



Beacon Project

April 21, 2020

A message to Islesboro and all of our supporters:

The board of The Beacon Project would like to take an opportunity to bring everyone up to date on what is happening at Boardman Cottage and what we are doing to keep it strong.

These are uncertain times for everyone. What we are certain of is that the staff and the community are taking good care of Boardman Cottage. For residents, long accustomed to visitors and outings to brighten their days, isolation is frustrating and sometimes depressing. But our staff are amazing, showing up for work, wearing uncomfortable protective gear all day, and yet making life fun and interesting for the residents. This includes music, singing and dancing, as you may have seen recently on Facebook. Community members have dropped off lobsters and volunteered to pick up and deliver the weekly grocery order.

Maura Michael, Administrator of Boardman Cottage since we opened in 2005, responds to daily updates and follows all Federal CDC, Maine CDC, Governor's office and licensing guidelines, adds new procedures to our policy manual, and sets up special staff training while applying to all available sources for personal protective equipment. She is also constantly in touch with the administrators of other island eldercare homes.

Boardman Cottage has been closed to all visitors since March 12. Staff have strict instructions not to come to work if they are sick; when they feel well and return to work they undergo a screening which includes respiratory questions and temperature checks. Strict handwashing and PPE are in place and performed by everyone prior to entering the home. Every item of groceries or supplies gets a wipe-down before coming in the door.

Residents are assessed every day for fevers and symptoms of respiratory infections. Caregivers make sure they are practicing social distancing, including during meals, and making sure they wash their hands frequently.

We know that communal living is risky. We hope that our smaller size, single-occupancy rooms and one-on-one attention from caregivers provide some advantages over the large nursing homes struggling with outbreaks. And we know that our residents, in spite of the stresses right now, are happy to have the comforts of home in their familiar surroundings.

Maura periodically sends updates to families of residents to let them know how things are going. In a recent reply, she received this note of appreciation:

Saying "thank you" seems like an understatement for what I'm feeling when it comes to knowing that my Mom is getting the best care and as small as it seems, thank you, thank you, thank you for what you do every day in caring for my Mom and for all the residents at Boardman.

Kellie Coombs

As a board, we're trying to take advantage of all the Federal and State assistance being offered to small businesses. Our application for the payroll protection loan was approved and the funds are in our account. We are checking on another payroll offset that allows us to recover the cost of paying employees when they are required to stay home due to illness. We are grateful to be able to keep our staff employed and grateful that they are willing to keep coming to work.

We would like to thank the volunteers in the Islesboro community who have been helping us with food deliveries, special treats and encouragement.

All of us are in uncharted territory, but we appreciate Maura's long years of experience and personal contacts at state agencies and professional organizations which allow her to stay up-to-date with best practices. She is ready and willing to do whatever it takes to keep Boardman Cottage safe and well.

Thank you all for the years of support which have made us strong.

The board of The Beacon Project

Jennifer Adams

Mike Boardman

Hank Conklin

Charlotte Cunningham

Sharon Daley

George Evans

Lois Chiles

Lucy Homans

Bonnie Hughes

Amanda Jones

John Kauer

Dick Lemke

Janis Petzel

Carol Pierson

Taz Stafford

Virginia Valentine