

Kanata Seniors Council Inc.
Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Directors on April 19, 2024

Present: Greg Richardson, Frank Boisvenue, Liz Tucker, Rachel McGregor, Susan Ditmar, Sandra Freeman, David Lee, Kay Dubie, Doreen McNair, Arnold Finkelstein, Moe Saleh, Michael McMahan, Jeet Wadehra

Regrets: Sarah Trant, Lianne Dwyer

Associates/Guests: Janet Baigent (City of Ottawa), Tia Joshi Taft (Timberwalk), Patricia Whitney (Carp Commons), Kristy Corey (Symphony Senior Living), Lillian Cepalo and Sarah Wells-Heemskerk (Comfort Keepers), Patsy McCarthy (The Bradley), John Kern

Opening: Frank Boisvenue opened the meeting shortly after 9:00 am with a welcome to all, and an introduction of guests. Special thanks to Kristy Corey and Symphony Senior Living for treats this morning!

Approval of agenda:

Liz Tucker moved that the agenda be approved as circulated; seconded by Susan Ditmar. Carried.

Approval of previous minutes:

Susan Ditmar moved that the minutes of March 15, 2024 be approved as circulated; seconded by Doreen McNair. Carried.

Presentations:

The Bradley (Patsy McCarthy): A Health and Wellness Expo will be held April 20 from 11:30 to 3:30. Proceeds from the sale of baked goods will go to the Kanata Food Cupboard.

Timberwalk (Tia Joshi Taft): A Plus 55 Show will be held April 19/20. The theme of the Open House on April 27 will be Famous Canadian Artists, including “The Beaverbrook 7”. Events in May include a Mother’s Day High Tea and a Flower Power Party, plus an outing to the Tulip Festival.

Symphony Senior Living (Kristy Corey): A Hawaiian Luau will be held from 12:00-2:00 on April 19, and Mother’s Day Lunch will be held in May.

Carp Commons (Pat Whitney): The residence will be raising funds for the Alzheimer’s Society in May. Events will include a Mimosa Brunch May 10 and a walk May 25.

Comfort Keepers (Lillian Cepalo and Sarah Wells-Heemskerk): Comfort Keepers provide in-home care and assist people with daily living, giving 1:1 custom care. The bulk of their clients are seniors, but they also have some younger clients with disabilities. June is the “Month of Joy”, where appreciation will be shown for caregivers and clients. A barbecue will be held at Chartwell on June 26.

City of Ottawa (Janet Baigent): Registration for the summer session starts May 16. The city is still looking for more qualified instructors. Staff is busy working with the Council on the Garage Sale and Far West Fun Fest (and we greatly appreciate it!). The HVAC unit is broken, so for now, there is no heat or A/C. As of Monday, April 29, Maureen Moynahan will be back at KSC and Karim Ahmed will be going to the Nepean Seniors Center.

General Items/Events: Note that as of this meeting, items of interest to residences and other guests have been moved up in the agenda, to be discussed before the coffee break.

- Garage Sale May 4: we could still use a few more volunteers for setup and cleanup (at least 2 more for each); still need 2 people to post signs at street corners the week before.
- Far West Fun Fest: Registration booklets have been printed and are ready to go. Many thanks to Karim and Janet for helping make this happen. Volunteers are in place for registration; we are looking for a few more volunteers to help at the opening breakfast and closing lunch.
- Seniors Marketplace: We closed the event with about 300 attendees, over \$6,000 in gross revenue and about \$300 in Café revenue. All the feedback from the exhibitors (and attendees) was very positive and many indicated they wanted to be invited again for next year. We had 31 commercial enterprises exhibiting, and 5 Not for Profit exhibitors (at no charge). Thanks so much for the commitment of the 4 Marketplace team members and the hard work of the 9 event day volunteers, as well as the city staff, particularly Karim, for helping to make this such a success. A more comprehensive report will be issued in the coming weeks.
- AGM June 17: Poster is done; will go up next week to catch everyone coming in for the Garage Sale or FWFF registration. Director nomination forms plus nomination forms for the Frank Valentine Award will be placed in the folder at the front desk. Volunteers are in place for registration; announcements will be in the May and June newsletters. **NB: all directors with a portfolio – we need your annual report covering the calendar year 2023. Deadline for submission to Rachel is May 24, 2024.**
- Travel and Lifestyles Highlights: Mike talked about the International Dining Series and Visits to Residences, great events at reasonable cost for the participants.

Financial Report: Liz Tucker is filling in as interim Treasurer at the moment; she reports that all memberships and insurance payments are up-to-date; plus, all requests for payment/cheques have been actioned (see Treasurer Status under Old Business).

Correspondence: A letter was received from Gordon MacKay (a new KSCI member), offering to do Free Workshops for Seniors. He also approached Janet and the city. As the workshop proposals were mostly Health related, the letter was passed to Kay. She and Janet will work together to schedule the first one to see how it goes.

The Dementia Society has several modules on the web; we should perhaps invite someone to come to KSC and present some modules – we would need someone to facilitate. Perhaps an idea for a future Friday to increase café sales.

Directors Reports:

Communications/PR: No report.

Technology and Website: Website Statistics: Visitors – March 686, February 639; Page views – March 1427, February 1373. Newsletter downloads – 33. Top 3 pages (after home page): calendar, activities, and the Centre. Facebook: Good responses from event postings.

Travel and Lifestyles: Summary: Financial: Team well ahead of planned budget for 2024.

- 9 events held in Q1 2024
- 6 events held in Q2 so far. Several more to come in June.
- The team is happy and working well.
- Still a good participation in events so lots of demand for these types of activities.
- The team, as usual, is fantastic and operating smoothly.
- Overall running at about 3 events per month.

Upcoming Planned Events (April):

- Spring makeover
- CAA Travel seminar
- International Dining: Indian
- Pizza and Trivia at the Brookside Senior Living

Upcoming Planned Events (May):

- Spring Maple Pancake Breakfast at the Kanata Legion
- Kanata Theatre: Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery

Event	Month	Status	Participants	Net Profit
Kanata Theatre: Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery	May	In Progress		
Spring Maple Pancake Breakfast at the Kanata Legion	May	In Progress	16	\$80
CAA Travel	April	In Progress	25	\$0
International Dining: Indian (The Magakali)	April	In Progress	25	\$125
Pizza and Trivia at Brookside senior living	April	In Progress	13	\$0
Spring Makeover	April	In Progress	29	\$145
Kanata Theatre: Brighton Beach Memoirs (and Busters)	March	Completed	10	\$40
International Dining: Turkish (Turkish Kabob House)	March	Completed	29	\$145
Seminar: Kanata Art Gallery	March	Completed	19	\$0
International Restaurant Series: Thai (My Thai Village) --	February	Completed	20	\$100
Lunch and Trivia at Busters	February	Completed	35	\$175
Kanata Theatre: Mauritius (lunch at Busters)	February	Completed	12	\$48
International Restaurant Series: Italian	January	Completed	26	\$130
Seminar: Beaverbrook Library Services for Seniors	January	Completed	22	\$0
\$5 Fridays: Kanata Legion: Fish & Chips & Darts	January	Completed	24	\$120

Month	# Events	Net Profit	# Participants
January	3	\$250	72
February	3	\$323	67
March	3	\$185	58
April	4	\$270	92
May	2	\$80	16
June			
July			
August			
September			
October			
November			
December			
TOTAL 2024	15	\$1,108	305

Liz had a comment from a client who takes part in a lot of T&L activities; she said that some of the posters are too wordy, making it hard to read and/or pick out the important info. Contrasting colours should also be checked to make the posters easier to read.

Honours and Awards: Volunteer Appreciation celebration: The plans for the June celebration with the city are mostly in place. Thanks to all who provided information. The first email blast to volunteers will go out Monday, May 13.

Membership and Volunteers: Our volunteer tea for National Volunteer Week, held at the Bradley April 17 was a great success, even though the turnout was lower than hoped. Many thanks to Patsy McCarthy and her team for the wonderful tea and goodies. Volunteer pins were handed out; for those that did not attend the tea, the pins were distributed via team leads (in person throughout the week where possible). We signed up 20+ new members at the Seniors Marketplace April 13. Many people stopped by our table to ask about the council and what we do.

Telephone Trail: We have now done four months of notices. Our lists are very small, but there are still those who appreciate the calls.

Health: We had a very successful seminar in March with 51 attendees. Our health fair plans are firming up and we have a very nice selection of subjects. We will not be presenting any programs May to August. At the Diabetes clinic in April, 27 attendees were very happy with the information received. (Note: as of the next meeting, a Health Team summary will be added to the section before the coffee break).

Advocacy and Outreach: 1. The Kickoff meeting for the A&O Committee is scheduled for Monday 15 April 2024; it will be attended by most members (some apologies). 4 new members, one KSCI member and 2 Alumnus. Members introduction, a scoping presentation and general discussion are on the agenda.

2. Submission of a proposal titled “Kanata Seniors This week” that is a weekly email message to all our members listing all activities, events, alerts, etc. concerning the Kanata seniors. It

should be published on the same day of the week. Feedback from recent events shows that our members appreciate Push type frequent messages making them aware of what is happening. The submission is a preliminary document and requires further development. A&O is seeking support of the board via a Motion to allow a few members to finalize this submission for final approval. This will be discussed under New Business.

3. KSCI is planning to participate in the “Volunteer Expo Spring 2024” (organized by Volunteer Ottawa). It will take place on Thursday, May 23, from 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM in the Rideau Hub cafeteria, 815 St. Laurent Blvd.

Moe also wanted to stress the importance of “No scents” at our meetings and events; however, there is no City of Ottawa policy that a public building such as KSC is scent-free. We can encourage it, though.

Sponsorship: The signing of new sponsors is on hold until we sort out the Newsletter and the number of ads. Sandra has received requests from 4 companies wanting to be sponsors; although they cannot be sponsors, there are many other ways to be contributors at events. Requested that this be an item for discussion at the May meeting.

Fundraising and Grants: Arnold reports that a new approach with better integration is needed, and a plan will be presented soon. Kay reported that the Retired Teachers of Ontario give grants to community organizations, up to \$4,000. Applications are due by May 15 – this should be added to our list of available grants, so it is on our radar each year.

Café: Doreen reports that the cafe is doing very well; we have had some good revenue on some days and are attempting to increase the income.

Linda and Doreen met with Brad Hammond (WOCRC) and his assistant from the Diners’ Club with a view to perhaps catering this event. They do not have a contract with Scott’s who serve a fairly simple meal at a cost of \$12.00 per person for the guests. \$2.00 of this amount is for entertainment; Scott’s get \$10.00. Scott’s deliver the prepared meal; 8 to 10 volunteers serve up the meal and clean up. The volunteers also enjoy the meal at no cost to them. Linda and Doreen also met with the 6 cooks to get their feedback on this proposed takeover. 4 of the cooks attended the lunch this past week and reported back to us. We have decided that it is not feasible financially to take over the Diners’ lunch; since we would only get \$10 per person, and after expenses, we do not think it is worth the time. In addition, our cooks are not really interested in working an extra day a month.

We have discussed the possibility of hosting a lunch at \$15.00 per person every month (or every second month). These lunches are very popular and usually sell out with a good profit. The Bradley is providing lunch for 50 on May 1st which will generate a clear profit except for payment of the room.

Doreen inquired about how to get a daily sales report from the new cash register, just an indication of how much money was taken in each day. This should be available; David says it is possible. Liz can also give Doreen daily cash totals if she is in the center.

Advisory Committee: The new agreements (Café and Computer) previously approved, are still at the city's legal department for standardization. Possible return is May/June. We continue to operate from the versions submitted.

KSC mentioned that there are some relatively minor projects that we might be able to help with now. KSCI does make use of these items, and it would be very helpful if the city didn't have to spend their budget to replace/repair them. First, one of the current large coffee urns quit working; replacement cost \$250 plus tax. Second, the 2 projectors that we use do not have spare lamps. Obviously, if a lamp burns out, the projector is useless until the bulb is replaced. Cost of spare bulbs \$175 each plus tax times two. Last, the portable projection screen has a broken metal supporting piece. It will be taken to see if it can be welded; if so, expected cost of repair \$300 plus tax. The board should consider some or all these projects for KSC to fund. To be discussed under New Business.

I'm sure you have noticed how parking near the center entrance has become unavailable at times recently. This may be a cause KSC wants to champion. There have been discussions in the past about increasing the parking, but without a concerted effort, and a community group behind it, there will be little progress. To be discussed under New Business.

Executive Committee Report: See Advisory Committee Report and Old/New Business.

Old Business:

Vacant Positions: A new candidate for Treasurer has come forward, Susan Ditmar. She has over 15 years of experience in financial software, and has been involved in A/R, A/P and GL, so using Quickbooks should be no problem. Thank-you Susan!

Greg Richardson moved that the Council approve the appointment of Susan Ditmar as our new Treasurer. Seconded by Kay Dubie. Carried (100%).

The position of Newsletter editor is still open; Greg is filling in on a temporary basis. We may put an ad in Volunteer Ottawa; plus, we have a couple of people that we might approach individually in person (this may have more effect than a general announcement/request). The T&L team members have a wide background of skills and will also be canvassed.

Spring Cleaning the Capital: Scheduled for April 20 with a rain date of April 27. A good group of volunteers has been lined up.

KSC Priorities – Membership Survey Report: the survey is now closed; and a slide deck of results has been generated, to be circulated soon. This deck is 44 pages, and contains a lot of information. Key takeaways from the results fell under 6 headings: Communications; Membership; Diversity; Age/Gender; Volunteers; and Activities and Services. It was agreed that a special Board meeting should be held in the next couple of weeks to discuss the results.

Mike commented that the survey team has put in a lot of work, and the results indicate many strengths as well as areas for improvement. The deck contains one slide per question, so it is easy to do a SWOT analysis and see what our membership is saying. It should give us information on what to focus on in the next quarter/year.

There were about 240 responses, including our members plus some from the general community. 93 self-identified as members of KSCI; when in reality only 43 actually were members. Free coffee chats will be accepted up until May 1 only.

Arnold reminded us that confusion over the council vs the center is not a new problem. There were about 30 paper surveys, and he feels we had a good response rate. John Kern (council member) asked about reporting the results to our members and would there be a synopsis at the AGM? It was suggested to have a “teaser” in the June newsletter, with a more comprehensive report delivered as part of the AGM.

Discussion arose as to whether to discuss the results now, or table it for the new Board of Directors after the AGM. It was agreed we should not delay too long. John asked if the meeting about the results would be open or closed. An open meeting would allow Janet to attend as well, as many of the decisions/strategies affect the center/city as well. The residences might also be interested in how to partner with us on what we decide to do. High level results (not individual questions) will be presented at the AGM, to which the residences are invited, as Associate members.

Website Refresh/Update: Progress is being made: a Technical Lead, Michael Leung, has been found from Volunteer Ottawa. A committee of 6 people has also been formed to look at the current website, and start mapping out where we go from here. One or two meetings will be held over the next 3 weeks. If anyone has any suggestions, forward them to Greg.

New Business:

Layout of Tables/Seating at Board meetings: Mike suggested we think about how we can organize the tables in the Owen Prince room to be more effective. Our recent in-camera meeting took place in the Susan Finch room, where we were closer together and sitting around a single table. The organization in the Owen Prince room is less optimal for discussion as people are farther apart. The idea of having fewer tables with chairs at the back for extra seating was dismissed, as we want everyone to feel part of the meeting. The suggestion was that, after the coffee break, the tables be moved closer together and/or all board members would move closer to the front. It was agreed that we would try this at the May meeting.

Advocacy and Outreach – Proposal for “Kanata Seniors this Week”: A proposal for a new newsletter-type document was circulated prior to the meeting. Moe did something like this for the Neighbourhood Watch program; he believes it can foster good communications with people. This would be a “push” notification, at the same time each week, and could operate on a shorter timeframe than our current newsletter. It would include events for the upcoming week, plus sponsor events or stories. It would be more text-driven, so would have fewer requirements for editing or formatting than our newsletter. However, it would still need an editor and a committee to put it out, and we had agreed when we first brought in the monthly email blast, that we would only send out one email per month to our members. Discussion centered around the pros and cons of putting together such a document. Communication is one of the key directions from the survey results, and from an advocacy point of view, we could reach out to our members to get them involved in doing something. In terms of member engagement, weekly is better than monthly, and members will feel part of the organization. Other than more emails to our members, other suggestions were a running ticker on our

website or other link/icon on our website. But some feel a “push” mechanism rather than a “pull” from the website would result in more people reading it.

Greg believed in taking advantage of methods of communication as much as we can, but switching to a weekly issue might be too much too quick. He suggested perhaps starting with a biweekly example to gauge interest/support/feedback. It was agreed to defer more discussion to a meeting about communications after discussion of the survey results.

Advisory Committee – minor projects requiring funding: As per the Advisory report earlier, the center needs to purchase a new coffee urn (\$250) and 2 spare projector bulbs (\$175 each); plus repair the portable screen (about \$300). Note that the council uses all of these items at their various events throughout the year (especially the AGM and FWFF). The city will approach the Kanata Seniors Craft Group to pay for the new coffee urn.

Greg Richardson moved that the council support the city by paying for the purchase of 2 spare projector bulbs and the repair of the portable screen, to a maximum of \$650. Seconded by Susan Ditmar. Carried (100%).

Advisory Committee – parking issue at KSC: The problem of the lack of parking at the center is not a new one. People have asked for more handicapped spots (but they take up twice the space of a regular spot). There should be easy access from the tennis club parking lot to the courts, so more people will park there. We need a larger parking lot, so we need to write to our City Councillor and/or the Mayor. We need to get the public behind this as well, perhaps via a petition to get the city to look into the issue. (Transportation and Parking were also big issues in the survey results).

Next Meeting: Friday, May 17, 2024, 9:00 am.

Note that the June meeting has been moved to June 14 (the 2nd Friday instead of the 3rd).

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at about 11:30 am.