

**LOHO Board of Directors  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Tuesday September 16, 2025  
At the Gathering Place and via Zoom**

**Present at the Gathering Place:** LOHO Board Members Mary Ann Cameron (arrived at 10:15 am), Karen Gilbert, Shannon Wilbur, and Barbara Orcutt, plus Hamlet House Director Amy Hatchel and Hamlet Executive Director Heather Harrison. Cottage resident Polly Ham was also present.

Board Members Kip Greenthal, Karen Johnson, and June Coover were absent.

Chair Barbara called the meeting to order at 10:02 am.

**Declaration of Conflicts:** There were no Declarations of Conflicts.

**Announcements:**

This is Karen Gilbert's last board meeting, and Chair Barbara thanked Karen for joining the Board when she did. She joined at an important moment in time, and we are grateful for her service. She also brought great people onto the Hamlet House committee, and we are happy that she will remain on this committee even after going off of the Board. Diane Dyer also recently joined the Hamlet House committee. Kai Sanburn is still on the committee, but has been doing service work elsewhere so she has not been very involved recently.

**Approval of August 19, 2025 Board meeting minutes:**

*Action: Karen Gilbert moved that the August 19, 2025 Board meeting minutes be approved. Shannon seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.*

**Public Comments:** Polly Ham announced that she is willing to join the Board. There will be a vote at the end of the Board meeting to make this official.

**Hamlet House report:**

Amy reported there is currently one market rate room open at Hamlet House, and she has alerted the clinic, LIHHS, pharmacy, etc. to help spread the word about the vacancy.

One of the Hamlet House caregivers had a stroke, but is recovering well. Amy worked on the floor all weekend to cover staffing shortages. Otherwise, staffing has been fine.

For two days next week, five of the caregivers will be attending the fall Adult Family Home conference in Tulalip. They can each get up to 12 continuing education credits for it. Amy will cover, and a previous caregiver will be back on island and can work on the weekend with Amy.

Amy is working with LIHHS to get the upstairs at Hamlet House cleared out so durable medical equipment can be stored there.

The new concrete walkway is very nice and will allow residents to attend events in the Gathering Place much more easily.

In reviewing the financials, Amy noted that August had been a three-payroll month, so payroll was much higher than normal by approx. \$20,000. Also, since Hamlet House currently has a vacant bed, income will be lower in September than it has been. Otherwise, all looks fine.

*(Mary Ann arrived and took over responsibility for the minutes from Karen.)*

### **Cottages report:**

Heather reported there will soon be a vacancy in a two-bedroom Cottage. The Cottage has been offered to someone who accepted and the new resident will be moving in soon. Heather expects there will be a vacancy in a one-bedroom unit soon, as she expects a resident to move into one of the new apartments in Lopez North.

During the month, there was another artist opening, and the Cottage residents enjoyed a BBQ on September 10.

There have been issues with smoke detectors in Cottages. All 30 detectors were replaced in May because the older ones were going off unexpectedly for no apparent reason. Residents were pulling them down when they went off and at times permanently disabling them. She sent out an email with steps detailing what to do if they went off unexpectedly. Cottage leases state the detectors can't be disabled. The smoke detectors we have get good ratings, but Heather is trying a new brand after reaching out to different experts for advice. Dave Welker is away until the end of the month, so she is reaching out and hiring others to help with replacement of the detectors.

The new concrete walkway is in place. However, there is the potential for folks to fall off the edges, so some sort of edging needs to be put in place to prevent that from happening. She will consult with Dave about the problem. Those from Hamlet House are usually accompanied by someone when coming to the Gathering Place. But others who are not accompanied by someone could accidentally slip from the pathway edge.

Heather indicated that the recent author event at the LCCA generated \$170 in donations, plus \$10k from a generous donor. Financials are doing fine overall. Donations look low on the LOHO budget since so many donations are restricted, but the donations and grants worksheet shows that we are doing fine.

Heather will eventually be hiring a Cottage Manager. That person will need to have maintenance skills, as well as good social skills.

### **LIHHS Report:**

Elizabeth provided the LIHHS report for the Board. She is the LIHHS Board Chair, and her first term will be over at the end of the year.

She indicated that one of the things they are trying to do is to expand their footprint to help support other organizations like LOHO. Last year at their Jingle event, they were able to invite

LOHO residents thanks to generous donors. Others appreciated the mix of people at the event, which also included their partners who provide support to others in our community. This year, the Jingle Mingle fundraiser for LIHHS is Dec 6.

LIHHS had an event about fall prevention in May that was well attended. Lopez Fit and others cooperated with them to do the event. They want folks to know them as something more than just Hospice. There are volunteers who visit Cottage residents. They would like to have an LIHHS volunteer who could roam and be a rover to Cottage residents.

Elizabeth said LIHHS is looking to help underwrite and partner with events so that they can be seen as something more than Hospice. She emphasized there is something more to celebrate in life than just the end of life.

Elizabeth said some generous donors gave to them because they were collaborating with others. There are opportunities for LIHHS and LOHO to work together.

Shannon asked about having someone from LIHHS be on one of our committees. Barb said collaborating is the way to go. Elizabeth said they reached out to Lopez Fit and others and eventually came up with the May event. They hope they will be able to continue to partner with Lopez Fit and EMS for more events in the future. Karen worked as Home Health nurse in 90s.. She would be happy to help with another event in the future.

Shannon thanked Elizabeth for her help with the event and other things she does for LOHO.

### **Old Business:**

#### **Investment and Finance Update:**

The Financial Committee hasn't met yet. For financials, another T-bill was rolled over for another six months per Damon's advice. When another one comes due, Heather will evaluate it again.

#### **Governance Update:**

Shannon indicated the committee hadn't meet since August. Logan Knight will be coming to our next Board meeting as a potential new Board member. He's an artist. Diane Dyer will serve on the Hamlet House committee.

#### **Fundraising Update:**

Heather indicated there was nothing new to report.

#### **Founders Fund:**

Heather has not heard back from a potential major donor that was interested in donating to this fund. He would like us to work again on our strategic plan and would like to look at it once we have made progress on it.

Heather wants to work on another grant for the fund.

## **Strategic Plan:**

*Priority A, Objective 4, Task 3: Identify services most needed and most viable optional partners.*  
This will be reviewed again in December.

*Priority A, Objective 5, Task 3: Identify training needed to prepare movement of a current or new staff position to move into key positions.*

Amy is sending 5 Hamlet House staff members to an Adult Family Home conference so that they can continue to learn and grow as caregivers.

Heather will need to hire a Cottage manager again. It would be good if they are able to work in QuickBooks online, and also if they have maintenance skills and good social skills.

Elizabeth says that Home and Hospice Support may bring in somebody to do some teaching on how to use QuickBooks online. If they do that, LOHO is invited as well.

*Priority B, Objective 1, Task 1: Recruit a new Treasurer for the Board.*

We are still looking for a treasurer. As we budget for 2026, we should examine the budget to see if we have money for a consultant to do it. This is an ongoing issue.

*Priority B, Objective 4, Task 1: Review expertise on Fundraising Committee and determine needs.*

Kip is planning to hold a Fundraising Committee meeting in late October, and can have a brainstorming session on this at that point.

*Priority C, Objective 1, Task 2: Develop a work plan for major renovations.*

Shannon is working on turning the inspection that Heather had done into a worksheet. She should have it ready for viewing by next month.

*Priority C, Objective 2: Plan for climate change and organization resiliency.*

Shannon has asked Brendan at the county to come and talk to us at the board meeting on October 21st. She hasn't heard back yet. Perhaps we can collaborate with LIHHS on this. His talk would be in place of the Strategic Plan next month. Heather commented that it makes sense to start the original discussion with the board, and then we can do a separate event that includes the residents.

## **New Business:**

### **Strategic Planning – Looking Ahead:**

Barb says 501 Commons was disbanded briefly but then went back into business. Barb, Shannon, and Heather will meet with them to discuss potentially doing strategic planning with Charlie Bookman again. Heather recapped who 501 Commons is and how we have previously worked with them. She had reached out to Wendy McClure to see if she was interested in helping with strategic planning but Wendy was too busy. Wendy recommended Molly Ware, and Molly had some great possibilities, but it seemed to make more sense to go back to Charlie since we previously worked with him. Charlie will meet with Barb, Heather, and Shannon on Friday. The Board will hold a separate meeting to work on the Strategic Plan.

## **Review Budget Assumptions:**

Heather stated that each year the board reviews assumptions as a base for the actual budget. The board chooses what assumptions to use, and then Amy, Heather and Rebecca utilize those numbers to create the actual draft budget.

LOHO assumptions were reviewed first, with rent income and occupancy rates set at 95%.

Rent increase is still a tough topic. Currently, Heather is looking at using 2.9% for 2026. Barb is wondering if we are still too low. Perhaps we should look at increasing for new renters more? There is a new law that states we are unable to raise rent for the first year of a resident's tenancy. When we do raise rents, we don't have to raise them the same amount for everyone, but that is typically what we have done.

Under donations, we typically put in the amount that will be needed to balance the budget.

Utilities include water, GP electricity, trash, etc. We usually use past average increases to inform us on this one, or the CPI.

Under payroll, Heather would like the board to continue to budget for a Cottage Manager.

Professional services in 2025 included the maintenance inspection, so we don't need to include funds for that in 2026. Barb wondered if we should add in a budget for legal fees, and it was agreed that we should use \$5,000.

We are currently planning an 8% increase for health and general insurance, but Heather is going to try to get more detailed information on this from our brokers before creating the HH and LOHO budgets.

Hamlet House reimbursement to LOHO seems to be fine at \$1,000/month. Heather and Amy plan to leave it at that. Maintenance and grounds budget will also remain the same at \$35,000.

We are planning to use the CPI as an increase for other expenses. The CPI is currently 2.9%. Perhaps we should round to 3%?

Heather will do more work contemplating Cottage rents.

The Hamlet House budget was reviewed next.

Amy is planning to leave rents where they are, since they seem to be at market rate. Rent income occupancy will stay at 92%.

Amy would like to increase the food budget to \$15,000, since she doesn't want to have to be as reliant on food share next year as she is this year.

Utilities increase will be based on past increases.

For professional services, Amy is using volunteers quite a bit this year, so she doesn't want to decrease this for next year.

We will get Hospital District funds next year (year 2 of 3), so this will be very helpful, but we don't budget this in since it's reliant on Medicaid occupancy and having a deficit.

Payroll has been pretty high largely because almost everyone is certified now. Very much worth it, but we do pay them more once they are certified. Should we do a CPI increase on this?

Many thanks to Rebecca Chao for helping so much with assumptions and budgeting.

Polly and Elizabeth left the meeting and the Board went into Executive Session at 11:52 am. The Executive Session concluded at 11:54 am and Polly and Elizabeth returned.

It was announced that Polly Ham was officially a new Board member, and that Mary Ann Cameron would be serving as the Board treasurer in the combined position of Secretary/Treasurer of the Board.

Elizabeth was asked if she was interested in joining the Board. She indicated she would consider it at some point in the future.

Mary Ann expressed appreciation to Polly for representing the Cottage residents on the Board. Heather expressed appreciation again to Karen for her service to LOHO, and said that Karen was leaving Hamlet House in a good position.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:03 pm.

The next meeting will be held on October 21, 2025 from 10 am to 12 noon.

Respectfully submitted by

Mary Ann Cameron  
Secretary/Treasurer  
LOHO Board of Directors