

Minutes of the 1/12/14 Staying Put Board Meeting

4:30-5:44 PM in the Parlor at the Congregational Church of New Canaan.

Minutes: November and December minutes were approved.

Operations: Barb Achenbaum reported 281 requests for services in December; 216 were for rides. Although requests for rides were 216, actual rides given were 287 because some ride requests are split into two rides due to the length of time between rides. The December request numbers are lower than other months because Lapham Community Center and some medical offices are closed for the holidays. Also some members spend more time with family during the holidays. There were 70 non-ride requests, especially for help with Christmas decorations, which Steve Orteig managed.

Barb and President Judy Bentley met with Bill Piper of Waveny Care Center to discuss further collaboration between Waveny Care Network and Staying Put. Barb made it clear that Staying Put volunteers are giving many rides to the New Canaan Inn residents – almost 40% of Staying Put rides are for these members. Ten members from the Inn came to the Birthday Party on Jan 11.

Members: Assistant Director Donna Simone and Kathy Collins spent time with the more needy members; there is no way to account for how valuable their time is with these members! Ruth Lewis is the new member for the month; she lives in the Schoolhouse Apartments.

A suggestion was made for members to read to nursery schoolers and Kindergartners. Judy Johnson says that she had seniors read to her classroom and that both the children and the seniors loved it.

Dues: Invoices for dues will look more like invoices to expedite payments. Previous invoices looked like letters. Staying Put still has “summer” and “winter” members according to when they joined. This led to confusion over when payments were due. Treasurer, Janet Lanaway, will review and recommend a new system. Past notices included a survey or questionnaire. The feedback provided helpful information about interest in programming, events and volunteering. They helped new members feel more included and provided information on prospects for new members and volunteers.

Events: The Library and Staying Put will co-host an event featuring Dr. Robin Goland, Director of the Diabetic Center of NY Presbyterian Hospital, speaking on dementia. Date to be determined.

Barb reported on 8 events in December with a total of 107 attendees. The Volunteer Thank You Tea at Lyn Chivvis’ was attended by about 50 Volunteers, some of whom are also members. Jody Davis and Aram Tchobaniam provided entertainment and were a great success. A luncheon at Sally Campbell’s was also well-attended. The tree trimming party in the office was poorly attended because of the bad weather.

The Annual Birthday Party on January 11th was a huge success, with 117 attendees. Please send photos to Nancy Helle, Lois Sandberg and Patti Geanakos. Nancy will get the photos and a few quotes from Tom Ferguson and Judy Bentley into the papers. Regarding decorations, the helium balloons are problematic because the helium tank is weakly pressurized. This year the sweets were not as popular as the deviled eggs and mini Pigs in a Blanket. The singers were a hit, especially when the songs were familiar and the Staying Put members could sing-along. The change-up in entertainment from the magician (3 years) and the sing along (one year) to a performance was refreshing. Perhaps next year we can have more sing along and more rhythm. Some thought it was difficult to hear the singers.

Upcoming Events: A lunch is scheduled for January 20th instead of dinner. The change to lunch in the winter months and has been very well received by the membership. Also, on January 20th Jim Bach is sponsoring Physical Therapist, Roger Silva, to train Staying Put drivers at 2:30. Volunteer drivers have been sent an evite and reminders. On January 21st at 5:30 at the Presbyterian Church Barb will give a talk on why New Canaan seniors should join Staying Put. Board members are encouraged to attend. The Board is also encouraged to thank Jody Davis for volunteering her time at the December 11th tea.

Annual Appeal/Grants: As of December 31st Staying Put received 395 gifts for the Annual Appeal. Barb will be applying for grants from groups like the New Canaan Sewing Group and the New Canaan Community Foundation; Staying Put will apply for grants for specific projects. Fairfield County Community Foundation gave a \$10K grant for Villages to study and learn from each other and includes Wilton's Stay at Home, and other Fairfield county villages. Barb will invite Jane Nyce to attend.

Board/Community Reports

Information Technology/Databases: Patti Geanakos presented the results of her eight-month research on Database Management Systems. Patti recommended, Kindful, which has been in business for 3 ½ years and boasts the NFL and The Peace Corps as two of its customers. Patti interviewed two references about Kindful. The Executive Committee voted unanimously to start using Kindful before January 1, 2015, in order to get the rate of \$99 a month. Kindful has no set-up fee, and training and support will be included in the \$99 monthly fee. Kindful will do nightly backups, and has its own servers, which is a nice added security measure. Staying Put will not be locked in with a contract; and Kindful does not limit the number of contacts or amount of data in the system. The set-up and data input will take time. Kindful will generate Appeal and thank you letters. It also has many other fields available, e.g., tracking dues paid, salutation monikers, family members etc.

Janet Lanaway will look into integrating Kindful with QuickBooks. Kindful can generate a monthly report for Janet to reconcile the donations entered into QuickBooks. Cathy Fitzpatrick and Kathy Collins will help with the data consolidations and input. The goal will be to use donor data from the last 4-5 years, as opposed to from 2008. The older data from the eTapestry system will be downloaded after the initial data system is up and running. This is a good opportunity to clean up the data collected in previous systems and formats over the past 8 years. Many thanks to Patti for spearheading this research with help from Donna Simone, Barb Achenbaum, Janet Lanaway, Sue Scannell and Alex Geanakos.

George Brakeley has interviewed 7 Staying Put Board members and former Board members for the Archives and plans to interview at least three more.

Board Retreat: Judy has spoken with Lee Barnes about doing a Board retreat to discuss Strategic Planning. Lee served on the Board for 3 years and helps non-profits with strategic planning. The first retreat was led by Lee and Rogers Harper, who will help with the upcoming retreat. They will meet with members of the Executive committee to get an overview of where Staying Put is going, its membership size, age and needs.

The office atmosphere is very harmonious with the "Office Four" – Barb, Donna, Cathy and Kathy – working efficiently and well together. They would like to set Friday afternoons from 1-5 when things tend to be quiet, for office planning time. The suggestion of a Staying Put "policy reminder card" for rides is being considered. Weekend Call Duty was emailed to the Board. Please check for messages twice each day.