

St. Lawrence County
OFFICE FOR THE AGING

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**St. Lawrence County Office for the Aging
Advisory Council Meeting Minutes
February 11, 2008**

Meeting called to order at 9:35 am by Barb McB. Members present were: Diane Burns, Barbara Hance, Holly Capuro, Florence Patterson, Carlton Doane, Ruth Ayen, Sister Donna Franklin, Ron Frank, Gloria Zehr and Elaine Porter. Also present were: Robert Miller, Sylvia Despaw, Pat Rourk, Barbara McBurnie and Kathy Skelly. Excused were: Bea Woodward, and Tedra Cobb. Absent were: Cheryl Madlin and Janet Kelly, A quorum was established.

Election of Officers:

- Carlton Doane was elected as Temporary Chair for the purpose of electing a new slate of officers for 2008. Carlton presented the slate of officers for 2008: Chair - Florence Patterson, Vice Chair - Holly Capuro and Corresponding Secretary - Sister Donna Franklin. Ron Frank made motion to approve slate of officers, 2nd by Ruth Ayen, all in favor.

Introductions and Welcome:

- Florence made opening remarks as Chair. New members Gloria Zehr, Elaine Porter, and Ron Frank told a little about themselves and all members introduced themselves.

Public Comment/Correspondence:

- Barb McB. reported that she attended the funeral for Pat Jones as a representative of the Advisory Council. Barb sent a private donation in Pat's memory in the name of the Advisory Council to the Pleasant Mound Cemetery Association in Colton. Pat will be greatly missed: among her many accomplishments, she was wonderful advocate for the Senior Citizens in St. Lawrence County. Thank you notes from both the family and the Cemetery Assoc. were circulated for all to read.
- Florence P. suggested that perhaps a certificate of appreciation could be sent to the families of both present and past members of the Advisory Council who passed away. This would be the Council's way of showing appreciation for all those individuals have done for the seniors in St. Lawrence County. Everyone thought this would be an excellent idea.

Approval of Minutes:

- Holly C. moved to approve the minutes of the November 05, 2007 meeting. Seconded by Diane B. All in favor- motion carried.

Old Business:

Office for the Aging Report:

- Barb McB. asked if any questions/comments about the new transportation policy for the Office for the Aging that was mailed with the report. She reiterated that it was felt that the new policy would accommodate the increase of clients wanting rides and cover the cost of the increased volunteer mileage rate without a negative impact on the clients. Council agreed with policy by consensus.
- Barb McB. asked the general opinion of the Advisory Council Members on the EISEP program "quandary" of how to handle those clients who go on the program as per the policy yet now are better and not in need of personal care, but still want housekeeping/chore services. The general consensus was that if people could take care of it themselves they should, but if they were really not able we should leave the housekeeping in.

New Business:

AARP Report:

- Carlton D., presented the report for Janet Kelly, Chapter President. The regular chapter meeting was held on January 18, 2008. A cutting party (everyone helps cut the pattern for bags) was held so members could have everything ready for others to take home and sew the bags together for the Nursing Homes residents with wheelchairs and walkers.
- The next meeting will be March 18th he was unsure of the location.
- Carlton also reported as President of NY StateWide Senior Action – they are working with AARP to hold a legislative day in Albany in May or June. Senior Citizen lobby day with New York State Legislators was to have been March 25th, but the Legislature would not be in session. It has yet to be determined in this lobby day would be the later that same week.

StateWide Senior Action Report:

- The next North Country Chapter meeting of NY StateWide is March 14, 2008 in Watertown. This year the North Country Chapter will be honoring different people at each meeting. Lewis and Jefferson County selections will be honored at this meeting.
- In June, St Lawrence County will honor their chosen individual(s). In September, it will be for Franklin County to honor someone, and at the last meeting of the year, Clinton County will have a turn. Many dignitaries will be in attendance at each session.
- August 14, 2008 will be this year's Seniorama, in Hogansburg.

St. Lawrence County Council of Senior Citizens Report:

- Sylvia Despaw, President of St. Lawrence County Council of Senior Citizens, reported on the new officer installation at the December meeting. Barbara McBurnie installed the new officers in a candle lighting ceremony. New committees are being formed.
- At the January meeting, John Eadie Executive Director of NY StateWide was the guest speaker and Kevin Wells, the new Sheriff of St. Lawrence County, offered his thanks to the seniors who supported him.
- May 3, 2008 will be the May Fest this year. The May Fest will be at the K of C Hall in Massena again this year. More information will be forth coming.
- The next meeting for County Council will be February 14, 2008 at 10:00 in Potsdam at the American Legion #345 with Michael Wiley as the Guest Speaker.
- When 2008 Seniorama was scheduled (for the second Thursday in August as the following week was not available) it was overlooked that it would conflict with the County Council meeting. So for the first time anyone can remember, the County Council will hold their meeting on the third Thursday of the month – August 21.

Veteran's Services Report:

- Veterans who are eligible for travel money have had the first raise in mileage in 43 years on 2/1/08. The mileage went from .11 a mile to .28 ½ cents a mile. Veteran's pension benefits are taken into consideration when receiving mileage.
- Merchant Marines or spouse are getting a one-time bonus of \$500.00
- The guidelines for the new Gold Star Veterans annuity, which is needs based, and paid to either a mother or father or both, are still being worked on.
- S. Lawrence County government passes the Cold War Veterans' exemption – 15% reduction on property taxes for those who served from 1946-1950 or 8/1/1955 – 6/1/1964 or 8/1975- 8/1990. Need to apply by March 1st to be effective for 2009. Each municipality has to "opt-in".
- Pat Rourk brought to everyone attention that all senior must sign up for the Star program by March 1st, and you need to reapply each year. There is a different amount (\$58,600) this year so more people may be eligible.

HEAP:

- Information about the recently approved second emergency HEAP benefit was just received. The application for the second emergency benefit is minimal and it can be done over the phone – for the first emergency benefit an individual has to have a face-to-face interview with a HEAP worker at DSS. For the initial HEAP benefit, only income is looked at. For the emergency benefits, resources are also looked at. An emergency constitutes being out of fuel or have less than a quarter of a tank left, the fuel

dealer will not deliver unless paid for in advance or at the time of the delivery and one hasn't the ability to pay for the delivery. Also, St. Lawrence County has approved \$750,000 in fuel assistance that has been given to a number of community agencies to distribute. Florence P. also knows of another program where people can get 100 gals of fuel oil. She will get the number and let people know (the office checked on this – it was through Citgo and is no longer available).

Advisory Council Membership:

- There are still several vacant seats on the Advisory Council. Still need a representative from the Morristown, Hammond area. Roger Bennett from Massena has been sent to the Board of Legislators for approval – he would fill Don Smith's seat. Barb McB. recently spoke with former member Bob Mead who indicated an interest in returning. The member representing the Ogdensburg area has only attended one meeting since being appointed – Barb will contact her to see if she is truly able to serve – if not, Bob would represent that area..

Announcements:

- MayFest, May 3, 2003, at the K of C, in Massena
- Seniorama August 14, 2008 in Hogansburg.
- Advisory Council meetings will be held on April 14th, June 9th, September 8th & November 10th

Adjournment:

- Diane Burns made the motion to adjourn, 2nd by Elaine Porter meeting adjourned at 11:00 am.
- Next meeting will be April 14th at 9:30 a.m.