

ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR GREENE COUNTY DEPARTMENT FOR THE AGING

February 14, 2023 @ 2:00 – In person with option to join via Zoom*

PERSON CONDUCTING MEETING: Dick Golden

RECORDER: Katy Drake*/Consultant

ATTENDANCE: Chair Dick Golden, Lula Anderson, Ernie Armstead, Ed Bloomer, Tami Bone (staff), Ken Brooks (staff), Lynn Brunner, Bea Clappin*, Kendra Huber*, Judy LoPresti, Tyler Lynch*(guest), Charlene Mabey, Beverly Meyers, Lillian Moore, Florence Ohle, Ruth Pforte (staff), Tezera Pulice (staff), Jeffrey Ruso, Stephanie Schleuderer (staff), Dottie True and Molly Whitbeck

ABSENT/EXCUSED: Don Crespino, Michelle Deyo, Vice Chair Linda Van Etten and Dawn Wallant

GUESTS: Toni Carroll, YMCA and Wendy VanLare, Miscellany Greene

With 15 members present, plus 5 staff and 3 guests, a quorum was available.

The Chair opened the meeting at 2:00 with roll call and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION/INFORMATION	PERSONAL RESPONSIBLE	DU E	DONE
Review of Previous Minutes	The January 10, 2023 meeting minutes were approved.	Ernie made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Dottie seconded the motion. Minutes approved with all in favor.			X
PRESENTATIONS					
	Wendy Van Lare presented on Miscellany Greene, a new program working of Coxsackie that provides a diverse collection of services to support the community.	Wendy shared an overview of the wellness services, art experiences and life enrichment events that are offered through Miscellany Greene. Wendy was seeking input on wellness services and programs that seniors in the county are interested in.	To connect with Miscellany Greene, contact Wendy at (518) 225-0144. Website: Miscellanygreene.com		
	Toni Carroll provided an overview of programs at the YMCA for seniors.	Toni shared a short video on the YMCA programs.	To contact Toni: TCARROLL@cdymca.org		

AGING SERVICES	Stephanie reported on a restructuring in process following Connie Bentley's retirement.				
NUTRITION	Tezera reported on a new walk-in cooler/freezer in Athens. Two new staff have also been hired for Athens.				
VOLUNTEER SERVICES	Ruth Pforte provided information on new volunteers, training, Hats for Hope and surveys.	<p>Ruth reviewed the names of new volunteers starting with the department. Three new volunteers have started training for Jewett.</p> <p>Ruth reviewed the donations that went out to Hats for Hope project.</p> <p>Surveys on services have been sent out and replies are coming in.</p>	<p>If Board members are aware of any concerns with volunteers, please speak with Ruth or Ken.</p> <p>Survey results will be shared at a future meeting.</p>		
BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT	Ken Brooks provided information on the 2023 budget, the Helping Hands program and Senior Angels.	<p>Ken is working with Tami and Stephanie to complete the NYSOFA budget. The budget has no additional funding despite expenses going up significantly.</p> <p>Ken shared that Senior Angels has raised a record breaking \$25,367.25 in 2022, leaving a solid nest egg for the Emergency Fund. Tami will be taking Ken's place on the Senior Angel Committee.</p>			

		<p>Ken reported that as of January 1st, Transportation will be under the Department of Economic Development & Planning. Ken will be assisting with this transition and will return as a consultant following retirement. The Transportation Advisory Board is expected to resume meetings soon. The bus to Albany will be restarting with trips to Colonie Center in April.</p> <p>Ken reviewed the Helping Hands program, noting a slow period as requests often are seasonal/weather related (storm/screen windows, A/C in windows, shoveling, etc.)</p>			
<p>DIRECTOR'S REPORT</p>	<p>Stephanie shared information on level two aide contracts, restructuring due to Connie's retirement and department interviews.</p>	<p>Stephanie reviewed that the county has subcontracted with Unlimited Care and that a level 2 aide has started to provide services on the Mountain Top. The contract addresses the waiting list for aides in the county. Stephanie reported that interviews are going well for the Case Manager position, with 6 applicants being invited back for second interviews.</p>			
<p>VOTING ON SENIOR AWARDS</p>	<p>Three nominations were received for two awards: Senior Citizen of the Year Outstanding Contribution by a Senior Citizen</p>	<p>Board members received ballots to vote on the 2023 awards. Members attending the meeting by Zoom returned their votes to the office.</p>	<p>Ballots were tallied by Maureen Murphy and awards will be announced at the next meeting.</p>		

COUNCIL MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPDATES

- * Dick shared information about the 10-week exercise program-“Bingocize” that is being offered at the centers. This exercise program, run by the YMCA, is a combination of bingo & exercise. Dick also shared that usage of the Coxsackie Food Pantry is up over 50%, with expectation of continued growing needs.
- * Florence also noted the growing need of the Community Action Food pantry. Community Action has a mobile (door to door) food pantry. Florence shared that CAGC has applied for a grant to increase access to fresh local foods (farm to pantry). The increase in individuals struggling with homelessness was discussed. Information was shared on the Voluntary Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. On Community Actions’ website there is a link for a free tax program, for those who meet eligibility—myfreetaxes.com. Florence shared an update on the weatherization program.
- * Ernie expressed appreciation to the Transportation Department stating the shuttle bus to the Catskill Senior Center is working well. Ernie stated the center is doing well—a new floor and good activities being offered.
- * Lynn shared that the Athens Valentine’s Day Party had a full house. A Saint Patrick’s Day party is being planned.
- * Jeff shared information on the personal challenges over seven months of enrolling in Medicare.
- * Lula shared that the senior group has been active with crafting between meetings. 20 seniors came to make truffles/valentine’s chocolates. Wax candles is the next project planned. The club is celebrating their 50-year anniversary at the next meeting.
- * Judy reported on the sold-out Valentine’s Day event at the Jewett Center. Judy also provided information on senior trips. The Williamsburg trip does still have openings.
- * Dottie reported that progress is slow on the new Cairo Senior Center with no opening date set yet. The representative from Central Hudson has been slow in responding to questions submitted, with no contact recently. Dottie shared that Greene County is working on a potential building for a Greene animal rescue. The Board discussed the impact on homelessness on animals as people are displaced due to rising rents and a lack of affordable housing. Dottie shared the success of recycling returning to Cairo. Lastly, Dottie provided information on an upcoming event- Pocketbook Bingo.
- * Charlene reported the interest in looking into a senior center for Durham.
- * Bea informed that Board that as of March 1st the additional funding under SNAP that was in place though COVID is ending. Notices have gone out and benefits for some people will drop by over \$200/month. Bea also shared the changes in Medicaid rates, noting new threshold levels for eligibility. To ask for a budget re-evaluation based on the new income levels, people should contact the office at 518 719-3700 and request a re-evaluation for Medicaid.
- * Ed shared information on Governor Hochul’s budget proposal to halt the longstanding practice of sharing federal Medicaid funds with the counties. He talked about the impact this would have on Greene County. Information will be included in the Greene County Roundtable Newsletter on how taxpayers can contact the Governor’s office to express their concerns to this budget proposal.* Sample letter from the Roundtable News included in notes
- * Molly shared that Catskill Mountain Housing is expecting less grant money available this year. The funding for 2023 for Restore will go quickly, offered first to the people who were not served in 2022.

The meeting adjourned at 3:28 p.m.

Next meeting – March 14, 2023 @ 2:00

Approved by a quorum April 11, 2023.