# **St. Lawrence County Office for the Aging (OFA)**

# **Advisory Council Meeting Minutes**

# **February 10, 2020**

**Meeting called to order:** 10:00 AM by Roger Bennett, Chairman

**Present:** *(voting members)* Roger Bennett, Linda Wilkinson, Bob Mead, Russ Backus

Gail Bisonette, Larry Denesha, Kathy Skelly

**Present:** *(non-voting members):* Chiara Delosh, Andrea Montgomery, Bridgette Conklin

Barb McBurnie, Vicki Clark, Andrea Smith

**Present:** *(New Members/Pending BOL approval)*

**Excused**: Carlton Doane, Brenda Sanderson, Andrea Smith, Gail Teele, Michael Boprey

**Absent:**

**Public Attending:** Myrtle Regan

**Meeting Location:** Human Services Building

**♦Introductions:** Meeting brought to order by R. Bennett. Opened with Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Reflection. Welcome and introductions.

**♦Guest Speaker –**

**♦Public Comment** – No public comments

♦**Approval/Minutes** – motion to approve minutes by R. Backus, seconded by V. Clark, all in favor.

# Motion passed.

♦**Correspondence** *(Linda Wilkinson)* – Sent Pat Rourke a card for his 8 years of service with Advisory Council. Sent sympathy card to Peg Walrich.

**♦Old Business**– B. McBurnie said that she noticed in the December Work Report that there is an EISEP provider that wasn’t taking anymore referrals. Barb asked Andrea which agency doesn’t have homecare available, and Andrea stated that United Helpers isn’t taking any more clients because they don’t have enough aides. Barb asked who are we contracted with and Andrea stated we are contracted with United Helpers, Caregivers and HSNNY.

**♦New Business** –

**Election of Officers**- Linda is the chair of the Nominating Committee. Linda will be rotated off the nominating committee and Kathy and Gail B. will be on the nominating committee for the next time. The Nominating Committee came up with R. Bennett for Chairman, L. Wilkinson for Vice Chairman, and K. Skelly for Correspondence Secretary. B. Mead stated that he wants to nominate R. Backus for Vice Chairman. There will be a ballot vote for Vice Chairman between L. Wilkson and R. Backus. L. Wilkson won the vote (4-3) against R. Backus.

**County Council of Senior Citizens Report** *(Brenda Sanderson)* A. Montgomery gave the report. May Festival will be held at the Pierrepont Fire hall on May 1st.

**StateWide Senior Action Council Report (***Barb McBurnie)* Don’t meet in January or February. Since the Governor announced his budget there has been a legislature call that she unfortunately missed. She has to get more information on it because she missed that call. Again going for safe staffing in nursing homes and hospitals, which also goes to needing more aides for home care agencies. We had the Executive Director come up and train three new people, Gail being one of them, to be SMP volunteers. To be a volunteer you go through a training. The volunteer work for SMP can be as little as sitting at a table passing out information, or giving a few presentations. There will be a meeting the first Thursday in March at the Best Western in the new room. Trying to get John to come and talk about the Census.

**Veterans Services Report** *(Mike Boprey)* No Report

**Public Health Report** – *(Dana McGuire)* Brigette gave the report. Flu is on the rise. Get your flu shot. Coronavirus is an outbreak going on right now that is a respiratory disease. They are learning new things about the virus every day. The immediate risk to New Yorkers is very low. There has been no confirmed cases in NY State or in St. Lawrence County for the Coronavirus. There is no vaccine or treatment available for this disease yet. Some of the symptoms of the Coronavirus include a fever, cough, and shortness of breath. There is a Hepatitis A outbreak in surrounding counties. Although it’s pretty rare Hepatitis A can cause death. To prevent Hepatitis A get the vaccine, which will be a two dose shot. Continuing to do lead poison education. If you live in a house that was built before 1978, have a child under the age of 6, if someone is pregnant, or you’re in a place that a child spends a lot of their time you might be eligible for lead poison education. Handed out medication cards.

**County Legislator’s Report** *(Larry Denesha)* Had organization meeting on January 2. Larry has been reappointed to the Chairman of the Operations Committee, Office for the Aging Advisory Board, Chair of Highway Solid Waste Committee, Farmland protection Board. There is a $6.1 billion dollar shortfall from the Governor. One of the things that the Governor presented to help with the $6.1 billion dollar deficient is a 1% reduction in Medicaid reimbursement. Bail reform is huge. At the end of last year there was 168 inmates in the county correctional facility. As of last Wednesday there was 48 inmates in the county jail. Sheriff has already talk to the Commissioner of Corrections about staffing. Larry will be introducing a resolution on the bail reform this evening to the Operating Committee. Bob Mead wants to take a vote that Larry can go to the meeting and say the Advisory Council is behind Larry on the resolution. Bob Mead made a motion Russ Backus second it. Everyone is in favor. New Director of St. Lawrence County Youth Bureau. Her name is Alexa Backus and she is a St. Lawrence County native.

**AARP Report**- *(Vicki Clark)* Right now the AARP Foundation is sponsoring their free tax aid program and this will run until April 15. There is a luncheon coming up on February 18 at the Potsdam Town Hall. The President is beginning to chat now about reductions in Social Security. Offered 8 Free Open-to-the Community programs/presentations, offered 9 luncheons with presentations, received AARP National grants for both 2018 and 2019, partnered in events with organizations and businesses: St. Lawrence Health Services for Alzheimer/Dementia Awareness Month; Donaldson-Seymour Funeral Home Tour; Taking the Scare Out of Medicare; Social Security: With You for Life; National Day of Service to honor Emergency Services, Fire Departments, and Law Enforcement; Donate Life Awareness Month; Trying to get my Mother Medicaid; Embracing What’s Next-No Matter What’s Next; Health and Wellness Day; Honoring Senior Citizens Day and recognizing SOAR (a local organization that mirrors some of AARP interests); Election Security presented by two Commissioners form the Board of Elections. Attended Massena School Staff Day; Advisory Council Meetings; StateWide Senior Health Fair. Three AARP members attended the StateWide Convention in Saratoga Springs. Two members attended the Poverty and Trauma Conference at SLU. Others signed up for the NY Transportation Conference at Clarkson on 11/19. Participated in Volunteer News Services phone calls for the NY Mega Region.

**Office for the Aging Report** *(Andrea Montgomery)*

* Cyber Seniors is starting back up.
* The office is collecting applications for Senior Awards until February 21. The Jacqueline Sears volunteer will be selected at a different time (we have the application to the Jacqueline Sears Award).
* Doing another push for volunteers for HDM.
* Free tax help with AARP is listed in the Mature Living.
* Tai Chi for arthritis is starting March 11.
* Went before the Service Meeting for authorization for a temporary Program Coordinator for HIICAP.
* HDM numbers are increasing. In December there were 51 new clients. It has been staying steady between 30 & 40 clients a month.

**♦Adjournment** – Motion to adjourn by K. Skelly, seconded by B. Mead, all in favor.

P. Rourk adjourned meeting at 11:13 AM.

**♦Next Meeting** – April 6, 2020, Human Services Center, Canton: 2nd Floor Conference Room at 10 AM

*(Minutes respectfully submitted by Chiara Delosh)*