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

# **Advisory Council Meeting Minutes**

# **September 13th, 2021 (Zoom Meeting)**

**Meeting called to order:** 10:03 AM by Roger Bennett, Chairman

**Present (VIA ZOOM):** *(voting members)* Roger Bennett, Linda Wilkinson, Russ Backus, Larry Denesha, Joan Howlett, Marjorie McCullouch, Matt Manierre, Barb McBurnie, Brenda Sanderson

**Present:** *(non-voting members):* Andrea Montgomery, Chiara Delosh, Christiana DeForge, Michael Boprey

**Absent:** Gail Bisonette, Vicki Clark, Jolene Munger, Kathy Skelly, Gail Teele

**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 M. McCullouch, all in favor. Motion passed.

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

**♦Old Business**– None

**♦New Business** – N/A

**Review By-Laws** – Sent out this morning with the change in Article 7 quorum Section 1; change from 51% to 30% of voting members must be in attendance in order to conduct Advisory Council business; no comments or concerns. Motion to approve by J. Howlett and second by R. Backus; all in favor.

**Members Updates** – No member updates.

**County Council of Senior Citizens Report** – *(Brenda Sanderson)* Andrea gave report. Andrea attended the County Council Meeting on September 9, and it was discussed that all future meetings will be postponed due to the rise of COVID cases. This will be reevaluated in January.

**StateWide Senior Action Council Report** – (*Barb McBurnie)* Cancelled in person meetings for Statewide. Statewide Convention will be held on October 12, 13, and 14 and will be done virtually this year. At the convention it will be brought up to encourage people about advocacy. Look at the Statewide site of the list of topics that will be discussed, and on October 6 it will be talked about if you see things that you don’t like or if anything should be added to the list, and it will be voted on after. Club meetings have been cancelled for the rest of the year.

**Veterans Services Report** – *(Mike Boprey)* VA clinic is moving from Massena to Potsdam. Filing a claim through the VA is moving faster.

**Public Health Report** – *(Jolene Munger)* None.

*R. Bennett* – Was wondering about the COVID booster shots and how far apart from the flu shot to get the booster shot.

The Pfizer booster shot is for individuals that are immunocompromised. When it comes to the booster shot, stick with the shot that you originally received. Moderna is supposed to be coming out with their booster shot within the next few weeks. You can receive your COVID booster and flu shot at the same time. Flu shots are now available, and you can receive both shots at the pharmacy.

R. Bennett- Was wondering if SUNY Potsdam will open up again for the booster shot?

Haven’t heard if any State sites will be opening up again for the booster shots. Public Health is offering shots. Local pharmacies are offering booster shots. Public Health is planning on opening up booster clinics.

**County Legislator’s Report** – *(Larry Denesha)* The North Country has the highest rate of COVID transmission. Franklin and St. Lawrence County has the highest COVID rate which is over 6%, while statewide is about 3.3%. 51% of St. Lawrence County population has been vaccinated. Passed resolution on the opioid settlement with Johnson & Johnson and St. Lawrence County. Money from this settlement is restricted solely for treatment. County Route 27 in Degrasse is closed, and will hopefully be opened in mid-November. Its budget season and they continue to work on the budget.

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

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

* COVID-19 will be an endemic instead of a pandemic.
* A Press Release was issued urging older adults to wear a mask indoors.
* Delta variant is 1,000 more times transmissible then COVID-19. It is as transmissible as the chickenpox. Our office is urging older adults to take precaution.
* Individuals with the COVID-19 shot are getting sick with the Delta variant, but they aren’t getting as sick and are avoiding being hospitalized and death since they received the shot. Encouraging individuals to get the booster shot.
* Temporarily closing congregate dining in Gouverneur due to the rise of COVID.
* Dr. Williams will be giving COVID update tonight at the board meeting.
* Roger was wondering if a document can be emailed out to everyone for the requirements of being able to get the booster shot?
* Andrea will email everyone this document.
* Andrea has asked her staff to wear their mask in the office and when they are meeting with clients.
* Record number for Home Delivered Meal clients. 60-70 new HDM referrals every month. Up to 23 HDM routes. Always looking for volunteers.
* There is a new program that will be starting called the Community Friendship Program. This is a volunteer program to help seniors age in place. There will be a zoom training next week for volunteers. Andrea will email out the flyer to everyone.
* Medicare Open Enrollment is October 15-December 7.
* HEAP will be opening October 1.
* We had a successful summer distributing Farmer Market Coupons. We were able to get rid of all of the coupons this year.
* The Senior Award Winners for this year were Kay Church from Gouverneur (Outstanding Contribution by a Senior Citizen), and Anna Campbell from Madrid (Senior Citizen of Year). State will have a virtual ceremony in October for the Senior Award winners. Looking to do an outdoor picnic either next May or June to recognize the Senior Award winners from the last few years as long as it is safe.
* Virtual Program opportunities for computer classes, health promotion, etc.
* Potsdam high school Positivity Club received a $10,000 award from Kentucky Fried Wishes to help seniors have access to free food. The Positivity Club members will be teaching the elder on how to use a computer to order food online. They will be working with 4 Senior Housing and our office will be partnering with them to help deliver food to the seniors.
* There are 2 open positions right now. One for nutrition aide and another for an advocate worker.

**♦Adjournment** – Motion to adjourn by J. Howlett, seconded by R. Backus, all in favor. R. Bennett adjourned meeting at 10:51 AM.

**♦Next Meeting** – November 8th, 2021, (Zoom)

*(Electronic Meeting Minutes respectfully submitted by Chiara Delosh)*