

Draft
BrooklineCAN Steering Committee
Notes

January 15, 2014

Attendance: Molly Turlish, John Seay, Carol Caro, Ruthann Dobek, Frank Caro, Judith Kidd, Peter Ames, Karen Zweig, and Kathy Burnes

- 1. Discount program and committee in transition.** Our discount committee is no longer active. We are not identifying the Brookline businesses that offer discounts. Gail Gordon no longer wants to play a leadership role. Ellen Bick remains interested but does not want to chair the committee. Ellen is willing to be a co-chair. Frank has drafted a letter that will be sent to merchants thanking them for their participation and informing them that we may be starting a new program in the future. Gail and Ellen have given their approval. The Senior Center staff will send out the letters. We are seeking a new chair. In the future, the committee may be concerned with discounts narrowly that are offered to all seniors. Alternately, our future committee may take on a broader agenda in identifying age-friendly businesses. The Health committee of the Age-Friendly Cities program has recommended an age-friendly business program. Frank is communicating with Lloyd Gellineau about the possibility of an age-friendly business initiative involving BrooklineCAN.

The committee voted unanimously to thank the Discount committee for its efforts. The committee is especially thankful to Gail Gordon for the leadership that she provided.

Leila Abelaw is a candidate to serve on the discount committee when it is revived.

- 2. Providing transition information to members.** We concluded that we will NOT place an article in our newsletter about the termination of the Discount program for BrooklineCAN members. Information that we currently disseminate about BrooklineCAN already indicates that we are now focused on discounts that are now available to all seniors. We will not reveal the fact that our committee is no longer active.

The newsletter will include a brief article indicating that a password will no longer be needed to gain access to the members section of our website.

We will no longer provide members with a membership card. (A major reason for providing membership cards is that they were thought to be useful for members when they claimed member discounts from merchants.)

3. **Membership data base.** John provided an extensive report on progress with the membership data base. We are using the Microsoft ACCESS database program. The data base includes information on committee membership. In the database, Payments are organized by household. We have stronger rules now for the timeframe for membership. These rules were developed by Molly Turlish and are described below. There is room in the data base for information about prospective members. We want to import the information we obtain at educational programs and other community forums for the prospective member list.

Frank promised to forward to Molly the signup list from the April 2013 forum on Senior Housing.

John is providing training to Molly and Sonia on use of queries to obtain information from the data base.

4. **Appointment of nominating committee.** Frank announced that Ruthann Dobek, Kathy Burnes, and Karen Zweig have agreed to serve on a nominating committee. The committee will be responsible for nominating officers and at-large members of the Steering committee. We will elect officers and at-large members at our May meeting. Karen will convene an initial meeting of the committee in March.
5. **Date for annual meeting.** We hope to hold our annual meeting in mid September. We identified three potential dates: September 15, 16, 17. Ruthann will check to see if those dates are possible for the Senior Center. We will appoint an annual meeting committee at our February meeting.

6. Committee reports

- a. **Communications.** In future issues of the newsletter, information about BrooklineCAN will be placed at the top. In February, we hope to print extra copies of the newsletter to help with membership recruitment.

We need to strengthen the ways in which new members get on the newsletter email distribution list. At present, anyone can subscribe online. John is interested in the possibility that data from the membership data base could be used to update the email distribution list for the newsletter.

- b. Professional service group.** At its February meeting, the Professional Services group will hear a presentation on end of life issues. At its April Meeting, the group will invite Frank and others to discuss options to strengthen the link between the group and BrooklineCAN as a whole.
- c. Membership.** Our membership promotion display has been moved from the Coolidge Corner branch library to the Main Library. The display is on the landing between the main floor and the ground floor. Karen Fisher was identified as a volunteer who might regularly check at the Main library to see that brochures are available. Our policy regarding length of membership now follows the approach used by magazines; that is, renewal extends membership for 12 months after membership was due to expire. A different rule applies for those whose membership has lapsed for more than six months. Molly reported in detail the series of notices that members receive as their memberships expire. Priscilla Smith, a volunteer, has agreed to send out membership renewal notices by e-mail. We identified a need for continuously updates information about committees since new members are sent information about opportunities to serve on our committees.
- d. Education.** On March 5, we will offer a program on “substance use” by older adults and boomers. The program will be offered at the Brookline High School. In May, the committee will offer a program on elder care. A panel has been assembled consisting of representatives of providers of service-supported housing. We discussed the possibility of adding someone whose organization is limited to community-based services. The emphasis in the program will be on answering questions from the audience. Judith recommended a future educational program on long-term care insurance. The topic has been covered in the past but deserves repetition. Frank recommended development of a program based on a new documentary film on end of life issues, “What Time Is Left.” The filmmaker, Dakin Henderson is interested in working with us to develop ways in which the film can be used to stimulate discussions within families.
- e. Finance.** Ruthann reported that income and expenses remain in balance. At the same time, we are not spending anything for administrative services. All of the work on membership management is being done on a volunteer basis.

Ruthann asks committee chairs to submit budget requests for fiscal year 2015 by March 31.

- f. Livable Community Advocacy committee.** The committee's winter sidewalk monitoring team has been active in reporting problems with snow removal from sidewalks in commercial areas.
 - g. Repair and referrals.** The Council on Aging has hired a social worker who will begin in February. The new staff members will have responsibility for the repair and referral service.
7. **Dates of future meeting.** Our default date for future meetings in 2014 will be the third Wednesday of the month at 3:00 PM. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, February 19 at 3:00 PM

Notes prepared by Frank Caro