**St. Lawrence County Office for the Aging**

**Advisory Council Meeting Minutes: September 19, 2022 at 10:00 am**

* Present (Voting members): Roger Bennett, Larry Denesha, Brenda Sanderson, Russ Backus, Matt Manierre, Joan Howlett, Kathy Skelly, Gail Teel, Linda Wilkinson
* Non-Voting Representatives: Renee Lomoglio, Danielle Durant, Carly Zimmermann
* Public Attending: Myrtle Regan
* Meeting Location: HSC
* Meeting Called to Order: 10:02 am by Roger Bennet, Chairman
	+ Opened with Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Reflection.
* There was no guest speaker.
* There was no public comment.
* August Meeting minutes – motion to approve by R. Backus, seconded by B. Sanderson.; all in favor. Motion passed.
* There was no correspondence to report.
* There was no old business to report.
* **New Business – Member Updates**:
	+ **County Legislator’s Report** (Larry Denesha) - Month of August - 1033 new cases of COVID reported, Averages about 33 new cases a day, July that was 23. DOH doesn’t think that is accurate number, believes it is much higher, people aren’t reporting. Percent positive per 100,000 was 10.1 for county, State was 5.5 Vaccination rate has been unchanged in the past 4 months. Hospital admits for fully vaccinated 0.875%, Unvaccinated Was 2.076%. Governor Hochul of Sept 14th, Covid state of emergency will not be extended. Anticipates free testing kits to go away. Home heating push statewide to eliminate Fossil Fuel. Read documentation about replacement fossil fuel. St. Lawrence Poverty rate higher than state and National rates. 2018 36% ng, 285 Fuel , 14% wood, Cost of retrofitting a home to transfer to electrification would cost between $20 to $30 K. In middle of budget, Finance committee meeting this month, no anticipated tax increases.
	+ **County Council Report** (Brenda Sanderson) -A lot of clubs are going again. Newer one in September, member decreases. Senior Picnic was a big success, over 300 people. Glad to see nursing homes participate. Brenda is checking on clubs, has about ¼ done. They want to look at recruiting younger people, but knows people work longer. Worries about people being isolated, that there are clubs in the area, would like to advertise. Would like a celebration for the seniors that received awards previously given out during Mayfest. There a lot of people that got plaques during COVID but no recognition. Jaqueline Sears awarded to Jerry Mahoney, from Helena. Senior Citizen of the Year award went to Myrtle Regan.
	+ **Veterans Services** – No report at this time
	+ **StateWide Report** – No formal report (Kathy and Gail went to Statewide Conference) Starting 1/1…Medicare will cover all shots (shingles, flu (preventative)). Meeting first Thursday of the month at the Lobster House. Seniors clubs having a hard time with transportation to go on trips.12/15 a Christmas Carol at OC Performance has Ok’d them for transportation. Looking for help from OFA for transportation assistance. ARC won’t do it because of liability reasons (insurance is too expensive). Jason (at Planning) with be contacted by Larry. Russ Backus confirms there is a shortage of bus drivers still.
	+ **Public Health** – Report by Carly Zimmermann, Deputy Director. Has new COVID booster for Monday and Thursday for the Omicron Variant. Schools are still requested numbers to be reported. Worries of parents not reporting and still sending kids to school while positive. Public Health doesn’t give FLU shots to the public, go to your PCP or pharmacy. There is not a plan to vaccinate in school. The new updated booster is good for anyone up to 2 months after last booster. Can do both Flu and Booster at the same time. Most officials believe that it will be seasonal but nothing has been made official. Roger asked about a “Super Flu Shot”, there are some other flu shots that vary to cover 4 different strains.
	+ **Member Updates:** Russ Backus-OPWDD removed mask mandates for facilities, however they still have people wear masks if there is a positive case. They will offer FLU shots for employees and to get COVID vaccinations. They did offer money for their employees to vaccinate and incentive did drive vaccination rates up.
	+ **OFA Report**- Danielle Durant filling in for Andrea- Good news, Hired Senior Program Coordinator, Jacob and Program Coordinator, Barb. One Program Coordinator open, 6 temp nutrition service aides open. Sept is Falls prevention month, in Mature Living and going to HDM. Medicare Presentations coming up, flyers present to bring to pass the word. Medicare 101 with Cindy Ayer, HIICAP Counselor. 9/27 in Massena, 9/27 in Ogd, 9/28 Gouv and 9/29 in Potsdam. Reminded that we only have one counselor and that they also can reach out to 1-800 Medicare. Oct 19th, DME repair/exchange, At Riverside in the community room from 12-4, and at Mayfield Community center same time and place. All the Lonely People 10/26. SUNY Canton Kington Theater presentation with NYSOFA. A lot of virtual pets available. We are part of the pilot program for ELI-Q. Lead poisoning presentation 10/11 Public Health at Gouverneur Community Center. Grab and Go and Sit and Stay (congregate), has not seen a lot of numbers at this time. Hoping with more talk that numbers will go up. Larry said Gouverneur residents think it’s complicated because of the reservation/cancellation. Danielle clarified that it is a NYS rule that we need to reserve meals. That this has always been the case but not strictly enforced. OFA is encouraging people to come out so we can get programs to come out. Myrtle was concerned that the public aren’t knowing that it’s open to the community. Russ suggests keeps data with 4 or 5 months, that it took a while for their programs to get going again but then it gets busy again. Larry- HDM is very rewarding to him, enjoys seeing his people every week. Danielle touched about gray area of the counties and extending into those areas. Larry wonders if colleges are untapped resources for getting volunteers. Matt is thinking there are groups on campus that are looking for community service hours. And reaching out to local high school to look for volunteers. HEAP opens up November 1st. A lot of calls already coming in. Concerns of people needs this winter. We have started a mailing list for application mailing. HEAP has furnace clean/repair. Reminded of Catholic Charities as back up assistance. Santa for Seniors- Holiday gift drive- Collecting financial contributions and gift card donations. Served over 200 people last year. Goal is to make sure that each HDM client is given something.

**Next Meeting:** 11/7/22 - last meeting of the year, same location and time. Motion to adjourn by Russ Backus and seconded by Kathy Skelly. Meeting closed at 11:15 am.

*(Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by R. Lomoglio)*