

Advisory Council for Greene County Department for the Aging
January 11, 2022 @ 2:00 – In person with option to join via Zoom

PERSON CONDUCTING MEETING: Chairman Dick Golden

RECORDER: Katy Drake/Consultant*

ATTENDANCE: Chair Dick Golden, Ed Bloomer*, Ernie Armstead, Ken Brooks, Lynn Brunner, Michelle Deyo*, Larry Krajieski*, Judy LoPresti*, Florence Ohle*, Dottie True* and Terry McGee Ward

Guest: Ann Krieg*/Greene DSS

*= Zoom

ABSENT/EXCUSED: Vice Chair Linda Van Etten, Lula Anderson, Bea Clappin, Beverly Meyers, Lillian Moore, Jeffrey Ruso & Dawn Wallant

With 9 members present and two staff, a quorum was available.

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

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION/INFORMATION	PERSONAL RESPONSIBLE	DUE	DONE
Review of Previous Minutes	The December 14, 2021 meeting minutes were approved as written.	Lynn Brunner made a motion to approve. Ernie seconded the motion. Minutes approved with all in favor.			X
REPORTS & UPDATES: Aging Services	Terry reviewed a report by Connie Bentley that covered the Staffing Situation, HIICAP, MIPPA, Caregiver Services, EISEP, NY Connects and Volunteer Recruitment.	Due to extreme staffing shortages, staff are working hard to cover as needed in all departments. In regard to HIICAP (Health Insurance Information and Counseling Program), Connie reported the office doubled the number of clients seen in a quarter— with most assistance provided through the phone, email & mail. Staff will be reaching out to clients who do not appear to be enrolled in savings programs (such as the Medicare Savings Program and the Low Income Subsidy through Social Security) as these programs can save a considerable			

		<p>amount of money. The office continues to promote Preventative and Wellness benefits offered through Medicare.</p> <p>The Alzheimer Support group planned to start in January at the Rivertown Senior Center has been postponed due to COVID concerns.</p> <p>Large caseloads for Case Mangers due to ongoing vacancies was again discussed as a concern as the number of people inquiring about home care increased following the holidays. A second interview for a Case Manager is scheduled for the end of this week.</p> <p>Connie reported out on the completion of the MIPPA Application (cost savings program for seniors), the RMT/NY Connects Quarterly Cost Analysis and the Data Verification Report.</p> <p>The placemat Connie designed seeking volunteers was shared - 1500 placemats will be distributed in Catskill.</p> <p>Due to extreme short staffing, two sites were closed yesterday. 14 staff are needed to run the sites and only 6 were available. Even with staff from all departments covering as possible the staffing/volunteer shortage is impacting the centers.</p>	<p>Volunteer Ad set for placemats for Catskill area.</p>		
Nutrition Services	<p>A report was not available for Nutrition Services due to the extensive staff shortages.</p>				
Volunteer Services	<p>As the software was not working, no specific numbers were</p>	<p>As of the October full report, Greene County had 202 volunteers. This</p>			

<p>Finance/Transportation/ Senior Angel/Helping Hands</p>	<p>available for Ruth's report.</p> <p>Ken Brooks shared his report.</p> <p>The Senior Angel Program</p>	<p>number is down from 349 volunteers before COVID. This decline in volunteers is impacting HDM routes, specifically in Catskill.</p> <p>Ruth reported 106 rides were provided in December for Medical Transportation.</p> <p>Ruth shared new reporting challenges for the Progress Report Supplement for AmeriCorps. New information in detail that is not collected is being requested (i.e.; ex-offender status, number of clients with Alzheimer's).</p> <p>Ken reported the 2022 budget mirrored the 2021 budget. Ken discussed the surplus in specific budget lines as so much was cancelled in 2021 due to COVID. The surplus went to covering the significant increases in food costs for meals. Ken provided specifics in terms of the shortage of aides. Placement agencies have no aides available at this time through Greene County contracts.</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.) The Helping Hands Program has been able to secure volunteers for the requests coming in.</p> <p>Senior Angels raised \$16,000 for 2021, surpassing last year's amount.</p>			
--	--	--	--	--	--

	<p>Greene County Aging Services Foundation - Call for new Board Members for 2022.</p>	<p>print instructions for the tests were created to hand out with every kit.</p> <p>Dick Golden and Ernie Armstead volunteered to serve. Meetings are held 4 times a year and will be scheduled in conjunction with the Aging Advisory Board schedule.</p>	<p>The Bylaws of the foundation were emailed out to all members on December 15th for review and consideration.</p>		
--	---	--	---	--	--

Council Member Announcements & Updates:

The deadline for nominations for the Annual Senior Citizen Awards is January 28, 2022.

During the meeting, Michele Deyo shared information on the Joseph P. Dwyer Veteran Peer Support Project. Michele is working with Senator Hinchey on an application for funding to bring these vet to vet programs to Greene County. Programs offered in the Hudson Valley currently include martial arts, a motorcycle build, warrior writers, welding and many others. For additional information on the programs visit www.HVCVR.org. Michele shared that the department is looking to have three drivers and also a per diem driver to be able to provide transportation to these activities. If funding is secured, specific activities will be tailored to Greene County – such as activities around the Hudson River and ski resorts. Lastly, Michele is working to secure state funding for technology costs for a mentorship program for newly separated veterans to transition back into civilian life. Michele reviewed the changes in process for the department—Tyler will soon be overseeing transportation for Veteran’s Services as Michele works to secure new supports and services for Veterans.

Florence Ohle shared information on new funding under the Weatherization Program now focused on “electrification ready” services. CAGC has been distributing masks and has requested test kits for distribution. Florence talked about strategies that Community Action has implemented to address the staffing crisis impacting the country—starting wages were raised and the program went to a 9 day pay period providing staff an extra day off each pay period. The Mobile Food Pantry has been busy, especially serving individuals who are homeless or people who have had to quarantine. Florence shared efforts underway in the area of housing and addressing homelessness. A surge in housing challenges is expected as the moratorium on evictions has not been renewed. Information was shared on Peer Court. Student involvement is being sought as prior to COVID the Peer Court was seeing a great deal of success working with youth to avoid the criminal justice system involvement. Community Action is gearing up for tax season assisting seniors and individuals with low income for the middle of February. Florence shared on the website is a program “My Free Taxes” available through VITA. Anyone can use the My Free Tax link - [Income Tax Assistance \(cagcny.org\)](http://Income Tax Assistance (cagcny.org)).

Larry Krajewski shared that Catskill Mountain Housing received a contract for the Restore Program which provides funds to help seniors with emergency repairs. Larry thanked the county for the COVID test kits for tenants.

Ernie Armstead shared concerns about the Catskill Senior Center being closed. This closure is a town decision. Seniors can still call ahead to pick up meals but Ernie discussed the benefits of the center being open for seniors to visit.

Judy noted that many senior meetings were cancelled for January due to Covid. Judy shared that the frozen meals received when cooking sites had to close due to staffing shortages were very good and worked well. Judy also thanked Tami Bone for her quick response on getting a PERS set up within a week. Judy was commended for her recent article on the need for volunteers.

Dottie did not have an update but answered the committee’s questions on the plans for the new Cairo Senior Center. Plans are moving forward but no construction has been started yet.

At 3:01, a motion to adjourn was made by Ed, seconded by Ernie and accepted by the committee. Notes respectfully submitted, Katy Drake*

Next meeting – February 8, 2022 @ 2:00 – In person with option to join via Zoom Notes approved by the Council on February 8, 2022