

MINUTES

Board Meeting

Thursday, January 11, 2024

6:00 p.m.

Chisago Lakes Town Hall



Call to Order

President Chris S. called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Attendance

President Chris Schneider

Vice President Scott Ross

Treasurer Marlys Dunn

Fundraising Director Natasha Zarich

Secretary Shelley Lindau

Member at Large Tim Clark

Member at Large Lori Bestler

Member at Large Dana Helm

Lorraine Swenson

Approval of Minutes

Natasha made motion, Dana seconded, to approve the minutes (action items list) for the November 8, 2024, meeting as presented. All Ayes. Motion carried.

Vote in New Members

Lori made motion, Dana seconded, to vote in new members Linda Thalhuber, Mallory Leider, Rochelle Hernandez. All Ayes. Motion carried.

Membership Committee Update

Lori provided information on membership and there was a discussion regarding GroupMe. There are approximately 68 members on GroupMe, so not all members were on there. Of the six new members, only four joined the GroupMe app, and it was agreed by the board that GroupMe should be the platform for keeping members informed. Chris acknowledged that some members are not big on technology, and he keeps in contact with a member who is not. Tim wondered if the problem getting people connected was the short time to respond before it timed out or possible security settings. Lori talked about the instructions on the welcome letter. Scott offered to have them reach out to him, and he will get them on it right away. There was discussion on putting things on the website blog and Natasha said not all Club events are on the blog because they are for Club members only and the blog is open to everyone. There was discussion on email, and it was noted that some of the emails go into spam or are quarantined. Lori spoke about specific members who were on the group me app and not on the communication list and some members who do not participate at all. There are some she will be deleting and one that Scott R. will contact directly to see if she is still interested. It was decided the issue of Club communication be brought up at the next meeting to see how members are connecting.

There was discussion on the process for new members and when to get them engaged. Natasha questioned who should be reaching out when the applications are received and the timeliness of acknowledging the receipt of an application. Currently, Shelley adds them to the contact list once they are approved, but it was decided they needed to be added when the application is received because of the lag time. Lori said she sends them information as soon as she receives the application, and Natasha mentioned doing the same with the Adopt a Grandparent applications. Dana sends applicants the AaGP if they noted on the membership app that they were interested. Natasha suggested adding non-approved members to the email list as soon as the application was received, and the Board agreed that was a great idea.

There was discussion on the process of approving new applicants, and Dana suggested the language “to approve” needed to be relaxed. It was decided that new members should be recognized and welcomed at the meeting and the formal voting-in process could take place at a board meeting. Lori would only have to send out one welcome letter. Applications will still be put in the “to be voted in” folder in DropBox until formal approval. Natasha will forward all members’ applications to her.

Treasurer Update

Marlys said the checkbook was still at approximately \$ 8,300. Dana asked if she received the \$500 from her employer, Thomas Rueter since they got a new system, and she wasn’t sure it went through. Marlys asked if it could be because of her new email. Dana will check. Marlys said she received a \$20 donation from an organization she doesn’t recognize, and she didn’t want to cash the check until she knew who it was from. There was one check written from the AaGP account for the Holiday mugs. Caroling brought in \$960 for the food shelf, and she had received a list from Family Pathways on the items needed. Of high demand were butter and baked beans. There was a suggestion to go to Sam’s Club and the benefit of ordering online where you could see the totals add up. Donation request letters were sent to the Fire Departments, but nothing has come back. She will follow up. Marlys is working on the tax returns and hopes to have them in by January 31st. Scott ordered flowers for a member’s dying father, and the Board agreed to reimburse him for that. Chris added that he and Marlys have a debit card in case there is another need like that.

Communications Update

Natasha talked about the newsletter and how she keeps adding items and will start adding new members. The merchandise link on there now and a request for people to start sharing their acts of kindness by submitting them on the website. It was also decided to share acts of kindness on the Facebook page. Natasha recently discovered she is able to schedule posts on Facebook, which makes it much easier.

Natasha provided updates on recent inquiries. One was from Carmen, who may be an AaGP candidate. Another was from Denise. There was still the suggestion regarding a book club by Edy. Chris will follow up on that. Mariette was another request for a lot of stuff she needed done around her house. Natasha will get the info to Scott, who will be working with Chris and Dennis for follow-up. There was a request from Dee who was looking for financial assistance. Natasha talked about providing her links to the County and Food Shelf, and Family Pathways. There was suggestion to refer her to Henery’s Humble Heart for clothing, and to Lakes and Pines. Another suggestion was the Community Lakes Access Fund as a resource and to use churches as a resource. There was a brief discussion on posting resources on the website, and a follow up question on whether we should endorse or just list them. It was concluded there needed to be more conversation on that.

Natasha reported there was spam on the CLGNC in the comments, and she blocked and reported it. There is also a lot of spam coming through emails.

Marlys reported there was outreach from the Lodge in Taylor Falls inquiring on the Club interest in getting involved in transportation. Marlys said she would prefer the seniors to get involved in the AaGP. She will follow up with them and see if there are any volunteers.

Adopt a Grandparent Program Update- Marlys D.

Marlys reported there were 12 volunteers and six or seven “grandparents”. She shared a story about a father in memory care who has a daughter in California. She was able, with approval from staff and his guardian, to Facetime him with this daughter and family. Marlys said there is another grandparent candidate at Eagle Ridge, and she will stop in and visit her. It was agreed more seniors needed to be

found for the program. She was working on getting more packets together and scheduling another meeting. Tim suggested going to churches and seeking out seniors who don't know about the AaGP, and Dana H. suggested having a booth at the church. There was also discussion on rebranding the AaGP to something like "Support a Senior". Dana thought it should go to the committee for a discussion on branding and goals. Marlys pointed out that personal pride keeps them from asking for help, and Chris said there needed to be a creative way to engage them.

Marlys talked about the biggest issue being transportation. She has connected with an organization that is looking to use their staff and equipment. This has grown into other organizations getting involved such as East Central Regional Transportation Council. Chisago County may also get involved. There is a survey being done and discussions happening now, and the next step will be getting MnDOT involved. She pointed out this was not just for senior transportation. The survey is going well. There are many Counties involved, and there is state grant money, and the Chisago Lakes Imitative Foundation has money.

Membership Engagement

Dana talked about goals for the Club saying one of her goals is new member engagement. She wants to get more volunteers involved and make them feel like they own it. She wants to try to get members to jump in, and she used Lorraine as an example. Chris pointed out that things are done by a lot of the same people. It was noted that most people don't volunteer unless asked. Dana suggested creating a buddy system, a sponsor buddy. Scott suggested providing a recap at the next membership meeting to try to engage new members. There was talk of surveying and having a clear call to action plan.

2024 Budget Discussion

Chris inquired on what numbers were needed to set the 2024 Budget. Marlys was preparing the 2023 tax return, and with the 2022 return, the Club should have a pretty good idea of expenses and revenues. Budget will be finalized at the March Board meeting. Shelley has list of all events, and Natasha has a list of activities.

Amendments to Bylaws

Amendments will be on the agenda for the annual meeting in April.

New CLGNC Dropbox

The current Dropbox is under Chris S., and Chris does not feel that one member should have control over it. Natasha will work on a GNC specific Dropbox, transfer data, and will make everyone an admin. There were questions on what the cost may be, and whether there was a non-profit free license. The amount of storage triggers the fee.

Celebration of the Lakes

Ticket sales-Tickets to win the ATV were handed out last Saturday at Shafer Grill. Shelly and Marlys were selling at the Gallery, and Marlys will be selling at Brinks. Tickets are \$10 and the CLGNC will be able to keep a portion of what the club sells. The ATV was not yet available, but Marlys reported that sales have still been successful without it. She explained things are behind schedule due to not receiving state approval timely, which is needed prior to printing tickets. Natash will send out a message regarding the raffle and asked Marlys to email her the flyer. Volunteers are needed to sell tickets on Friday night at Winehaven and the Uncommon Loon. Marly said GNC members can go to the Chamber to check out tickets for the Club sales, or they can get them from Marlys. They are tracking all tickets. The drawing is at 4 p.m. on February 10. It was noted that tickets needed to be brought to the membership meeting to sell.

Candlelight Walk- Natasha has created a volunteer form. Setup is at 4 p.m. and the event is from 5:30 – 8:30. Members are needed to set up the walk and to sell tickets.

Turkey Bowling- Chris S. has the pins from last year pins. Turkeys are needed as well as chickens for the kids to throw. Jakes on the Lake said they would partner with the GNC for games on the lake. This will take place from noon-2 p.m. on Saturday.

March Food Drive

Lorraine said that John from the Uncommon Loon has connected with her on the March Food Drive, and she will make arrangements with them. She said North Branch has round bins the Club could decorate and use for donations. She can do posters, and there are also Minnesota Food Share posters available that could be printed with the food shelf logo. Lorraine said she could get the link to the document. The dates are February 26-April 6. There was a suggestion that Cathy from Copy Pro create the flyer and board and maybe something to put around bin. It was suggested to not put dates on poster so it could be used at another time.

Zion Community Meals

The Club has only committed to January 29. Other dates will be considered.

Chisago Lakes Showcase

Marlys explained that this was formerly the Chisago Lakes Home Show. This year, it will be one day only on March 23rd. More info to come.

Rock Painting

Lori will be doing rock painting at her house in February.

Miscellaneous Meetings

Loranne talked about township meetings that are held in March and are an opportunity to present and request funding. Lorraine will find out more about it. She also talked about the Yellow Ribbon Network that is always looking for volunteers to speak to the group. They are a Military group and have quarterly meetings. She will find out when the next YRN meeting is.

Winter Plunge

The Plunge is February 17th and no one from the Club has signed up.

Next Meetings

GNC Club Meeting - February 8, 2024

Board meeting – March 14, 2024

Annual GNC Club Meeting - April 11, 2024

The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Secretary Shelley Lindau

“Chisago Lakes Good Neighbors club, through its resources and diverse membership, contributes to the needs and wellbeing of our communities through acts of kindness.”