

**Tompkins County Office for the Aging**

**Advisory Committee Meeting**

**March 27, 2023**

**Hybrid**

**9:30am**

**Members present:** Hart, Hultberg, Shearer, Beyers, Mallison, Stamm, Roe, Hatch

**Liaisons:** Lynch, Burger, Jewell, Stuart, Evans, Hillson, Klein

**Staff:** Monroe, Bullis, Jackson, Davis, Willer (intern)

1. Hatch called meeting to order at 9:30am.
2. Meeting minutes from February 2023 approved.
3. Public comment:
4. Member comment: Mallison commented that she has heard from folks in Newfield that they do not like coming to the COFA office because parking is so difficult. Wondered if 2 spots could be reserved in front of the building for senior citizen parking. Perhaps ask the city to reserve? Monroe stated that yes, this has been a conversation in the past and can certainly be started again. Explained that our office does have parking scratch off tickets that they can purchase and use when they park so they don't have to use the parking stations. The cost of tickets is by time increments and is the same that they would pay at the pay station. Roe asked about expiration dates and if they were still being sold around town, usually where garbage tags are sold. City is still honoring the tickets.

Roe will be attending the Brooktondale Senior group and will bring information. Aging Services Specialist Dawn Sprague will also be attending.

5. COFA Update-Monroe:
  - Annual Update: NYSOFA is getting information out to us, will be reviewed by Budget Subcommittee and then it will be presented to the whole committee
  - Jackson reported on Caregiver events: Caregiver Support group every other week from 11a-12p (hybrid); Caregiver presentation Friday, April 7<sup>th</sup> 11:00a-12:30p by Ann Dolan "Everything's an Experiment"; Tuesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> 2:00p-3:30p Teresa Sivers will be presenting on "Preparing Your Home for Caregiving"; Brookdale is restarting their Caregiver Support Group
  - Older Americans Month in May- will hold an Open House on Friday, May 12<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-4:00. Tabling by COFA and some partners. Will be recognizing the outstanding volunteer awardees at open house.
6. Liaison Reports:
  - a. Burger: Lifelong-
    - Launched new website; allows people to register for classes online if they'd like; would like any feedback
    - Hired new Program Director, Amy Campbell

- Past halfway mark for tax season; all appointments are full at this point; can call 211 if someone still needs in person appointment; Lifelong can assist with self-prep if the person's income is below \$73,000
- Hosting Volunteer Fair, May 10<sup>th</sup> from 10am-12pm
- Annual Meeting, May 25<sup>th</sup> at Hotel Ithaca at noon; tickets will be available starting next week online or call Lifelong, \$25.00

b. Lynch: FLIC-

- Registry funded by COFA is a service to match people with aides (private pay); always in need of more aides
- New position openings will be posted soon

Hatch commented on the need for more pay for homecare workers. Asked about any feedback. Lynch stated that they haven't heard anything yet. Have a lot of support from Assemblyperson and Senator. The postcard campaign was positive.

c. Evans: Foodnet-

- May 3<sup>rd</sup>; 4:30-7pm Mac n Cheese Bowl at Farmer's Market; have 18 competitors, tickets are on sale now
- Restarting Congregate dining at Titus Towers April 24<sup>th</sup>; M-F 11-1:30

d. Hillson: TCWH-

- Upcoming Rabies Vaccinations Clinics in April and May; can pre-register on their website
- Lourdes Mammography Van will be at the Health Department on May 24<sup>th</sup>
- Still promoting COVID boosters, test kits still available in the community

Roe asked if there will be a joint COVID/Flu shot. Hillson hasn't heard that yet. Hatch reminded people about ticks this time of year.

e. Klein: TC Legislature-

- Watching the State budget; will have a big influence on our local budget

f. Jewell: Love Living at Home-

- Information Session March 30<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am on zoom
- Friday, May 12<sup>th</sup> at Stewart Park Large Pavilion will be having a member, volunteer, friends of love living at home potluck event 4pm-6pm
- September 1<sup>st</sup> details forthcoming; event at Treleaven with the band Destination

Hatch praised Cheryl for information that she provided on changes in medical providers. Cheryl will provide to Lisa to share with the entire group.

g. Stuart: VNS-

- No real changes at this time; agency is stable
- Have had several staff out with COVID over last couple of weeks; currently servicing about 3 COVID positive patients

7. Discussion: Community Health Assessment & Improvement Plan: Sam Hillson, Director of Health Promotion, TC Whole Health
- Required of all local health departments to complete an assessment and submit a plan every 3 years.
  - Goals include identifying key health challenges, determining gaps and disparities, prioritizing strengths and resources and advancing health equity
  - Process includes reviewing state and local data, partnering with local agencies/experts, input through the Community Health Survey, identifying priority needs and then selecting goals and interventions with guidance from NYS Prevention Agenda
  - Had 1500 survey responses
  - Low income and black populations rated their physical and mental health lowest
  - Top two factors people chose for what makes a healthy community were affordable, safe housing and equitable, affordable healthcare
  - Tompkins County is often ranked as one of the healthiest counties in NYS overall, however, there are still significant barriers that lead to disparities in health outcomes
  - Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP): 3 goals- prevent chronic disease, promote healthy infants, women, and children, and promote well-being and prevent mental health and substance use disorders
  - CHIP workgroups are heart disease and diabetes early detection, cancer screening, and perinatal, infant, and family health. If interested in any of these please reach out to Sam
  - full plan and report is available on their website

Beyers asked about the status of health providers in the community. Have heard that several have retired recently. Does anyone address or monitor overall capacity? Hillson agreed that this is an ongoing issue. Refer to Cayuga Health Physicians line that folks can call. 211 navigators may also be able to help find providers.

Hatch asked about partners and what some of the other County agencies that they work with are. Hillson responded that they work with many of the county departments such as DSS, Youth Services, COFA, DOER. Found it striking that housing was the top reason for lower health in a community. Believes its huge deal that effect both young and old.

Evans commented that no one really ranked high in the ratings of physical and mental health. Hillson reminded that it is a pretty small sample, but it is telling.

Hart asked if the county was reaching out to builders and asking if they are encouraging them to include affordable handicapped units. Klein stated that he would run that by the planning department. Monroe also stated that this ties into our Age Friendly work. Lynch stated that often builders will reach out to FLIC on the building of accessible units.

Hatch asked about COFA's Ombudsman program. Monroe stated that it looks promising that more funding will be coming. In process of hiring 2 Project Assistants to help with the coverage. Frustrating that program is volunteer based.

## 8. No old business

Next meeting will be April 24, 2023

Meeting adjourned 11:00am