meeting.

3. November Town Meeting issues

- a. MBTA-CA State law compliance.
- b. Senior discounts for water and sewer taxes.
- c. Revision of Work-off program to match minimum wage.
- d. Warrant article re care of animals in pet shops.
- e. Warrant article re circus animals.
- f. Articles re rent stabilization program.
- g. Article re PFAS.
- h. Article to create a Moderators study commission for changes to form of government.
- i. LWV forum on Brookline form of government link on website.

4. Review of current property tax programs and participants

- a. Discussion postponed to a future meeting.

5. Treasurers report (John)

- a. Only expense was for newsletter.
- b. Membership dropped slightly to 201.

6. Committee reports

- a. Membership
 - i. Sign in sheets from the Annual Meeting – discussion.
 - ii. Add people to email newsletter.
 - iii. Sandy will add the people to the newsletter database.
 - iv. Future – Limit information to name and email address.
 - v. Same process for sheets from Brookline Day.
 - vi. Need on-on-one recruiting for chair and other committee roles.
 - vii. Need to identify time demands of chair and committee roles.
- b. Communications
 - i. Newsletter – Need someone to work with Carol. Need people comfortable with computers but do not require specific computer skills. Focus on vaccine clinics and Senior Center benefits. Note over 1000 emailed newsletters.
 - ii. News Releases – Need someone to work with Bea.
 - iii. Website – No report.

- iv. AFC-TV – No report.
- v. Social Media – No report.
- c. Livable Communities
 - i. Next meeting – November 13th at 3pm.
 - ii. Next meeting - Presentations on MBTA-CA warrant articles.
 - iii. Next meeting – Paul Warren will answer questions on MBTA-CA Select Board version others will answer questions re other versions.
 - iv. Next meeting – Discuss Water and Sewer tax discounts.
 - v. Next meeting – Discuss senior work off program changes.
 - vi. Last meeting – Rent stabilization program.
 - vii. Future focus on possible change in Brookline form of government.
 - viii. Sent a list of warrant articles to membership.
- d. Education
 - i. Review THE WISDOM OF MORRIE, Wednesday, September 27 at 1pm at the Senior Center.
 - ii. WISDOM – Full house turnout and David spoke on behalf of BrooklineCAN.
 - iii. November 30th – “Planning for Caregiving: Where do I start?” is a live event at the Senior Center.

7. Old & new business

- a. Tom Smythe, Social Worker – May be available to take on a project with BrooklineCAN.
 - i. 2nd year Masters student at BC working with older adults.
 - ii. MIT Age Lab – organizing life style leadership panel.
 - iii. Lifestyle Leaders Panel – Over 85 group convene bi-monthly for educational sessions and input re health and safety, tech, community organizing, et. al.
 - iv. UNC – Worked on social support networks for isolated older adults in Western North Carolina...
 - v. Living in Coolidge Corner last 1 ½ years.

8. Next Steering Committee: November 15, 2023 3pm

Attachment:

BrooklineCAN – Words for an “Elevator Speech”

Or a grocery line speech, or a social event exchange – basically, how to capture the essence of BrooklineCAN in a few words, whenever the opportunity presents itself

Key attributes to convey

- Advocacy
- Information
- Engagement

Words one might use (think of this as a conversation starter)

I'm a member of BrooklineCAN – an all-volunteer organization that focuses on Brookline as a great place to live for seniors and for everyone. We advocate for the ability of older Brookline residents to age in place, to remain engaged in the community and to have access to the information they need to make this possible. Because successful advocacy is at the root of everything we do, we are working to increase our membership to make our advocacy more effective.

Sample opportunities to talk about BrooklineCAN

- Someone asks, "Why did you decide to live in Brookline?", or "What do you like about Brookline?"
- Someone asks, "What have you been up to lately?"
- Could be at a dinner party, other social gathering, at church/synagogue, at concert intermission, in a line at the grocery store or bank, or yes, even on an elevator

If someone wants specific examples of what BrooklineCAN has done, here's a starting list

- Advocacy
 - BrooklineCAN brought together City of Newton and several Brookline Town department to create TRIPPS for transportation alternatives for seniors
 - BrooklineCAN monitors sidewalks in winter and advocates for timely snow removal to make sidewalks safer
- Information
 - BrooklineCAN provides a periodic newsletter and a website with information on many topics
 - BrooklineCAN provides a list of tested (vetted?) local service providers
 - (and is always looking for additional trusted service providers to add to the list)
 - BrooklineCAN has worked with local businesses to generate a list of restrooms in the neighborhood that are open to those who need them.

- BrooklineCAN sponsors events and presentations that bring together members of the community for learning, information sharing, and socializing [e.g., Conversation Project presentation, Mind-Body Connection presentation, etc.]
- Engagement
- BrooklineCAN engaged residents in Town senior housing to work on a project to include sidewalk safety in their neighborhood
- See “events and presentations” above
- BrooklineCAN offers many opportunities for older residents to be involved, to participate in advocating for a better Brookline

For many more examples of what BrooklineCAN has done, go to the website

<http://www.brooklinecan.org>

Choose examples that resonate for you.

Attachment – Susan Granoff List of Goals

1. Provide a forum for Brookline’s seniors to meet directly with Brookline’s government officials and candidates for town wide office in both large and small group settings.
2. Be an advocacy voice for the concerns of Brookline’s seniors to Town government decision makers and a recognized source of feedback for Brookline officials and groups seeking to know the views of Brookline’s older residents.
3. Provide opportunities for Brookline seniors wishing to use their skills and abilities to improve the lives of Brookline seniors and to make Brookline a better place to live.
4. Be a source of useful information about Town of Brookline events, programs, and news of special interest to Brookline seniors and other topics of interest to Brookline seniors.
5. Serve as a catalyst for the creation of new Town of Brookline governmental entities (such as the Pedestrian Advisory Committee), study committees (such as the Moderator’s Committee for Elderly Tax Relief), and programs.

Matt Note: May substitute “older adults” for “seniors”.