

St. Lawrence County Office for the Aging (OFA)
Advisory Council Meeting Minutes
February 9, 2015

Meeting called to order: 10:05 AM by Patrick Rourk, Vice Chair

Present: (*voting members*): Roger Bennett, Frank Carter, Ron Frank, Bob Mead, Joyce Persons, Patrick Rourk, Ada Santaferra, Linda Wilkinson. Quorum established

Present: (*non-voting members*): Gail Bisonette, Michael Boprey, Andrea Montgomery

Excused: Sylvia Despaw, Carlton Doane, Christine Fobare, Steve Putman, Elaine Porter **Absent:** Ruth Bogardus

Public Attending: Nancy Vosbrink,

Meeting Location: Human Services Bldg., 2nd Floor conference Room, 80 St. Hwy. 310, Canton, NY

◆**Introductions:** Meeting brought to order by Patrick Rourk; Council members and public audience introduced themselves. Moment of silence for recently departed member Doris Brown.

◆**Guest Speaker** – Nancy Vosbrink, community educator from Hospice, introduced herself and acknowledged the difference between palliative care and hospice care. Palliative care is “comfort care”- palliative patients are those who are living with a chronic condition but are not hospice ready. All hospice patients are palliative, but not all palliative patients are hospice. Palliative care nurses are available to patients who are not able to get out. She also addressed the caregiver program. There are a lot of caregivers but many who do not consider themselves a caregiver. On the second Thursday of each month, a caregiver support group is held at Hospice and anyone who is a caregiver is encouraged to go. Hospice also provides a grief program known as “Grief Gardener’s Workshop” to help adults with the death of a loved one. She passed around seven handouts.

◆**Public Comment** – No public comment.

◆**Approval/Minutes** – M. Boprey moved to approve the enactment of the Pledge of Allegiance for OFA Advisory Board Meetings. R. Bennett seconded, all in favor. Motion passed. Also motion to say a prayer after the pledge of allegiance suggested by Gail Bisonette. All in favor. Discussed hanging a flag in the corner of the room for POA.

◆**Correspondence** – Ruth Bogardus not present.

◆**Old Business** – OFA Work Reports / no questions or comments

◆**New Business**

County Council of Senior Citizens Report (*Sylvia Despaw*)

Andrea Montgomery reported. Raffle fundraiser will be held at Mayfest. This month’s meeting will be held on Thursday, February 12 at the American Legion in Potsdam. Senior citizens will have free access to Ancestry.com at the Potsdam Library computer classes. Will be conducted by Bobby Gordon. February 28 is the deadline for the Jackie Sears award nominations. This award is for recognition of volunteering.

StateWide Senior Action Council Report (*Linda Wilkinson*)

Announced the new office elections. Seniorama is August 12th at SUNY Canton. Advocacy training on March 24 in Albany. Mentioned budget proposals under Addie Russell. Recommendations for budgets, asking for more money. Helpline in connection with Nancy Green- patient’s rights.

Veterans Services Report *(Mike Boprey)*

M. Boprey discussed the new Veteran's Choice Card. It is available for any eligible veteran. It is an option rather than a choice. It will help reduce waiting times and help combat the distance from the main center in Syracuse. Need to utilize VA healthcare first. That can then authorize a veteran to seek care. However, cannot go to just any doctor. To see the Revolutionary War records you have to request for them and pay- go to the archives. Veterans can ask for their discharge papers or all records including medical records. F. Carter asked if you can get records for a deceased family member. M. Boprey said you can, you need proof with a death certificate and then must fill out the papers. Announced that a fire in Missouri destroyed 80% of the records from WWI until 1969 and 60% of the Air Force records.

Public Health Report *(Laurie Maki)*

Andrea Montgomery reported. Announced the issue of a measles outbreak (not in this area). It is recommended that individuals get vaccinated. Also, the flu epidemic is a big issue. Everybody has it or has had it. The flu vaccine this year only covered 20% of the flu virus. Each year the virus is based on the outbreaks in the previous year and is still working on being mastered. Many individuals were reluctant to get the vaccine as it did not protect against the flu 100% as some who got the shot still got sick. M. Boprey shared that he heard on NPR that there have been five confirmed tuberculosis cases. Discussed how to know you've had a measles shot. Can get a booster shot by calling or visiting Public Health.

County Legislator's Report *(Steve Putman)*

Andrea Montgomery reported. The county administrator is retiring in March. Will stay on board until someone new is elected and trained for the position. County Attorney is Steve Button, now looking for someone new to fill the Public Defender position.

AARP Report *(Gail Bisonette)*

The Caregiver Act was passed through the Senate. AARP not so busy this winter, not much to report.

Office for the Aging Report *(Andrea Montgomery)*

The AIP is almost approved. There have been no major changes. Introduced a new program "RCI" for caregivers of those suffering from Alzheimer's and Dementia. There will be a training program on March 25. A master trainer from Washington will come and train those who want to become a certified trainer. If anyone is interested, there will be more information and brochures available shortly. OFA is encouraged to serve a target number of ethnically diverse populations, such as African Americans and Native Americans, but there is a low number around here. OFA is always looking for volunteers at the nutrition sites. Will be partnering with the three local BOCES at the nutrition sites. Will serve as a learning experience for the students. The computer classes at Wanakena Ranger School will begin in March. Also, health promotion classes will begin and there is talk about another "I Can Feel Better" workshop. Anticipating a new contract for home health aides with United Helpers because there is not enough care to serve those in need. Requesting proposals to contract out with HIICAP and medical transportation because it is too exhausting for the few staff members we have. Want to train those to help with the open enrollment period. Medical transportation a liability on the county end. Senior award nominations have been selected and will be announced at Mayfest. April is Volunteer Appreciation Month. OFA is looking to expand into an Adult Day Care with the current funding. Asked for ideas of future guest speakers. Suggestions were Jerry Horahan and Linda Camano.

◆**Adjournment** – Motion to adjourn by R. Bennett, seconded by B. Mead, all in favor.
P. Rourk adjourned at 11:20 AM.

◆**Next Meeting** – Monday, April 13th, 10 am at the Morristown Nutrition Site (Fire Hall).

(Minutes respectfully submitted by Tressa Goolden)