# 2025-05-30 Residents Council: Affiliation & Operational Insights

## Board Member Introductions and Backgrounds

* **Kevin Gerber, Vice President of the Board of Directors**
  + Originally from Minnesota; worked as an orderly in a nursing home during high school and obtained a nursing home administrator's license during undergraduate studies.
  + Has spent his entire career in not-for-profit senior living, including serving as CEO of Covia, a full senior community.
  + Has served on numerous not-for-profit boards and has a longstanding interest in architecture, particularly the Julia Morgan building, which drew him to the Heritage.
  + Committed to sustaining the Heritage as a not-for-profit organization, emphasizing the duties of loyalty, care, and obedience to the mission and long-term viability of the organization.
  + Currently serves as vice chair of the Heritage board and has chaired governance and nominating committees for several organizations.
* **Sue Raymar, new board member with extensive experience**
  + Holds an undergraduate degree from Mills College and an MBA from UC Berkeley Haas School of Business.
  + Has served on the investment committee and boards of Lytton Gardens, Episcopal Senior Communities (which became Covia), and Front Porch, including as president of the Lytton Gardens board.
  + Joined the Heritage board due to longstanding professional relationships (notably with John Casey and Kevin Gerber) and to contribute her financial expertise.
  + Has a deep understanding of senior living finances and organizational operations, and is enthusiastic about the Heritage community and its building.

## Discussion on Affiliation and Organizational Viability

* **Rationale for affiliation**
  + Single-site not-for-profit senior living communities face increasing challenges due to lack of scale, complexity of services, healthcare, finance, regulatory requirements, and rising costs.
  + Affiliation with a larger organization brings shared resources, economies of scale, and improved financial viability, often by reducing administrative duplication (e.g., not needing two CFOs or duplicative functions).
  + The Heritage has been able to cover operating losses through investment accounts, but long-term sustainability requires generating enough revenue to cover expenses without relying on reserves.
* **Experiences with previous affiliations**
  + In the affiliation between Covia and Front Porch, a CEO change led to significant improvements in efficiency, cultural integration, and financial management. The process took time but ultimately resulted in a more effective and culturally appropriate merger.
  + Even large not-for-profits like Covia found that additional economies of scale were necessary for long-term sustainability, as costs and capital needs continued to rise.
  + Examples were given of other organizations (e.g., American Baptist Homes and Southern California Presbyterian Homes) that merged to ensure viability.
* **Day-to-day operational concerns post-affiliation**
  + Resident contracts at the Heritage will be honored after any affiliation; this is a priority for the board and a critical requirement for any partner.
  + Most changes are expected at the administrative level, with minimal impact on daily services for residents.
  + Significant staff turnover is unlikely, as affiliates will want to retain qualified staff; changes may occur at the department head or administrative level, but preserving staff is in everyone's best interest.
  + Economies of scale are typically realized in administrative functions, not in resident-facing services.
* **Board composition and leadership implications**
  + Affiliation may result in a new board composition, often integrating with the parent organization's board. Discussions will focus on ensuring Heritage's mission and culture are represented in governance.
  + The CEO of the affiliated organization would become the CEO for the Heritage as part of the larger system, while a person of Mary’s caliber would likely serve as executive director at the community level.
  + Heritage’s formal name, the Ladies Protection and Relief Society, and its unique mission and culture are important considerations in negotiations about board representation and governance.

## Financial and Fundraising Reports

* **May financial snapshot**
  + Beginning balance: $13,409.14; Receipts: $411.22; Disbursements: $689.06; Ending balance: $13,131.30.
  + Major expenses included supplies for the garden and a minimum request for the library.
* **Camp fundraising**
  + Total raised for camp: $420 (not processed through the main account).
* **Cash box/recycle fund update**
  + The black cash box is slowly accumulating funds, averaging about $20 per month, with an estimated annual total of approximately $737 based on recent weekly averages of $14.10.
  + Residents are encouraged to contribute, especially long-term residents, and to ensure only CRV (California Redemption Value) bottles are recycled. Squeezing plastic bottles is requested to maximize bag space and reduce costs.
* **Game night event success**
  + Game night was highly successful, raising $1,600 for employee appreciation—double the previous year’s amount—due to increased participation, raffles, and a "buy it now" option for prizes.
  + Recognition was given to dealers (Bledsoe, Martha Torres, Lillimore) and prize donors (Eleanor Bissell, Jennifer Arthur, Joanne, Katie Liu), as well as to event organizers for their guidance and support.
  + The event highlighted the importance of community spirit and innovative fundraising strategies.

## Food Committee Report (May 13, 2025)

* \*\*Attendance:\*\*Dining staff (Angie Lamb, Chef Sylvie Holden) and residents; Fred chaired the meeting due to the usual chair’s illness.
* **Key observations and feedback**
  + Holiday and foreign meals, entertainment, and decorations were excellent.
  + Residents who cannot see the top shelf of the food display are encouraged to ask staff or hosts for assistance.
  + Ongoing issues with spice and seasoning, including concerns about flavor and potential medication interactions (e.g., with warfarin). Specific feedback included missing crust, olives, feta, and oregano in certain dishes.
  + Requests for food improvements:
    - Brown gravy with turkey and mashed potatoes.
    - Shredded hash browns to be crisper and less bland, with a texture similar to curds; previous complaints about excessive spiciness led to reduced seasoning.
  + Portion sizes: Some residents feel portions are too large, but larger portions are available upon request.
  + Positive feedback: April 1 dinner meatloaf was exceptional; mussels on April 12 were highly praised.
  + The "happy index" for April was 98/100, with the latest report showing 161/100, indicating high resident satisfaction.
* \*\*Next Food Committee Meeting:\*\*July 8, 2025, at 10:30 a.m., McKinley Road.

## Strategic Planning and Affiliation Updates

* **Affiliation proposals update**
  + Seven proposals were received in response to the request for affiliation; the strategic planning committee has narrowed the field to three California-based organizations.
  + Discussions with these three organizations will take place over several weeks, with ongoing updates to residents.
  + There is no guarantee that an affiliation will occur, but the process is moving forward.
* **Role of the strategic planning committee**
  + The committee is responsible for evaluating cultural representation, board composition, and shared economic benefits in potential affiliations.
  + Resident feedback is being actively solicited and documented to ensure the Heritage’s culture and values are preserved in any partnership.
* **Upcoming structured meeting: June 6, Friday, 3:00 p.m.**
  + A structured meeting will be held to gather comprehensive resident input on affiliation and community culture.
  + Multiple methods will be used to record feedback, including live spoken recording and written “sticky” notes, to ensure all viewpoints are captured.
  + An overall report will be compiled, and further sessions may be scheduled if needed.

## Additional Community Topics and Operational Issues

* **Lighting in Morgan Hall and common areas**
  + A resident raised concerns about adequate night lighting for comfort and safety in Morgan Hall.
  + Suggestions included installing motion-activated lights in hallways and rooms, and adjusting lighting to be sufficient for navigation without being overly bright.
  + The issue will be referred to maintenance (Hector) for possible implementation of movement-initiated lighting.
* **Communication protocol for administrative inquiries**
  + Administration is required to respond to resident questions within 14 days, with follow-up at the next meeting.
* **Record-keeping and resident feedback documentation**
  + Plans are in place to create detailed written and recorded summaries of resident comments, especially regarding affiliation, for historical and decision-making reference.