

Greene County Human Services Department- Aging Advisory Council
May 11, 2021 2:00 – 3:20 Virtual Meeting

PERSON CONDUCTING MEETING: Chairman Dick Golden

RECORDER: Katy Drake/Consultant

ATTENDANCE: Chair Dick Golden, Vice Chair Linda Van Etten, Lula Anderson, Ernie Armstead, Ed Bloomer, Ken Brooks, Lynn Brunner, Bea Clappin, Larry Krajeski, Judi LoPresti, Dottie True and Terry McGee Ward

ABSENT/EXCUSED: Michelle Deyo/Tyler Lynch, Lillian Moore, Beverly Meyers, Florence Ohle, Jeffrey Russo and Dawn Wallant.

*With 10 members present, a quorum was available.

STAFF PRESENTING REPORTS: Connie Bentley and Ruth Pforte

The meeting opened with roll call and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION/ITEM	PERSONAL RESPONSIBLE	DUE	DONE
Review of Previous minutes	Minutes approved as written.	Judi made a motion to approve, Lynn seconded the motion. Minutes approved with all in favor.			
REPORTS & UPDATES:					
Aging Services	Connie Bentley provided a report that covered Case Mgmt, Staffing, Outreach, Caregiver Supports, Legal Supports, Meetings & Monitoring.	Aging Services report attached for review. A new staff member who will be a primary contact for NY Connects will starting on May 24 th .			
Volunteer Services	Ruth Pforte provided two reports that covered volunteers, recruitment, volunteer recognition, AmeriCorp Senior Grant, Volunteer Safety and Training.	Two Volunteer Services Reports attached for Review.			

<p>Nutrition Services</p> <p>Finance/Transportation/ Senior Angel/Helping Hands</p>	<p>Terry read Tezera Pulice's report as Tezera was out covering meal preparation at the time of the meeting.</p> <p>Ken Brooks shared his report with the committee: The \$170,000 through the CARES ACT was largely spent on additional meals during the height of COVID. This funding reduced the county match required, lessening the burden on the county & tax payers. Due to hiring freeze, the Unmet Needs Grant funding was used for new packaging required to deliver meals during COVID. Ken noted the increased cost in food in 2021 - meals now cost approximately \$15/meal.</p> <p>Another new Wheelchair Van is expected on the road by summer.</p> <p>Transportation received approximately \$547,000 through the CARES ACT which was used to pay Greene Transit Drivers when the ARC closed so no drivers were laid off.</p> <p>Ken also shared information on the Helping Hands Program with the local Rotaries and the Senior Angel Program - Both are doing</p>	<p>Nutrition Report attached for review.</p> <p>When the final budget is set, Ken will send out to the Council for review and approval.</p>			
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<p style="text-align: center;">Director's Report</p>	<p>well despite the challenges of COVID.</p> <p>Terry shared information on services during COVID: Staffing shortages were discussed at length. Nutrition is facing the greatest impact from the shortage. Two Case Managers are also vacant. Courtney Carlson will be staying on 3 hours a week to assist with computer software.</p> <p>Due to the shortage of staff and volunteers during the height of COVID, Cossackie Transit was used to deliver meals. While expensive, this was a necessary action to get meals to seniors.</p> <p>Two Human Services staff were shared with the Emergency Operations Center and just returned to the office.</p> <p>Terry shared the three awards for May's Older Americans Month.</p> <p>Virtual BINGO was hosted through a partnership with the Alzheimer's Association.</p> <p>Information on "Get Set Up", a virtual learning tool for on line</p>				
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	classes such as yoga, painting, etc. was shared. This program will be free to seniors who sign up and also offer seniors the opportunity to get paid to teach classes.				
UNFINISHED BUSINESS					
NEW BUSINESS					
CENTER RE-OPENINGS	Terry shared information on the potential re-opening of centers. Social distancing, temperature checks, and reservations will be some of the steps taken to ensure safety when the centers do re-open. Staffing is a big consideration when planning the reopening as staff vacancies are a significant challenge at this time.	The reopening of centers will require a great deal of public relations outreach so seniors understand the new requirements for visiting the centers. August 1 st is the earliest anticipated date for re-opening the centers.			
NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS	Due to COVID, a motion was made to suspend the normal procedures and combine nominations and elections into one meeting.	Ed Bloomer made a motion to nominate and elect Dick Golden to continue as Chair and Linda VanEtten to continue as Vice Chair. Larry Krajeski seconded the motion. No other nominations made. The motion carried with all in favor. Linda VanEtten made a motion to nominate and elect Florence Ohle to continue as Secretary. Ed Bloomer seconded the motion. No other nominations were made and the motion carried with all in favor.			Complete 5/11/21

Council Member Announcements & Updates:

Lula Anderson thanked the Council for adding her to the membership. Lula shared information on the Golden Ages in Windham. Crafters are being sought in various areas to continue classes.

Ernie Armstead shared the recent efforts of the Northeastern Food Pantry and Matthew 25 for Food Drives - 4,000 Boxes of food have been distributed in the past 4 months. The next distribution is May 19th. Ernie shared the efforts over the past few months in getting seniors registered for COVID vaccinations and for finding accessible vaccination sites. Ernie encouraged people to visit seniors in Nursing Homes. Some of the challenges in navigating COVID safety procedures in local nursing homes were discussed with recommendations provided for safe contact. Ernie commended everyone for being able to multi-task and get so much done during these difficult times.

Dick Golden shared that the YMCA has given away over 1,200 boxes of food to those in need. He also shared that the YMCA has re-opened and classes have started.

Judi LoPresti shared information on her letter writing campaign to increase vaccination sites and provide vaccinations to the homebound.

Linda Van Etten thanked all those working so hard during these challenging times. Linda encouraged people to visit nursing homes as they start to re-open. She encouraged people to call and check the safety procedures before scheduling visits or drop offs as guidelines change based on infection rates and active cases.

Florence Ohle sent in the following information to share:

- CAGC has housing money available to assist with those in arrears, and emergency assistance including housing for those affected by COVID. Anything related to, responding to, preparing for or preventing covid, for folks under 200% of poverty may be considered.
- From now until October, every Tuesday afternoon Community Action will have a FREE FARMERS MARKET in the parking lot near the Thrift Store. Free produce, eggs, maybe baked goods. Bring your own bag & masks required.
- CAGC is accepting applications for Weatherization Assistance Program- guidelines have changed effective 4/1/21 and CAGC are now allowed to re-weatherize homes that have not had our service in 15 years.
- VITA (volunteer income tax assistance) The season is now over, but refunds are taking a long time. The IRS is overwhelmed- Many returns for seniors, who do not normally have a filing requirement but needed to file in order to receive their stimulus payments, were prepared.

Terry McGee Ward shared information that the Western Catskills Community Revitalization Council, Inc is seeking grant funding through ACCESS to Home for accessibility modifications for disabled or senior persons who are facing challenges with mobility. WCCRC also has funding through RESTORE for emergency home repairs. Both grants focus on Western Greene County Towns. Interested people can call 607-652-2823. Information was emailed out to the Council following the meeting. Terry brought a concern to the Council regarding a cable service company charging a senior \$1.50 a month to receive a paper bill as the senior does not have internet services to receive the bill electronically. Ed Bloomer said the concern is being discussed, along with rate increases by the cable/internet company. Unfortunately, with only one provider in the area, the senior does not have options but does not want to pay to be billed. It was noted that for seniors watching their budget, \$1.50 can be several food items.

3:20 motion to adjourn accepted. **Next meeting – June 8, 2021 @ 2:00—Virtual.**

Respectfully submitted, Katy Drake 5/11/21