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

# **Advisory Council Meeting Minutes**

# **September 11, 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, Linda Wilkinson

**Present:** *(non-voting members):* Jacob Kormanyos, Chiara Delosh, Andrea Montgomery

**Absent:** Michael Boprey, Mary Jones, Carly Zimmerman, Barb McBurnie, Brenda Sanderson, Kathy Skelly, Gail Teele

**Public Attending:** None

**Meeting Location:** HSC

**♦Introductions** –Meeting brought to order by L. Wilkinson. 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. Bennett, seconded by R. Backus, all in favor. Motion passed.

♦**Correspondence** – None.

**♦Old Business**– None.

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

**County Legislator’s Report** – *(Larry Denesha)* Had 2022 Financial Audit and the results in August is it has been 6 years in a row with no findings. Andrea did a presentation on the Nutrition Program. Right now there is 26,000 individuals that are 60 and older. In the next two years that number will increase to 29,000. There is 11% of seniors that live in poverty. The funding levels remain the same. Budget is pretty close to being done. The next few months will be reviewing. There will be a modest decrease in SLC taxes as long as nothing changes.

**Public Health Report** – *(Carly Zimmerman)* Andrea gave the report.The number of COVID-19 cases in the area are increasing, and SLC Public Health is urging residents to take steps to prevent the spread of illness and know what to do if they test positive.

**Prevention:**

* Everyone 6 months and older should stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines.
* Regularly wash hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
* Clean and disinfect commonly used surfaces and objects.
* Cough and sneeze into a tissue or elbow and teach children to do the same.
* Consider wearing a mask in public spaces when not feeling well or near someone who is at risk of getting very sick.
* Ventilate indoors or let in fresh air, especially when gathering with others; or hold gatherings outdoors.
* Stay home when sick, and keep children home from school/daycare when sick.
* If exposed to a positive case, wear a mask when around others for 10 days, test and monitor for symptoms.
* If you have symptoms of COVID-19, get tested and isolate until you have results.

At home tests are available free of charge in the lobby of the Human Services Building. Tests are also available through health care providers and for purchase at pharmacies throughout the county.

**If You Test Positive:**

* Stay home and isolate for at least five days, wearing a mask for days 6-10.
* If you have a fever after five days, experience shortness of breath, or have a weakened immune system, isolate for ten days.
* If you must be around others, wear a high-quality mask for ten days.
* Contact a healthcare provider to discuss treatment options.

Roger asked if there could be monthly and weekly statics about COVID put on the website. Andrea said she will look into this and let him know.

**County Council of Senior Citizens Report** – *(Brenda Sanderson)* None

**StateWide Senior Action Council Report** – *(Barb McBurnie)* Linda gave the report. They had a meeting last Thursday regarding Senioroma. There were 36 tables at the event and a $100 donation was given. The money is used for when StateWide goes to a convention or their lunch when they meet at the Lobster House for meetings. None of the hospitals were there which was frustrating. They did try to get the hospitals to come to Senioroma, but they wouldn’t return their phone calls.

Andrea asked Dr. Berk about information regarding the Flu, COVID, RSV and shingles shots. Dr. Berk said you should start getting the Flu Shot around September 20. Get the flu shot done by the end of October. Right now there is no point of getting the COVID shot because that only helps with the old COVID variant not with the new variant. Wait for when the new COVID shot comes out. RSV is new. If an individual is a healthy person then this shot shouldn’t be on top of their list to get. If an individual has a compromised immune system then they should get the shot. For the shingles shot Dr. Berk tells everyone to get the shingles shot. There are 2 different shots for shingles. MCR pays for shingle shots for individuals that turn 65 or are older.

**Veterans Services Report** – *(Mike Boprey)* None

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

**Members Updates** – None.

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

* Had Senior Picnic on 8/17 in Morristown. There was about 200 seniors that attended and about 50 staff and volunteers.
* In June some of our staff attended the ACCU conference in Albany. It’s a 2 day workshop. Also, individuals are able to watch the workshops on Zoom.
* Completed FMC.
* The 2023 Senior Citizen of the Year Award winner is Claudia Moulton.
* Presented to the board a few weeks ago and presented our Nutrition Program and how the numbers are increasing. Overmatched by County Board for Nutrition Program.
* HEAP will open beginning of November.
* The 2024 Budget was pitched to the Budget teams. There has been positions that have been added, make temporary Nutrition Aides permanent, and increased pay for nutrition staff.
* There are 2 open positions right now. A Secretary 1 and Senior Advocate Worker. The Senior Advocate Worker is provisional and it’s estimated about 1-2 years before the exam will be given.
* Two of our Keyboard Specialist resigned and took jobs closer to home.
* There are three Nutrition Aides positions opened.
* Medicare Open Enrollment begins 10/15-12/7. There will be four MCR Presentations in the Community.
* Will be partnering with Hospice in October. The presentations will be focusing on obituary writing and will be held at the 5 nutrition centers.
* The State OFA annual evaluation will be the next 2 days. This is their first time on site since 2019.
* Late October or early November there will be a Public Hearing Meetings.
* In November’s meeting we will needs to select nomination committee for election of officers for February meeting. November 2021 committee included: Kathy as Chair of Committee, Barb and Marjorie. According to the by-laws, Kathy would come off the committee and Barb would head up the committee this year. Positions open for election in February: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Correspondence Secretary; as all the current people have served two terms.

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

**♦Next Meeting** – Monday, November 6th, 2023 at 10AM

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