

Broome County Office for Aging

Advisory Council Meeting

December 11, 2023

In attendance: Amy Pessarchick, Katie Legg, Carolyn Price, Sue Thrasher, Rene Conklin, Dr. Jerome Mikloucich, Maria Motsavage, Robert Hoover, Dr. Lee, Sally Hoffman, Kathy Bunnell, Dr. Kang

Guest: Jason Garnar, Colleen Wagner, Dr. Wang

OFA Staff: Mary Turbush, Lucia Esposito

Carolyn asked for a vote to approve minutes from the last meeting. Motion made by Sally Hoffman and second motion made by Rene Conklin. Noone opposed.

Mary asked if anyone had questions about the Director's report shared with everyone via email.

Maria asked about an update about changes pertaining to Yesteryears that recently went from Social Adult Day Care to Group Respite. Mary explained that nothing has changed in the daily operation of the program and who it serves. This change happened to align Yesteryears with a more appropriate designation and one that allows us more flexibility.

Public Hearing update – an evening meal was offered but attendance wasn't great. We held at Broome West Senior Center. Attendees shared that phone and computer literacy should be improved. Many seniors do not know that there is free internet at the senior centers. One attendee also asked about a list of common tech terms that older adults may not know about.

OFA is working with Lourdes Senior Care on a new proposal funded by Lifespan out of Rochester. If approved OFA would receive funding and pass some of the funding to Lourdes. Lourdes would provide referrals to OFA for clients who need connections to community services and Caregiver supports. This project is scheduled between February 2024 and March 2025. Once the project ends the goal is to be ready for the new CMS physician fee for service program. This program will be effective January 2025 when Medicare Part B will be able to be billed by physicians who need to seek community services OFAs can coordinate. This would mean that OFAs will be able to be paid for services they offer and coordinate with the ultimate goal of improving social determinants for health.

We have some staff retirements coming up. Staffing is challenging but we have multiple new staff joining us in January. We are still looking for a Leisure time Activity Leader for Broome West Senior Center.

Dr. Lee had a question about Age Friendly Project and hosting another Senior to Senior Dance at Johnson City Senior Center. Dr. Lee will reach out to us about working on this.

OFA will be celebrating 50th anniversary in 2024. The celebrations will be held at various senior centers.

Robert Hoover provided an overview of the LGBTQ group that has been meeting at JC Senior Center. Robert reported that they have had 9 meetings and had wonderful speakers attend.

Dr. Lee thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve on the OFA Advisory Council. She hopes to stay connected through the Foster Grandparent Program and Age-Friendly Project.

Rene Conklin reported that the Ford Wellness Center is getting busier.

Carolyn Price shared information about the Grange in Windsor. There is a building that needs to be refurbished and it will be quite expensive. Town of Windsor worked closely with students who provided the work.

Dr. Kang reported that he has 5 more animatronic pets to deliver. His research shows that older adults who received the pet showed improvements in their depression. Dr. Kang will continue his research to also look at individuals who didn't show improvements in their depression.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Kathy Bunnell, seconded by Sally Hoffman.