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

# **Advisory Council Meeting Minutes**

# **June 5, 2023**

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

**Present:** *(voting members)* Russ Backus, Roger Bennett, Dr. Gary Berk, Larry Denesha, Joan Howlett, Matt Manierre, Barb McBurnie, Brenda Sanderson, Kathy Skelly, Gail Teele, Linda Wilkinson

**Present:** *(non-voting members):* Jacob Kormanyos, Kelly Zakarauskas, Michael Boprey, Jolene Munger

**Public Attending:** None

**Meeting Location:** HSC

**♦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** – None.

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

♦**Correspondence** – None.

**♦Old Business**– None.

**♦New Business** – Updates as follows in reports below.

**County Legislator’s Report** – *(Larry Denesha)* Budget planning is underway for next year. State budget – FMAP started with the Affordable Care Act. Government offered money to help with the cost of Medicaid. The state will intercept the money that we have been receiving. This could lead to a significant expense to county taxpayers. This could mean up to a 6% increase in property taxes. Suggest to contact your state representatives. Perhaps, we could send a letter from our OFA advisory council to the state representatives, as well.

**Public Health Report** – *(Jolene Munger)* We will be offering travel clinics for yellow fever vaccinations. We are offering rabies clinics at no cost. Ticks are out. We are seeing a larger number of tick-borne illnesses. Make sure you are doing your tick checks, even if you live in town. We are working on increasing access to healthier food options and food security. We are working with transportation companies and trying to look at food deserts versus transportation deserts. We will have surveys going out soon to the public. We typically may see 1-3 overdoses every 10 days. Last week, we had 8 in a 12 hour time period, including one fatality. We have seen an increase in calls for narcan and fentanyl test strips. We also have harm reduction kits.

**County Council of Senior Citizens Report** – *(Brenda Sanderson)* We are currently planning for our senior picnic in Morristown at the fire department. Hired the Blues Brothers out of Waddington area. We will have registration at 8am. We will have a picnic lunch and play bingo. We are asking local clubs if they would donate items for bingo prizes.

**StateWide Senior Action Council Report** – *(Barb McBurnie)* June 5th – June 11th is Medicare Fraud Prevention Week. The most important thing to remember is that Medicare will never call you, unless you have previously set up an appointment for them to call you. If someone calls saying that they are from Medicare, hang up. Look at your Medicare summary notices and make sure the dates align with your procedures and appointments. Seniorama will be July 24th. Looking for help with registration. June 22nd, there will be a luncheon and forum on sepsis and NYSOFA director, Greg Olsen will be attending.

**Veterans Services Report** – *(Mike Boprey)* Still doing claims, grant from NY state was increased from $10,000 to $25,000. Hoping to upgrade one position to a service officer position. We want to increase traffic. We are still doing a lot of claims and helping veterans get benefits. The Pact Act has increased. Hypertension was added to the list of service connected disabilities, which can lead to benefits for more people. Veterans can contact Thomas Todd for farmers market coupons for veterans.

**AARP Report** – *(No Rep)* No Report.

**Members Updates** – None.

**Office for the Aging Report** – *(Jacob Kormanyos)* May was Older Americans Month. We held many presentations with Hospice for their book, Road Maps for the Journey’s End, across the county. This has been very well received. Health and wellness fairs are starting back up again. We had a senior awards reception for the winners in 2020, 2021, and 2022, in May at the Potsdam Nutrition Center. We will be accepting nominations soon for 2023. Andrea was asked to be one of 9 OFA Directors across the state to participate in a state forum with the Department of Health on the Master Plan on Aging. NYSOFA held a forum on the NYS Four Year Plan on Aging at the Gouverneur Community Center. We received some nice press coverage from ABC50 and NCPR. We served over 700 clients in April for our home delivered meal program. We had 50 new referrals last month. We currently have 25 home delivered meal routes. We are hiring a program coordinator to oversee social, health and recreational programming at our Nutrition Centers. Held a Riverview reunion for the volunteers, first responders and tenants who were impacted by the fire at the Riverview tower in March 2022. The department presented the John B. Miller Jr. Community Spirit Award to John B. Miller Jr. We have been hosting a caregiver support group once per month. We have been getting 7-8 members each month. We will have a Medicare 101 presentation on June 15th at 10am. We don’t receive Farmers Market Coupons until at least July 1st. We will be hosting Farmers Market trips with the public transit service, where we take seniors to farmers markets and provide a lunch for the day. Seniorama will be July 24th at the bingo palace. The senior picnic is August 17th at the Morristown Fire Hall.

**♦Adjournment** – Motion to adjourn by L. Wilkinson, seconded by M. Manierre, all in favor. R. Bennett adjourned meeting.

**♦Next Meeting** – Monday, September 11th, 2023 at 10AM

*(Electronic Meeting Minutes respectfully submitted by Kelly Zakarauskas)*