

**Advisory Council for Greene County Department for the Aging**  
**November 9, 2021 2:00 – In person with option to join via Zoom**

**PERSON CONDUCTING MEETING:** Chairman Dick Golden

**RECORDER:** Katy Drake/Consultant\*

**ATTENDANCE:** Chair Dick Golden, Vice Chair Linda Van Etten, Ernie Armstead, Ken Brooks\*, Lynn Brunner, Bea Clappin\*, Judy LoPresti, Lillian Moore, Florence Ohle\*, Dottie True, Dawn Wallant\* and Terry McGee Ward

\*= Zoom With 10 members present and two staff, a quorum was available.

**ABSENT/EXCUSED:** Lula Anderson, Ed Bloomer, Michelle Deyo, Larry Krajieski, Beverly Meyers and Jeffrey Ruso

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

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION/INFORMATION	PERSONAL RESPONSIBLE	DUE	DONE
<b>Review of Previous minutes</b>	The October 12, 2021 meeting minutes were approved as written.	Lillian Moore made a motion to approve. Judy LoPresti seconded the motion. Minutes approved with all in favor.			<b>X</b>
<b>REPORTS &amp; UPDATES: Aging Services</b>	Terry reviewed a report by Connie Bentley that covered HIICAP, Caregiver Services, EISEP, NY Connects, Monitoring and Grant Reports & Applications.	In regard to HIICAP (Health Insurance Information and Counseling Program), staff have participated in training to prepare for the Open Enrollment/Annual Election period, which runs from October 15 – December 7 each year. It was noted that there has been a steady flow of counseling requests since 10/15. Connie shared that 2022 Medicare Plans are now offering more in terms for Dental and Hearing Aid assistance.  An Alzheimer Support group is being planned to start in January at the Rivertown Senior Center in Athens, replacing the meetings previously held at The Pines.			

<p><b>Nutrition Services</b></p>	<p>A report was not available for Nutrition Services – Information will be provided during the Director’s report.</p>	<p>Sana Masih from the Alzheimer’s Association is presenting on <b><u>Effective Communication</u></b> for staff on December 6<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p>The committee discussed the shortage of aides available, locally &amp; statewide. Connie reported that Hearthstone Care has been able to consistently provide Companions for level one clients (shopping, housekeeping, etc.). It was also reported that due to staff vacancies, Case Managers have large caseloads.</p>	<p>Tezera Pulice</p>		
<p><b>Volunteer Services</b></p>	<p>Terry shared Ruth Pforte’s September report.</p>	<p>Ruth reported for October there were a total of 106 volunteers, 78 for meal delivery, 10 for medical transportation, 8 for the Advisory Board, 7 for the Thrift Shop and 5 for Outreach.</p> <p>The progress report has been sent to AmeriCorps. It was predicted that 200 meals would be delivered from April 1, 2021 - September 30, 2021. 500 meals were delivered during this period. It was predicted that 110 clients would receive rides to medical appointments during that same time frame; 106 rides were provided.</p>			

<p><b>Finance/Transportation/ Senior Angel/Helping Hands</b></p>	<p><b>Ken Brooks</b> shared his report:</p> <p>The budget was submitted to the state and remains the same as last year with the state giving a flat amount each year.</p>	<p>In-person meetings (Recognition Committee and RSVP) were held in October.</p> <p>A tree was decorated for the Festival of Trees with a theme of “Volunteers are Angels”.</p> <p>Ruth is working on the new AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP grant which is due by November 30<sup>th</sup>. Ruth attended the training session on the grant on October 14, 2021.</p> <p>Ken reported the American Rescue Plan money is being spent first, with the last of the ARP funding being spent this quarter. Ken shared information on the carry over areas and the county match requirements. Generally, a 10 - 20% match is required, but due to continued decreases in funding, and increase in costs, Greene County has been providing a 30 – 45% match. Ken shared that the subsidy can be accessed when the County has exceeded the match requirements.</p> <p>The costs of the required state computer system, Peer Place, was discussed.</p> <p>It was reported that two 4 X 4 vehicles, to assist with mountain top transportation, have been requested for 2022. Another wheelchair accessible van is on order for Spring 2022. Currently, the Department has more vehicles than hired drivers.</p>	<p>11/30</p>		
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<p><b>Director's Report</b></p>	<p>The Senior Angel Program is getting referrals for clients. The Emergency Funds are being used to serve seniors in collaboration with Community Action, Catholic Charities, Catskill Mountain Housing and Veteran's Services.</p> <p>Helping Hands</p> <p>Terry shared information on staffing and volunteers.</p> <p>2022 Senior Day</p>	<p>The Helping Hands program with the Rotary is getting more requests.</p> <p>Senior Angels has raised \$9,000 so far in 2021. This is down \$5,000 for 2020. The request list has doubled in size, with a focus on gift cards for groceries. Ken reported due to COVID, most Senior Angel Christmas shopping will occur online.</p> <p>The Athens Victorian Stroll is scheduled for December 11<sup>th</sup>. Senior Angels will have a table at the Center to give out coffee &amp; tea while accepting donations, The Thrift Shop will be open during the stroll.</p> <p>Helping Hands, with the Rotarians, continues to be a great support to local seniors with small household needs (a/c's brought in, lawn care, shopping, etc.)</p> <p>Terry again discussed the critical staff and volunteer shortages. Recruitment continues and interviews have been held but no offers made other than a new cook hired for Athens. Terry created an enhanced training program for nutrition staff, similar to the orientation for office staff.</p> <p>Due to the shortage of meal delivery volunteers, Terry is exploring the option of frozen meals delivered weekly for the clients who would be able to manage that system (storing, heating, etc.).</p>			
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		<p>Planning for the 2022 Senior Day will start after Thanksgiving. “Homecoming” was suggested for the theme, but additional suggestions are requested.</p> <p>Terry shared that the history of the Department is being recorded for public hearings.</p> <p>The Pen Pal Program is going well for those participating.</p>	Please email		
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**Council Member Announcements & Updates:**

- \* Ernie discussed the Catskill Senior Center, sharing the events and craft groups are meeting again. The committee was asked to remind seniors that they must call in if they want a meal at the Center. Due to the change in meal prep and packaging, extra meals are not available unless “ordered” in advance by a standing order or call for a specific meal/day.
- \* Dick shared information on the Rotary Auction, which will donate to the Senior Angels Program.
- \* Lynn shared information from the planning committee, which will meet on November 23<sup>rd</sup> to discuss a Christmas Party.
- \* Dottie shared information on resources for Veterans and plans for the new Cairo Senior Center to be built on Route 32 and shared with the Ambulance Headquarters. Dottie also shared information on lap quilts being made for the Senior Angel Program.
- \* Florence shared that Thanksgiving Dinner with the Elks is planned. Last year meals were delivered to 300 people. Volunteers to prep, serve and deliver are being sought. Florence also shared information on the mobile food pantry and the weatherization program. To start to address the critical staff shortage, Community Action of Greene County is going to a 9 day pay period with staff having an extra day off each pay period. Florence reminded the committee that if seniors are asking for gift cards for food, Community Action is available for those in need.
- \* Dawn shared that Common Ground is back in the office in Catskill, but trainings and mediation are occurring remotely.
- \* Bea discussed some of the pending changes in Medicaid. Changes are coming, but no effective date is set yet.
- \* Ken shared that the Roundtable News may not be mailed out for December due to toner shortage. The Roundtable News will be emailed out, but hard copies may not be able to be sent as roughly 1,500 copies go out using approximately 9,000 sheets of paper.

Information on current phone scams were discussed by the committee.

At 3:03, a motion to adjourn was made by Judy, seconded by Ernie and accepted by the committee.

**Next meeting – December 14, 2021 @ 2:00 – In person with option to join via Zoom**

Notes respectfully submitted, Katy Drake\*