

St. Lawrence County
OFFICE FOR THE AGING

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**St. Lawrence County Office for the Aging
Advisory Council Meeting Minutes
February 09, 2009**

Meeting called to order at 9:35 am

Election of Temporary Chair to preside over the election of officers:

Motion made by Bob Mead and seconded by Florence P. to elect Carlton Doane as temporary chair. All in favor. Diane Burns, Chair of the Nominating Committee presented the slate of officers and explained that all three were contacted and had accepted the nominations. Robert Mead was nominated for Chair by the nominating committee, no nominations from the floor. Florence P made a motion that Robert Mead be approved with Tedra Cobb seconding the nomination, all were in favor. Carlton Doane was nominated for Vice Chair by the nominating committee, with no nominations from the floor. Robert Mead made a motion that Carlton Doane be approved; Roger Bennett seconded it, all were in favor. Sister Donna Franklin was nominated for Secretary by the nominating committee, no nominations from the floor. Diane Burns made a motion that Sister Donna Franklin be approved with Florence Patterson seconding, all were in favor.

Meeting was turned over to the new Chair, Robert Mead. Members present were: Florence Patterson, Carlton Doane, Robert Mead, Roger Bennett, Diane Burns, Gloria Zehr, Elaine Porter, and Tedra Cobb. Also present were: Robert Miller, Sylvia Despaw, Gail Bisonette, Pat Rourk, Deb Kent, Ruth Fishbeck, Barbara Hance, Barbara McBurnie, Kathy Skelly and Beth Osman. Excused: Ruth Ayen and Sr. Donna Franklin. Absent: Ron Frank. A quorum was established.

Introductions and Welcome:

- All members introduced themselves. Barb M. also introduced the Office for the Aging student intern from SLU, Beth Osman as well as Deborah Kent, interim Director of Public Health, and Ruth Fishbeck from the St. Lawrence County Health Initiative.

Guest Speaker:

- A presentation was given by Ruth Fishbeck from the St. Lawrence County Health Initiative on the "Living Well Workshops" that are sponsored by the St. Lawrence Health Initiative Inc. The programs will take place all over St. Lawrence County and will be on Self-Management of Chronic Disease. The program is a six-week series of workshops that meet for 2 ½ hours each week. Everyone is welcome to attend. This program is not just for people with a chronic disease but also for caregivers and interested family members. You are asked to attend all 6 sessions to get the full benefit from the workshops. For more information on the workshops see the enclosed report.

Public Comment/Correspondence:

- Robert Mead read a letter of resignation from Holly Capuro who moved out of the County and will no longer be able to serve on the Advisory Council.
- Barb M. also read an annual review letter from John Rush, who is the State Office for the Aging's Aging Services Representative who monitors the SLCOFA. The Office for the Aging received a very good review on all programs throughout the office. There were no areas that needed corrective action.

Approval of Minutes:

- Diane Burns moved to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2008 meeting. Seconded by Tedra C. All in favor- motion carried.

Old Business:

Office for the Aging Report:

- No comments or questions

AIP Review Report:

- Florence P, Carlton D. and Sister Donna met with Barb McBurnie to review the Office for the Aging's Annual Implementation Plan for services for 2009/10. Barb was very complete in her review. The funding allocations, each with their individual budgets, and the services provided with the funds were reviewed with minor discussions at that time. Florence recommended the following:
 1. To distribute the report in advance - this will allow for more input from the review committee.
 2. To ask for increase of funds to widen the range of service for seniors, especially more funding for Nutrition Counseling and Nutrition Education
 3. Advocate for the reduction of salt in manufactured food products and in food served by restaurants.
- Carlton D. said it was an eye-opening experience going over the AIP Report. He was very impressed with everything Barb and her staff accomplished. Carlton was very impressed with all the assistance that was given to all the constituents who called in for help. Elaine Porter noted that she had volunteered in the office and until then was unaware of the number of people that come through the door for help.
- Florence suggested that if anyone has anytime to volunteer it would be most helpful.

By-Law Committee Report:

- Ruth A., Holly C., and R. Mead met to review the by-laws and have made recommendations for changes they would like.
 1. Article I Section 4, third line change the "who then forward" to "who will forward". In Section 5 delete all the wording starting with "3 year term" which will eliminate term limits for members. Barb M. noted that in Article 1 Section 2 fourth line mentions being exempt from term limits. Sentence should end after "the pleasure of the Chair. Section 7 to be amended at the end of the section "as in Article I Section 5 and 6".
 2. It was discussed whether to take out a portion of Article II Section 1. Second line stated "through appropriate social change". The Committee suggested it be omitted but in the discussion that followed it was decided it should be left as is.
 3. Under Article VI Amendments a spelling error had been made and favorable should be changed to favorably.
 4. Under Article VIII: Meetings: The section to be changed was where special meetings may be called at the discretion of the Chairman with a two week advance notification made to Council members. It was decided after discussion that there would be a 2 day advance notice of special meetings or committee meeting. Also the sentence will read Special or Committee meetings.

This is the first presentation of the By-law amendments. Barb will get out copies with indicated changes to everyone prior to the next meeting. After reviewing at the next meeting, the membership will vote on the amendments.

New Business:

Veteran's Services Report:

- Cold war Veterans tax exemption was passed by the County, but individuals must be aware that it is up to individual towns to pass this exemption. The Cold war Veterans who the exemption applies to those who served between the following years *1946 – 50 * 55 – 61 and * 75 –1990. Veterans must apply by March 1st to be eligible for the 2010 tax year. Be sure to check with your own village and town to see that they have enacted this tax exemption.
- The Veteran's Administration has a new Secretary: General (Retired) Eric Shinseki. It is felt that he is a good man and will do a great job for our Veterans.

- Adopt a Platoon program has just been initiated for the County. This is for a Platoon that just left for Afghanistan in January and will return home next January. Teshia Hewitt from Veteran's and Nancy Green from our office are co-chairs of this program. The County Chamber of Commerce and other agencies have asked to join in. The 1st shipment of collected goods went out last week. There are many drop off points around the County. Anything you can give would be a help to our troops. Donations of money are also accepted as it will cost about \$299.00 a month to send the boxes.

AARP Report:

- The new President of the St. Lawrence County Chapter of AARP, Gail Bisonette, was introduced. Gail brought in samples of two of the projects AARP is working on. Three projects are carried out annually: one is making bibs for nursing home residents; another being bags that can be attached to walkers to help carry objects they may need; and another is lap robes. Gail let everyone know that donations of dish towels for the bibs and material for the finishing of the bibs and making the bags will be greatly appreciated. It was also brought to our attention that if we know of anyone who is homebound who would benefit from any of their projects just let them know.
- There will be a meeting in May of the scholarship committee. At that time it will be decided who will be given AARP scholarships this year. Two scholarships are given each year.

StateWide Senior Action Report:

- StateWide meeting will be held on Feb 23rd & 24th in Albany. The North Country will have about 6 people in attendance.
- The North Country Chapter of StateWide meeting will take place in Gouverneur April 3rd at 10:00. There are many projects on StateWide's advocacy agenda: Universal Health Care, transportation, Medicare and Medicaid, affordable housing, homecare, heating, long term care, to only mention a few.
- The Seniorama will be held on Monday, August 17th in Hogansburg. The vendor rates will be increased this year.
- The new Drug Coverage Bill which is being sponsored needs to be pushed by all citizens. The Bill number is HR3932 and S2219 – call your federal representatives and urge their support for this bill.

St. Lawrence County Council of Senior Citizens Report:

- There was no January meeting due to the bad weather. There will be a full agenda at the February 12th meeting.
- The Council now has new members on the Board of Directors. They now have one board member from each of the 17 active clubs that make up the Council. Sylvia will be appointing committees and getting ready for MayFest which is being held in Massena at the New Massena Senior Center (Community Center) on May 2, 2009. The schedule of speakers for the meetings is not ready but we will start scheduling them starting in March.
- All seniors are invited to attend the County Council meetings. We serve free coffee and donuts from (9:00am – 10:00am.) Meetings start at 10:00am with a lunch to follow for a nominal fee.

Announcements:

- The DTV transition has been extended from the month of February to June. If you already called about a box and one wasn't available or your original coupon expired before using it, you should call again. You only had 90 days to get the box.

Adjournment:

- Motion by Florence P, 2nd by Elaine P adjourned at 11:17 am.
- Next meeting will be April 13th at 9:30 a.m.