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

# **Advisory Council Meeting Minutes**

# **September 14, 2020**

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

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

Larry Denesha, Kathy Skelly

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

Barb McBurnie, Brenda Sanderson, Michael Boprey

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

**Excused**: Carlton Doane, Gail Teele, Bob Mead, Gail Bisonette, Vicki Clark

**Absent:**

**Public Attending:** None

**Meeting Location:** Zoom

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

**♦Guest Speaker –** None

**♦Public Comment** – No public comments

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

# Motion passed.

♦**Correspondence** *(Kathy Skelly)* – None

**♦Old Business**– N/A

**♦New Business** – N/A

**County Council of Senior Citizens Report** *(Brenda Sanderson)* No meetings at this point. The senior award winners are William Lutz (Outstanding Contribution by a Senior Citizen), and James Shaw (Senior Citizen of the Year). Linda Bouchey was the winner of the Jacqueline Sears Award.

**StateWide Senior Action Council Report (***Barb McBurnie)* Busy with zoom meetings. There will be a fundraiser in 2022 for the 50th anniversary of Statewide. There is a convention next month that will be a virtual meeting. This meeting will be held on September 29 and will be a 2 hour meeting. There will be a Legislative platform in October. October 13, 14, 15 the convention will be held through zoom.

**Veterans Services Report** *(Mike Boprey)* Busy as usual. Currently not seeing anyone face-to-face. Everything is being handled over the phone. The Blue Water Navy exposure is now open for veterans that were exposed in Vietnam during this time. Encouraging veterans to do the claims for this. Veteran Clinics are open and running.

**Public Health Report** – *(Dana McGuire)Brigette Conklin gave the report in D. McGuire’s absence*

* To date there has been 301 COVID-19 cases.
* No hospitalizations.
* There are 18 active cases, 281 completed isolation.
* March 25 was the first positive result.
* To date there has been 4 deaths.
* There has been over 40 cases in the last month.
* July was a busy month
* There was a cluster from a work site that tested positive.
* COVID-19 testing at colleges is going well.
* There is one positive case that came from someone that was tested before having a medical procedure done.
* 6 positive cases that were essential workers.
* The positive cases have come from traveling, family gathering, and congregate settings.
* There has been 5 positive cases so far since last week.
* The daily average has decreased.
* This month the average age for positive cases was 35. Prior to this the average age for positive cases was mid 40’s. The average death age was 73.
* Go to <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory> for travel advisory list. Go to bottom of page for facts and questions.
* Started doing gym inspections. There has been a total of 12 inspections that have been done and pass.
* Wear a mask, social distance, wash hands, and stay home if sick.
* Flu season is approaching. Get your flu shot. September and October is the best time to get your flu shot.
* Public Health is offering flu shots to county employees.

**County Legislator’s Report** *(Larry Denesha)* In the middle of budget season and things are coming along reasonably well. The findings for the 2019 audit was this is the second year in a row that there were no findings. Very good internal controls. The property tax rate from 2016-2019 have remained flat. There is a possibility for a 20% reduction from the state. NY State isn’t calling it a cut, it’s calling it a hold back.

**AARP Report**- *(Vicki Clark)* No Report.

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

* Employees have been working during the whole COVID pandemic because we are considered essential employees. There has been 5 individuals that have been rotating out of the office for the last 3-4 months, and the rest of the staff has been working from home. All staff has returned back to work at the end of June.
* There has been 4 retirements in the past 3 months. HIICAP Counselor, Nutrition Aide, Nutrition Supervisor, and Senior Advocate worker.
* Having a hard time to fill Nutrition Aide position. There has been months that have gone by to fill the vacancies.
* There has been a severe shortage in volunteers for nutrition.
* We are serving between 600 to 700 nutrition clients weekly.
* Our HDM runs have gone from 15 runs to 19 runs.
* There has been 40-50 new HDM clients each month and we are expecting this trend to continue for the next few months.
* There is no congregate dining until the beginning of 2021.
* Consolidating some operations due to staffing, volunteers, and budget. Looking at merging some of the sites.
* There are 56 individuals on the HDM waitlist. There are some areas that we aren’t able to serve.
* New HIICAP Counselor Cindy Ayer.
* Open enrollment will look differently this year. No appointments unless absolutely necessary. Most counseling can be done over the phone. October 15 is open enrollment.
* Looking to hire for 2 Senior Advocate positions.
* Telephone Reassurance calls are doing well. Our clients receive a weekly call from either volunteers or a staff member to do a wellness check and help reduce loneliness of individuals.
* We have a virtual caregiver support group that we are offering.
* Every week there is a virtual coffee hour. Individuals are able to call in and talk about anything and everything, but try to stay away from the hot topics like politics, religion, etc.
* We had a successful Farmer Market Coupon distribution over the summer. We had drive thru distribution in different towns, tables set up at all local farmer markets, mailed some booklets, and Volunteer Transportation delivered some of the booklets.
* Awaiting to hear word about the 20% cut. Will use stimulus funds if we receive the cut.
* Call volume is high for NY Connects
* Continue partnership with St. Lawrence University college students.

**♦Adjournment** – Motion to adjourn by L. Wilkinson, seconded by R. Backus, all in favor.

R. Bennett adjourned meeting at 11:05 AM.

**♦Next Meeting** – November 2, 2020, TBD

*(Minutes respectfully submitted by Chiara Delosh)*