

Minutes of the February 10, 2014 Staying Put Board Meeting

A meeting of the Board of Staying Put took place on Monday, Feb. 10 at 4:30 pm in the Parlor of the Congregational Church of New Canaan.

President Tom Ferguson opened the meeting with the good news that Gloria Major-Brown will return this week after many weeks recuperating from her knee injury. The January minutes were approved.

Tom thanked Lois Sandberg for the newest, most colorful Newsletter ever with Joel Pelzner winning the gold medal for weight lifting air conditioners. Tom also announced that with the addition of Patti Geanakos to the Executive Committee, the technological expertise has quadrupled.

Executive Director Jane Nyce passed around the new scorecard that has a graph charting important statistics to show STAYING PUT's progress over the last 6 years. January was a busy month with 3 new memberships – some of whom are households – and one special member who changed to regular membership. (Ten percent of STAYING PUT members are special members.) Early in the history of STAYING PUT it was decided not to offer ½ year memberships (to those who spend many months out of town); however, in one unusual instance where the new member has a broken bone and expects to have a full recovery within the year, that person was given a half year membership.

January was busier in the request category also. STAYING PUT has been averaging 150 rides a month and January had 180 rides. NB: one request is measured as one ride, even when it is a round trip. Giving up a driver's license is one of the main reasons for people to join STAYING PUT. In January, 77 volunteers gave rides to 101 members; Jane calculated that this amounts to approximately \$125K worth of rides.

Many health-related issues required trips to doctors, help with Medicare, help with finding the right agencies, as well as home visits. Most of these issues are handled personally by Jane and Assistant Director Donna Simone.

January had many tech-related requests also.

Events in January were mixed; because of the snow, two events were cancelled. However the Birthday Party and the Russia dinner and presentation had the best attendance ever.

Please make every effort to come to the Birds of Prey presentation this Wednesday, Feb. 12 at 2 pm at the Nature Center. It is FREE, and will be indoors.

The publicity on NBC Nightly News with Pat Stoddard and Brian Williams was seen across the nation and the subsequent phone calls and email inquiries were also from across the nation. Thanks go to Patti Geanakos whose work with social media has raised the “reach” of STAYING PUT 1228%.

Treasurer Tom Turrentine noted that STAYING PUT received a good number of donations in January. (Some were in memory of Jane Sweet.) While the market was slightly weaker in January, the STAYING PUT Agency Fund at the NCCF is invested in two broadly diversified portfolios positioned for long term growth. Investments at Fidelity were liquidated and are sitting in a conservative money market fund. The Audit will be finished by the March meeting.

Fundraising has many different aspects.

Patti Geanakos has entered STAYING PUT as one of the recipients of the FCCF March 7 Giving Day. This is the twenty-first century’s answer to the Telethon. Over 140 501(c)3 organizations in Fairfield County are signed up already. This is an online donation program that is run by Bank of America, FCCF and Just Give, a national organization that does marketing around the country for this kind of program. There will be awards for most donations by 10 am; most dollars by 10 am; and awards for 2nd and 3rd places. The organizations that are involved in running this program (BoA, FCCF, Just Give) will get a % of the moneys donated.

The STAYING PUT information on the Guidestar website will be checked for accuracy before the March 7 Giving Day.

The Annual Appeal is on target with 58% of the goal already raised. The list of donors will be emailed to the Board with the expectation that each Board member will write a thank you note to those on their lists who donated.

Jane has been working on grants from various organizations.

Lyn Chivvis reported that the Volunteer Committee had its first meeting in many years! The reason for no meetings is that the Volunteers are out doing the driving, answering the phones, helping the members, and generally do not feel the need for a meeting. That said, the discussion at the meeting centered on the question of how to accrue more Volunteers, especially more drivers.

All members of the Board are already STAYING PUT’s most valued Volunteers; but we still need help from each Board member in convincing friends and neighbors to Volunteer. STAYING PUT needs more Volunteers in every category.

Suggestions for convincing a tentative volunteer include asking that person to come along when one is giving a member a ride. Also, keep the "Want to be a Good Neighbor" flier handy to give to a prospective Volunteer. (The fliers were designed by Arthur Congdon, a former Board member who moved to St Louis, but his heart is still with STAYING PUT. Three years ago we papered the town with these fliers to no avail. The better strategy is to give just a few to just the right store manager, office manager or doctor.

Thanks go to Joel Pelzner and George Brakely who, on the heels of NC Senior Men's Club showing the NBC Nightly News piece, managed to encourage 3 senior men to sign up as STAYING PUT Volunteers.

Phil Ives, Joel and Larry had a Membership Meeting and noted that there were no women present, so they decided to talk about how to focus on "meNbership!" It was decided that men would rather be asked to give help than to be the one asking for help. Therefore, perhaps one path to "meNbership" is through Volunteerism. Another suggestion is a monthly lunch for the men. NB: there are only 10 men who belong to STAYING PUT who do NOT live at the Inn. A combined lunch with Sr Men's Club is also a good possibility. The men's coffee started off small and now regularly has 10 – 15 attendees. A lunch might start the same way and become a good gathering.

The cost of membership is a deterrent for some, but there are savings to be had from all the different referrals of service providers at STAYING PUT. One member said his dues were less than it would have cost him to pay a stranger to come set up his new computer; instead he had a friendly STAYING PUT Volunteers who came and got him up and running and enjoyed a cup of coffee with him too. That's a real example of neighbors helping neighbors.

Along with the NBC Nightly News publicity, and the NC Advertiser article on the Birthday Party, Nancy Helle plans to run an article on Mitzie Transue and Volunteerism. Mitzie has managed the to fill the office with Volunteers five days a week! She has the magic touch.

The Events Committee meets every other month and has generally been run by Donna Simone. In an effort to take some of the burden off of Donna, Steve Orteig and Lyn Chivvis reported that they are going to ask each Events Committee member to take charge of one type of Event. For example, Ruth Kelly sets up the once-a-month dinner in a different restaurant each month. Lila Coleman has offered to explore music event each month. Other members will be asked for their ideas of what events they'll take charge of each month. The other important

part to be played by Events Committee members and by all Board members is encouraging STAYING PUT members to attend the events.

Tom Ferguson asked the Board to email names of potential nominees to the Board to him and to Judy Bentley.

The meeting closed at 5:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lyn Chivvis, Secretary to the Board

2/10/14