

Advisory Council for Greene County Department for the Aging
March 8, 2022 @ 2:00 – In person with option to join via Zoom

PERSON CONDUCTING MEETING: Dick Golden

RECORDER: Katy Drake/Consultant*

ATTENDANCE: Chair Dick Golden, Vice Chair Linda Van Etten, Lula Anderson, Ed Bloomer, Ken Brooks, Lynn Brunner, Bea Clappin *, Don Crespino, Larry Krajeski, Judy LoPresti, Beverly Meyers, Lillian Moore, Tyler Lynch, Florence Ohle, Jeffrey Ruso*, Dottie True, Dawn Wallant* and Terry McGee Ward. * = Zoom

ABSENT/EXCUSED: Ernie Armstead and Michelle Deyo

With 14 members present, plus two guest and two staff, a quorum was available.

The meeting opened at 2:03 with roll call and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION/INFORMATION	PERSONAL RESPONSIBLE	DUE	DONE
Review of Previous Minutes	The February 8, 2022 meeting minutes were approved with one correction.	Judy made a motion to approve. Lynn seconded the motion. Minutes approved with all in favor.			X
REPORTS & UPDATES:					
Director's Report	Executive Director Terry McGee Ward began the meeting with her report. Staffing was discussed at length due to vacancies. Open positions include: 2 part time Meal Site Managers, one full time Case Manager, bus driver, full time cook and several food service helpers/drivers. Menus are being revamped due to the staffing shortage.	A new Case Manager, Christopher Lewoc, starts March 14 th . The other Case Manager applicant, a retired DSS employee who was considering working part time, turned down the position. Terry shared information on a SUNY student volunteer who is a business & marketing major who will be working on a marketing plan for the volunteer program. Terry discussed how necessary measures needed to be taken to keep sites open. Pre-packaged items in place			

<p>Aging Services</p>	<p>Terry discussed her upcoming retirement. The responsibilities of the Director were shared.</p> <p>Terry reviewed information submitted by Connie Bentley that covered the Staffing Situation, EISEP and NY Connects.</p>	<p>of scratch baking & side dishes are necessary in order to cut down on prep time.</p> <p>Interviews have begun but it is unlikely a new Director will be in place before Terry's last day on March 31st. The Council wishes Terry all the best in retirement!</p> <p>Under EISEP, the office is getting regular calls for home care. Level one aides have been available for shopping and housekeeping. Level two aides for hands-on care have not been available. Under NY Connects, a steady stream of calls from family members seeking support and assistance has occurred.</p>			
<p>Volunteer Services</p>	<p>Terry shared information from Ruth Pforte on Volunteer Services.</p> <p>AmeriCorps Senior Grant</p>	<p>In March, volunteers are working in the areas of meal delivery, medical transportation, advisory boards, outreach, crafting and the thrift shop. Ruth reported 110 rides were provided for Medical Transportation.</p> <p>Ruth shared the news of an award of \$50,000 for the next three years for AmeriCorps Senior Grant.</p> <p>Surveys are in process with Medical Transportation and Homebound Meal clients.</p> <p>Gift Cards for recognition have arrived and will be sent out shortly.</p>			

<p>Nutrition Services</p>	<p>A report was not available for Nutrition Services due to the extensive staff shortages.</p>	<p>Terry reviewed the positions currently open under nutrition and potential upcoming retirements. Starting pay rates were discussed due to the number of vacancies and the lack of applicants.</p>			
<p>Finance/Transportation/ Senior Angel/Helping Hands</p>	<p>Ken Brooks shared his report.</p> <p>Transportation</p> <p>ARPA and Cares Act Funding</p>	<p>Ken reported the 2022 budget mirrored the 2021 budget. Ken discussed the surplus in the personnel budget lines due to being 14 – 18 people short staffed. The nutrition budget is high due to the drastic increases in food costs. The supply budget is also high due to the increase in office supply costs.</p> <p>Ridership on the Teal Route 711 is increasing.</p> <p>Ken shared that major renovations for the Athens Senior Center are in process through Unmet Needs Funding. Funds have been allocated for the following for Athens: Walk- in Cooler, Generator and A/C.</p> <p>Two four-wheel drive vehicles have been ordered. No delivery date is available yet due manufacturing delays.</p> <p>Two aides (level 1 care) have been hired for the Mountain Top.</p> <p>Helping Hands, with the Rotarians, continues to be a great support to local seniors with small household needs (shoveling, garbage cans in/out,</p>			

		<p>shopping, etc.) The Helping Hands Program has been able to secure volunteers for the requests coming in. The program is seeking volunteers for weekly calls with seniors.</p> <p>It was stressed that Helping Hands Requests should go through the office and volunteers should not give out their private phone numbers.</p> <p>Senior Angels raised over \$16,000 for 2021.</p>			
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Council Member Announcements & Updates:

Lula Anderson shared details on the planning of a spring and fall dinner. Hopefully a spring fling, with music and food, will be held in May. A place large enough for 75-100 people, all on one level, is being sought with the VFW in Windham being considered.

Lynn Brunner shared information on the Athens’ St Patrick’s Day party scheduled - 50 people have already signed up.

Bea Clappin, Greene County Social Services, shared information on Medicaid rates and how adjustments occur. “Rural versus city” wages are impacting the availability of aides, especially considering the travel costs for rural aides.

Don Crespino, Greene County Transit, provided an overview of the initiatives he is focusing on as he learns his new role as Greene County Mobility Manager. Travel training, hiring drivers and increasing ridership are the current priorities.

Larry Krajeski, Catskill Mountain Housing, discussed the ReStore Program sharing the challenges that high prices for gas and materials have on limited available funding. Larry shared that he will be retiring this summer.

Judy LoPresti shared information on upcoming trips and events including the ABBA show on May 24th and a potential 4-5 day trip to Maine in mid-August. Judy also brought up for discussions an informal program of volunteers checking in with interested seniors to help address loneliness. Judy commended Tami Bone for her prompt assistance in setting up a PERS for Judy’s mother. Judy expressed appreciation for the new Greene County aide

Beverly Myers shared that there are numerous requests for the bus back to Albany. (A driver needs to be hired before this service can resumed).

Florence Ohle, Community Action, shared information on Income Tax Preparation for clients that have been assisted in the past. Changes in the weatherization program were discussed with most work that prepares eligible clients' homes for weatherization being accepted now, with the removal of the 15 year look back. Florence shared that the Domestic Violence Shelter has been closed for 6 months as the required 24 hour a day staffing has not been available.

Jeff Ruso agreed with the workforce challenges we all are facing now — from starting wages to attracting applicants to retaining staff.

Dottie True brought up questions on Senior Day. No date has been set yet, but hopefully the event will occur in May. Themes are still being discussed.

Dawn Wallant shared that Common Ground is back doing face-to-face service and is back in the schools.

The Committee discussed the challenges seniors are facing with Central Hudson – billing issues and high costs are a real concern. Florence shared that a virtual presentation for a Public Utilities Rights meeting has been scheduled for March 10th. Information on this presentation was emailed to all committee members immediately following the meeting.

At 3:20, a motion to adjourn was made and accepted by the committee. Notes respectfully submitted, Katy Drake
Meeting Notes approved at the April 12th Board meeting with a quorum present.

Next meeting – April 12, 2022 @ 2:00 – In person with option to join via Zoom