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

# **Advisory Council Meeting Minutes**

# **February 7th, 2022 (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, Matt Manierre, Barb McBurnie, Brenda Sanderson, Kathy Skelly

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

**Absent:** Gail Bisonette, Vicki Clark, Gail Teele, Marjorie McCullouch, Michael Boprey

**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

**Changes to November Meeting Minutes:** Jolene Munger was on attendance twice under present and being absent. Removed her from the absent list. Also, changed the order of the Nominating Committee to say Kathy, Barb, and Marjorie.

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

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

**♦Old Business**– None

**♦New Business** – N/A

**Election of Officers-** There was no nominations for new officers from the floor. Will be keeping the same slate of officers from last time. Everyone approved.

**Members Updates** – No member updates.

**County Council of Senior Citizens Report** – *(Brenda Sanderson)* Talk to a few Presidents from the clubs and they have been receiving calls from members about starting to set up meetings again.

**StateWide Senior Action Council Report** – (*Barb McBurnie)* Statewide continues to be busy. There will be a meeting on March 3 @ 10 at the Lobster House. There is active advocacy training going on right now. The training is 6 months long and is held the third Thursday of every month at 3. Call Barb if you are interested in this training. You need to be a member of Statewide. There will be a convention for Statewide in early September. Senior Medicare patrol is active.

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

**Public Health Report** – *(Jolene Munger)*

* Still doing vaccination clinics on Monday, Tuesday, and Friday at Public Health.
* Seeing a decrease of people attending booster clinics.
* Tracking a new vaccine called Norvax.
* Calling all positive individuals but not calling people that have been in contact. Trying to focus more on education.
* Our county has 59% vaccine rate. 85.1% seniors are fully vaccinated. 20-44 year olds not getting vaccinated.
* Pfzifer has applied for emergency use.
* Its 5 months to get the booster for Pfizer and Moderna, and 2 months for Johnson and Johnson.
* State still has mask mandate in place. Cloth mask are less protective
* Can still order home test from federal government.

**County Legislator’s Report** – *(Larry Denesha)* No Report. (Larry left early to perform his hdm route.)

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

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

* Holiday Gift Drive went well. Over 250 seniors received gifts.
* Got through another year of Medicare Open Enrollment.
* Have new stipend for HIICAP volunteers.
* Hiring 1 permanent and 3 temporary positions for nutrition.
* Our office has been helping sign seniors up for booster shots. Also, to sign up for COVID test or locate home test.
* We are looking in 2022 to add additional nutrition staff and adding more vehicles. We are looking into using our stimulus and unmet needs funding.
* Looking at when to safely reopen congregate dining.
* Looking at adding additional case managers to help with clients. Looking into using our stimulus and unmet needs funding.
* HEAP isn’t part of our office it is part of Department of Social Services, but we get a bulk of phone calls because clients aren’t able to get through to the HEAP Department. There has been a lot of no heat emergencies this year.
* 2022 Senior Award Nominations are going on right now. Andrea will email everyone the form.
* There will be a presentation with Red Cross on February 15.
* AARP will be doing tax assistance again this year. Also, SUNY Canton has a program called VITA where students help with tax preparation.
* There will be two Chronic Disease self-management going on. One is for diabetes and the second is just chronic disease.
* Looking at doing in person class in late Spring or early Summer with Cornell Cooperative for health promotion like Tai Chi or Walk with Ease.
* Our office has an audit with NYS Office for the Aging tomorrow, February 8.
* Starting to see COVID-19 burnout among staff. There will be a couple of different speakers that will come in to discuss this.
* Our office has been doing advocacy for fair pay for home health aides. Trying to negotiate with our three agencies for increase in pay for the aides.
* Looking at ways to address loneliness and isolation among seniors. There is a site called GetSetUp where they offer free classes online. Also, we still have the Telephone Reassurance Program.
* SUNY Canton and SUNY Potsdam have testing facilities that are open Monday-Friday. At these sites they do the cheek swab. Also, SUNY Canton is very accessible for the seniors.

**♦Adjournment** – Motion to adjourn by J. Howlett, seconded by B. McBurnie, all in favor. R. Bennett adjourned meeting at 10:55 AM.

**♦Next Meeting** – April 4th, 2022 (Zoom)

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