

AGENDA NILMA MEETING

DECEMBER 11, 2014

2:00 PM

GREAT MEADOW HALL

Call to Order

Len Green

Approval of November 13, 2014 Meeting Minutes

Appreciation Committee Report

Cynthia Shulman

Landscape Committee Report

Jay Berkson

Holiday Decorations

Nancy Kummer, Rabbi Judi Erlich

IT Support Services

Bob Pierce

Old Business

New Business

Adjourn

Call to Order

Len Green

Meeting was called to order at 2 PM by Len Green, President.

Present: NILMA members Len Green, Raya Dreben, John Averell, Jay Berkson, Arnie Heiger, Betty Rosencranz, Bob Sandman, Gloria Lerner, Howard Cohen, Sue Waxman, Jerry Sands  
with Steve Colwell, Marilyn Stone

Approval of November 13, 2014 Meeting Minutes

Motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of November 13 without change. The motion passed unanimously.

Appreciation Committee Report

Cynthia Shulman

The summary of the fund as of December 10, 2014, for the Fall campaign is:

<b>Independent Living Receipts (Fall 2014)</b>				12/10/2014	Expected	\$275.00
Total Contributors	333	Contributing	329	No Gift	4	
<b>Total Expected</b>	<b>\$91,575.00</b>	<b>Contributed</b>	<b>\$90,415.00</b>	<b>Reached</b>	<b>99%</b>	
<b>Assisted Living Receipts (Fall 2014)</b>						
Total Contributors	51	Contributing	40	No Gift	11	
<b>Total Expected</b>	<b>\$14,025.00</b>	<b>Contributed</b>	<b>\$12,465.00</b>	<b>Reached</b>	<b>89%</b>	
<b>Memory Support Receipts (Fall 2014)</b>						
Total Contributors	32	Contributing	16	No Gift	16	
<b>Total Expected</b>	<b>\$8,800.00</b>	<b>Contributed</b>	<b>\$4,825.00</b>	<b>Reached</b>	<b>55%</b>	
<b>Total Receipts (Fall 2014)</b>						
Total Contributors	416	Contributing	385			
<b>Total Expected</b>	<b>\$114,400.00</b>	<b>Contributed</b>	<b>\$107,705.00</b>	<b>Reached</b>	<b>94%</b>	
<b>STAFF APPRECIATION FUND DISTRIBUTION: Fall 2014</b>						
<b>Total Distributed</b>		<b>Total Qualified Employees</b>				
<b>\$115,000.00</b>		<b>248</b>				
<b>Average Check</b>	<b>Median Check</b>	<b>Maximum Check</b>				
<b>\$464.00</b>	<b>\$514.00</b>	<b>\$724.00</b>				

Cynthia Shulman, Chairperson of the Appreciation Committee, reported:

Since 11 A.M. the members of your Appreciation Committee have been distributing your gifts to 248 hourly employees.

This has been our most successful campaign -- \$115,000 is being distributed today. This gift will help to pay the rent, put food on the table, make car payments, buy clothing and help cover tuition.

Please stop by at the Winter Garden after this meeting to witness happiness. Some of the employees bring their children along to express their thanks, some shake each committee member's hand, all are smiling, as are we all.

My thanks to every resident who contributed to the fund to thank our hourly employees. My thanks to all members of the Appreciation Committee, with special thanks to our devoted and hard-working treasurers – Jack Goldberg, John Averell, and Dick Winneg.

### Landscape Committee Report

Jay Berkson

On October 30 the Landscape Committee made an inspection of the campus to determine if some areas could receive upgrades to further enhance the vision of the campus. Although we were not privy to the details of the maintenance contract currently in force, we have noticed that what we saw in pruning is much less than what we would like to see. In the Atrium you will notice much overgrowth, resulting in geometric shapes, which we do not want to see. At five years old, the plantings should be pruned to retain the original free-flowing design, and to receive new plantings. None of our proposed improvements will come to fruition unless they are included as a line item in the NBOC budget to fund ongoing improvements. In addition we are proposing a memorial walkway in Great Meadow in an alley of flowering trees. This could be funded by voluntary donations.

Len asked if Jay was in touch with the landscapers about current maintenance. Jay responded that he is in close touch with Kevin, who is in charge here. He agrees that improvements could be made with some additional funding.

Raya asked if within the current existing budget there is room to improve the existing plantings. Jay said that he does not know the details of the existing budget, but that far more should be done. The current landscapers are doing a good job on what they are tasked to do. Jay does not want to see our landscape becoming filled with geometric shapes, but rather with new and free-flowing, low maintenance plantings.

In answer to a question from Raya, Steve Colwell reported that we bid out the landscaping about 2-3 years ago, with a laundry list of maintenance that are done seasonally, including new plantings.

Since Jay is asking for an increase in capital budget, Len asked if he has spoken with anyone in administration. Jay said no, and that the work the landscapers are doing now is very good; they are working with what funds are available, not with what we would wish to provide.

Steve suggested that Tom West is the person to talk with and put together a wish list. This can be worked out with AQPS, our landscaper, to put numbers to it. Jay will pursue this.

Len asked that this be done over the next quarter to work something out with Tom West and the landscaper.

### Holiday Decorations

Nancy Kummer, Rabbi Judi Erlich

Len introduced Nancy Kummer, Chairperson of the Trust and Transparency Committee, to report on the request at the November meeting to discuss holiday decorations, in a timely fashion, with her committee and all others involved. Nancy gave the following report.

As requested by NILMA, The Trust and Transparency Committee convened a special meeting to discuss the issue of holiday decorations at NewBridge. A group of 15 residents met on 11/21/14. The group included eight members of T&T, two members of the Jewish Life Committee, three Christian residents, Rabbi Judi Ehrlich and Steve Colwell.

Nancy Kummer set the guidelines for listening to each other with respect and trying to walk in each other's shoes, keeping in mind that we are members of a community. All present were given the opportunity to express their opinions about holiday decorations and their suggestions for action. It was noted that while NBOC is non-sectarian in admission policy, it is a Hebrew Senior Life facility, and as such has attracted a majority of Jewish residents. Many Jewish residents have strong feelings about having lived as a minority in a predominantly Christian society, and here at NewBridge they want protection from the all-encompassing nature of Christmas holiday decorations. Residents spoke of feeling "saturated" and "bombarded" by Christmas -- the decor, the music, the commercialization. At the same time, the Jewish residents expressed concern about respecting the feelings of non-Jewish residents and safeguarding their ability to observe their holiday comfortably and in accordance with their faith and traditions.

Steve expressed his commitment to strengthen community and keep openness to all viewpoints. Anyone can live here, but the community at large can decide how we live. Rabbi Judi reviewed the history of the first five years of NewBridge, as our holiday observances have evolved. "HOME" has different meanings -- the public spaces are home to us but are shared, unlike our private residences. The stated policy from the outset has been to keep the public spaces neutral, even where art is concerned. Everyone is free to decorate and observe according to their own wishes in their private apartments. A festive Christmas dinner is served in Copper Beech, which will be decorated for the holiday.

The Christian residents present at the meeting were asked how their needs could be met. They requested some seasonal greens in public spaces and extended

days of decor in Copper Beech. One resident, who feels her needs have not been addressed, asked that Christmas decorations have equal time compared to Chanukah. It was explained by Rabbi Judi and others that Christmas and Chanukah are not comparable or equivalent holidays. They happen to occur at the same time of year but they have totally different meanings and significance.

Rabbi Judi outlined some of the important changes which have grown out of greater recognition of each other's needs. NewBridge now has an HSL-trained Christian chaplain, Gayle Robertson, coming regularly to meet with Christian residents here. She will also for the first time this year be conducting Advent services in the weeks leading up to Christmas -- dates and times published in our schedules. One Christian resident suggested that a committee open to all residents, of all faiths, help put up the decor in Copper Beech. Other suggestions, beyond the holiday season, were for increased interfaith learning, such as a Daughters of Abraham group, and other opportunities for dialogue. These positive suggestions were greeted with enthusiasm by this group.

One Christian resident spoke of the positive gains from learning about each other's traditions. She was attracted to NewBridge by the stated philosophy of "addressing the whole person and integrating the physical, emotional and spiritual dimensions of aging." As she has learned to rejoice in Jewish traditions, she asks NewBridge to rejoice in hers. Rabbi Judi notes that the conflicts are often more cultural than religious.

Steve wants to work toward finding compromises which, while they may not fully satisfy everyone, will cause minimal offense to most residents. A Jewish resident proposed that we expand the period of decor in Copper Beech to five days. Dialogue will continue, with the hope of expanding the scope of interfaith activity.

Len then asked Rabbi Judi to continue the report from the special group. He reminded residents that Rabbi Judi is the Interfaith Chaplain, serving the spiritual needs of all I/L residents.

Rabbi Judi stated that she is following up the excellent report by Nancy to address the question of how to increase the Christmas decorations without offending those who do not wish to have Christmas decorations at NewBridge. She pointed out that we cannot make everybody happy. However, a decision has been made in consultation with Rabbi Sara Paasche-Orlow, Chaplain and Rabbi for all of HSL, with Steve Colwell, and herself. The decisions made are as follows:

1. Christmas decorations will be for five days in Copper Beech only. There will be a live Christmas tree and poinsettias in the room.
2. There will be no other Christmas decorations in any other public space.

The rationale for this decision was to provide the spiritual and cultural need of all residents in the best way possible that does not upset anybody else. She offered the Talmudic saying: "This one enjoys, and this one is not diminished." This decision will provide the desired space and opportunity for Christian residents to decorate appropriately. Those residents who may not wish to see such decorations need not enter this space during the five days provided. Other public spaces will remain neutral, as they have for the previous six seasons.

John commented that he feels that although Christmas and Chanukah may not be of equivalent doctrinal significance, that they are both religious holidays in this discussion, and both should be considered.

John then pointed out that Chanukah services, candle lighting etc., are held in public spaces. He asked whether Rabbi Judi considered this OK in the spirit of the decision.

Rabbi Judi responded that she does feel that this is OK. It is admittedly a double standard, since both Chanukah and Sukkoth are celebrated for eight days in public spaces. This is just a fact at NewBridge. There is however no desire to deny non-Jewish residents the opportunity to celebrate religious or cultural observances simply because they are a minority at NewBridge. Jewish people have been in that role for far too long, and do not wish to put others in that position. This decision is the best we can come up with in our community.

Steve commended the special committee for the time and care and consideration each person gave to understand each other's concerns and viewpoint, and the decision as giving space to each person for what they want.

John mentioned that he personally agreed with the decision. He brought up the question for completeness sake in the discussion.

Marilyn asked that this topic be determined much earlier in the year in future so that last minute questions do not arise.

Rabbi Judi expressed the hope that the decision made here be considered a satisfactory decision for all concerned, to the extent it ever could be. She hoped that this not be rehashed continually. Clearly this may be reconsidered in future, especially as new voices are added to the residents at NewBridge.

Len congratulated Nancy, Rabbi Judi, and the committee for the excellent and sensitive job performed by all.

### IT Support Services

Bob Pierce

Len introduced Bob Pierce, who is responsible for servicing the IT and telephone needs for all of our I/L residents. He explained there are many complaints about our telephone service and the time of response to 1-stop shopping calls. Len asked if his staffing promised six months ago is now adequate for our needs.

Bob replied that it is not adequate. It has taken longer than planned. He has a new person starting on 12/17, and another on 12/22. Ben, starting on 12/22, has worked here before in summer and will work here another six weeks. He is very good in all fields of our needs. By the end of the year staffing should meet needs. Another intern will be hired. He will be split between Roslindale and here.

On phone coverage, a phone tech will be here two days a week, which should cover phone tickets. Bob will be here at NBOC Mondays and Wednesdays, available for direct consultation.

On any given day, he will have two people staffing IT, five days per week. Bob feels that calling Comcast has not worked well for residents, and may they may charge for simple services if they come to the apartment.

Concerning internet speed complaints, the speed has been tripled from 2 to 6 MBps. Steve says this has been quite cost effective.

Jerry Sands stated that he has been frustrated by no-shows when calls for service promised to come at stated times. A better control system must be in place. Jerry also asked for better information on when to call IT and when Comcast. Bob suggested calling Comcast first, but warned that they may charge up to \$100 to come out and change batteries in a remote, for example. He is trying to get the staff to respond to these many simple problems.

In answer to Len's restating the question of who to call, Bob said call 1-Stop Shop. He is trying now to supply tip sheets to the main desk operators, who may be able to make immediate diagnosis and suggest fixes to the caller. Next level is to call Comcast.

Betty stated a problem that after one ring her phone may go directly to voice mail. She often cannot get to the phone in one or two rings. Bob agreed that there has been an increase in 1-stop tickets for this problem.

John noted that voice mail systems usually have a way to configure how many rings should be allowed before voice mail picks up. Cannot this process be communicated to residents without bringing in technicians? Bob did not have the answer to this, but hopes that this can be supplied in a tip sheet.

Jay stated that he could not get internet in the Villa. Since Jay does not move his laptop, John suggested that he not use the wireless network, but have IT run an Ethernet cable directly to the wall from his computer. That way he will always have incoming service.

Sue Waxman reported having had many complaints from cottage people about slow or non-existent internet service, about phone problems of short rings, similar to other reports. Who do they call? She called IT directly and had a phone problem fixed without coming out. Steve said to always call 1-stop shopping now.

Howard reported that people calling him while he is already on the phone, and getting a message "You have reached a non-working number." Bob will get help on this.

Steve asked that all calls should be made through 1-Stop Shop (4-9500). All calls are recorded, and response times can and will be monitored. If you are not getting a response, then call again and record the complaint so it can be remedied. Further examples of similar phone problems were given by various members.

Arnie reported that he has called Comcast several times about TV problems with great success in giving remote steps to fix problems. He suggests calling Comcast first about TV issues, and then 1-Stop Shop if Comcast is not helpful. Len thanked Bob for appearing here, and looks forward to better service.

Len paused to thank Tiffany Gosier for placing copies of the NILMA meetings in the Library binder for all to read. Len also asked that we all support our new Centro Manager, Jeff Feldman, and give him some time to acquaint himself with people

and needs before inundating him with suggestions. He will be invited in the near future to address NILMA.

#### Old Business

Raya expressed thanks to Lynda Bussgang and Marissa for instituting the intergenerational program with Rashi and other schools to help NBOC seniors with their smartphones and tablets. They have been most helpful.

Jerry asked for a straw vote on a better starting time for a New Year's party here. Len stated that this was something to take up with Sam Lehrer and other interested residents, since this is not a NILMA matter.

John brought up a long-standing intermittent problem in the North entryway. For over three years, there frequently are "beeps" coming from the security panel at the entrance, audible inside and really quite annoying. Calls to security may not be responded to for hours or days in resetting the alarm. Is this alarm being ignored, and is there some way to fix the problem? Steve said that other buildings get these beeps. He will check with security on whether they get requests, and whether they reset these warning beeps that appear to be from unknown causes.

#### New Business

(none)

#### Adjourn

A motion was made and seconded, and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,  
John Averell, Recording Secretary