

**St. Lawrence County Office for the Aging (OFA)
Advisory Council Meeting Minutes
February 8, 2016**

Meeting called to order: 10:00 AM by Patrick Rourk, V. Chair

Present: (*voting members*): Russ Backus, Roger Bennett, Larry Denesha, Joyce Persons, Patrick Rourk, Ada Santaferra, Linda Wilkinson

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

Present: (*New Members/Pending BOL approval*)

Excused: Frank Carter, Carlton Doane, Richard Gardner,

Absent: Ron Frank, Bob Mead

Public Attending: Arlene Kerr, Marie J. Wood, Shirley Meek, Myrtle Regan, Lauri Maki, Marcella Bailey, L. Michael Page, Brandy Mulvaney, Stacey Kass

Meeting Location: 2nd Floor Conference Room, Human Services Bldg., Canton

◆**Introductions:** Meeting brought to order by P. Rourk. Opened with Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence. Welcome and introductions.

◆**Guest Speaker** – A. Montgomery introduced speaker, **Diane Wilcox, SSA** (*Social Security Administration*). Diane is from the Ogdensburg Office which serves only St. Lawrence County. Hours of operation: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9 AM – 4 PM, Wednesdays 9 AM – Noon. Phone number (866) 572-8369. An appointment should be scheduled if applying for benefits. For other questions just walk-in. Diane presented with a power point explaining social security benefits and how to access them. Individuals may apply for social security retirement online (*can't be finalized online, application must be reviewed*), with a phone call, or in person. Survivor benefits, social security disability, Medicare enrollment periods, Part D, and SSI were also explained. Brochures covering all of the SSA services were made available.

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

◆**Approval/Minutes** – R. Bennett moved to approve minutes, seconded by R. Backus. All in favor.
Motion passed.

◆**Correspondence** (*L. Wilkinson*) – no correspondence

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

◆**New Business** – Elections

- Nominating Committee presented the nominees

P. Rourk / Chair

R. Bennett / Vice-Chair

L. Wilkinson / Corresponding Secretary

- Motion to approve nominees from R. Backus. R. Bennett seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion passed.

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

Meetings are now being held at the Norwood American Legion on the second Thursday of each month at 10 AM. There is free coffee and doughnuts. Lunch follows for a nominal fee. The public is welcome. Next meeting is

Thursday, February 11th. Guest speaker will be Robert Gorman from the United Way. MayFest will be discussed and the by-laws will be updated. There are more expenses this year. Nominations are being accepted for the Jackie Sears Award.

StateWide Senior Action Council Report *(Linda Wilkinson)*

Next meeting is Thursday, March 3rd. All meetings are at the Lobster House. Governor Cuomo's state budget is out. Patients' rights is a major issue. More money needs to be put back in the budget for this.

Veterans Services Report *(Mike Boprey)*

Veterans Choice Program / allows veteran to seek healthcare from civilian medical if VA medical services are not available within 40 miles. The program is constantly changing and veterans need to know how to use it. These medical services have to be approved. Veterans are urged to make an appointment to know their benefits. Also discussed continued Camp Lejuene claims.

Public Health Report *(Laurie Maki)*

It is now officially flu season. It is now widespread. This is 3 months later than usual. If people have not been vaccinated they should do it now. Distributed info regarding Zika virus. There are now travel advisories for Mexico, South America, and the Caribbean. Take precautions and wear repellants. The greatest risk is for pregnant women. NYS Dept. of Health has info on the Zika virus. Mosquito season may be earlier this year and also be aware of ticks. There are a number of insurance companies that Public Health will no longer be participating with.

County Legislator's Report *(Larry Denesha)*

L. Denesha stated that he considers it a privilege to be on this Advisory Council. He is a strong advocate for seniors. Discussed the financial difficulties of the county at this time. Sales tax is down due to decrease in the price of gasoline and heating fuel. Also being effected by the value of the Canadian dollar. Question from G. Bisonette regarding what the county is doing to get more money coming into the county through commerce. L. Denesha explained what is being done by the St. Lawrence Trails Coordinator with multi-use trails and the need for this infrastructure for economic development. Also the need to proceed in the cleanup at the J&L site in Tupper Lake. He also mentioned the Newton Falls paper mill and the need for a strategic plan in the county.

AARP Report *(Gail Bisonette)*

AARP convention coming up in Albany. Next meeting is at the Freighthouse in Ogdensburg on Tuesday, March 15th. The speaker will be A. Montgomery, OFA. April meeting is at the Lobster House April 19th. Bryan Thompson and Helen Thompson Hinsdale will be the guest speaker.

Office for the Aging Report *(Andrea Montgomery)*

- explained the restructuring at OFA
- BIP rollout is scheduled for April 1st unless changed by the state
- Senior Awards nominations are due Feb. 12th
- have been working on 2016-2020 AIP revisions
- by the end of 2016 OFA is planning to have info hubs at all the nutrition sites with the ability to enroll in programs
- also planning to have more nutrition/educational and health programs at the sites
- Walk With Ease and Computer classes beginning. Tai Chi will be available soon.
- M. Regan asked a question about the status of SAD (*Social Adult Daycare*) OFA has funds and is still looking at this

♦**Adjournment** – Motion to adjourn by R. Bennett, seconded by R. Backus, all in favor.
P. Rourk adjourned meeting at 11:30 AM..

♦**Next Meeting** – Monday, April 11th at 10 am at Clifton-Fine Community Center in Star Lake
(Minutes respectfully submitted by Christine Fobare)