

GREATER ARNPRIOR SENIORS COUNCIL – RECORDS OF DISCUSSION
Wednesday, October 21 2020 – 9:00 AM
VIA ZOOM

Present

Darrrel O’Shaughnessy, Chair	Kaila Zamojski, Town of Arnprior, Deputy Clerk
Sandra Elliott, Secretary	Marjorie Joly, Hospice Renfrew
Ralph Chown, McNab-Braeside	Geoff Patterson, McNab-Braeside Recreation
Pamela LeMay, Arnprior	Audrey Edwards, Dementia Society
Eleanor Hotchkiss, Arnprior	Tracey Foster, Island View
Glenn Arthur, ARH/SALC	Lynn Russett, Island View
Graeme Ivory, Town of Arnprior Recreation	Brittany Harris, Arnprior Villa

Absent

Pierce Campbell, ADHS, Youth Rep	Robin Paquette, Arnprior CAO
Eric Hanna, ARH	Karen DeLuca, Arnprior Library
Dennis Harrington, Seniors At Home	Karen Simpson, AFHT
Mandy Stinson, Seniors at Home	Cathy McCaig, Arnprior Ministerial
Rick Gwalchmai, Arnprior Recreation	

1. Call to Order

The October meeting of the GASC was called to order at 9:15 am.

2. Roll Call

All members of the Greater Arnprior Seniors Council were present except as noted above.

Sandra welcomed new members of the GASC who each gave a brief outline of their respective roles.

Marjorie Joly, Executive Director of Hospice Renfrew who has been with Hospice for 3 months and is pleased to represent Hospice and thanked the GASC for inviting her to join.

Brittany Harris, who has been **Sales Consultant at Revera Living, Arnprior Villa** for the past 4 years and is pleased to join the GASC.

Lynn Russett, who has been with Sienna Living for 2 years and is pleased to recently represent the **Island View as Retirement Counselor** since July.

Sandra also welcomed **Kaila Zamojski** who has recently returned to the Town of Arnprior following her Mat Leave.

3. Adoption of Agenda

The Agenda was adopted as presented with no additions.

4. Approval of Records of Discussion from meeting February 19, 2020

The Records of Discussion were approved as previously presented.

5. Program Updates

5.1 SALC

Glenn advised that the SALC re-opened in August with half of the membership returning. Membership prior to COVID was 630. Some are understandably skeptical. Current programs are limited with pre-registration mandatory and social distancing and wearing of masks protocols in place.

Bus trips have returned with 20-25 attendees on recent trips to Kingston Penitentiary and Upper Canada Village's Pumpkin Inferno. Shopping trips in November to Merrickville and Westport are in the planning stage.

A Hearing Clinic sponsored by Helix Hearing was well attended with another scheduled for November 2 from 1-4. Appointments are required.

Seniors Without Walls is continuing with November bookings in place.

The Community Gardens were very popular this summer and the plots and raised gardens are being readied for next summer.

The SALC are still advertising and seeking more participation for the Saturday morning Salsa group.

Both chair and mat Yoga programs at SALC and the Swimming Program at the NSC continue to be well attended and extra classes have been added.

All in all the SALC is continuing to be popular with seniors and the programs rolling along nicely.

5.2 Men's Shed

Darrel reported that the Men's Shed was only closed mid March for 2 weeks when they were called back with orders for PPE. 30 plexiglass shields have been assembled for ARH, AFHT, Arnprior Museum, Opportunity Shop, Yakabuski's office and health units in Pembroke. The men responded to these requests with limited participation by its members.

They continued to fill requests for birdhouses, picnic tables, Muskoka chairs, raised gardens, stepping stones, shelving at the Opportunity Shop and have recently begun a program with children from Renfrew County Family and Children's Services.

The Men's Shed are holding a Craft Show at the NSC on Saturday, November 7 from 9am-2pm and the men are busy making wooden children's toys among other items for Christmas. Everyone encouraged to spread the word and visit the Sale.

Current membership at the Men's Shed is 33.

At this point in the meeting we moved Seniors Affordable Housing ahead on the Agenda as Pam had to leave the meeting early but for the purpose of these meeting notes I opted to keep the Agenda as originally presented.

5.3 Arnprior Regional Health

- **Grove Redevelopment**

In Eric's absence Glenn advised that construction was half way there with plans to open by end of August 2021. He noted that in 2 years, \$800,000 has been raised locally which is a remarkable achievement on behalf of the community.

- **Ontario Health Team**

No update available at this time.

5.4 Island View Activities

Tracey advised that residents at the Island View were well and healthy.

They are currently planning their annual Light Up the Night pumpkin carving activity where Arnprior residents and/or groups are asked to pick up pumpkins for a \$20 each starting on Monday, October 26, return your carved pumpkin to the Island View by October 28 or 29 where they will be judged by residents. Plaques will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd prize. Carved pumpkins will be on display outside the Island View on Halloween. All proceeds will be given to the Men's Shed.

Also in the planning is their annual Chili Fest which this year will involve participation by local restaurants. The Chili Fest will be held November 19.

The Island View will have a drive by display commemorating Remembrance Day on November 11.

5.5 The Villa Activities

Brittany reported that residents of the Villa are also all safe and healthy.

The Villa recently sponsored an Act of Kindness activity aimed at identifying local residents in need of and deserving an Act of Kindness. The GASC recommended someone who was caregiver of a family member with Alzheimer's. This individual received a potted plant, a certificate identifying the GASC as the group identifying the need and Brittany visited the individual for a chat to see what further assistance might be available.

As part of this Act of Kindness campaign, Davidson Hearing has generously donated a gift certificate for the patient's portion of a pair of hearing aids. This donation can be gifted to ANY senior within the Arnprior area and is not limited to residents of the Arnprior Villa. The Villa are looking for someone in need of hearing aids but are having financial limitations making it difficult to invest in a pair. Once someone is chose, Davidson's will print their name on the certificate to personalize it.

5.6 Hospice Renfrew Activities

Marjorie advised that Hospice are maintaining their occupancy levels with diligent screening measures in place and everything going well so far.

They have had to venture out of the box with their fundraising events but have had a successful virtual Hike for Hospice and Bike ride with \$140,000 raised. John Yakabuski attending. Hospice rely heavily on their fundraisers as there is limited government funding available.

5.7 Seniors at Home

No report available.

5.8 Covid Update in Renfrew County

No report available.

5.9 Seniors Affordable Housing

During this past summer, Renfrew County and the City of Pembroke initiated Seniors Housing Strategy and hired a consultant who sent out questionnaires to the County and to the Town of Arnprior. Councilor Dan Lynch reached out to the GASC to complete from our perspective and to put our position forward. The Housing Sub-Committee of the GASC was inactive during the summer months however Darrel and Pam met to complete the questionnaire and submitted at the end of August.

Some of our concerns are that appropriate and affordable housing options are generally lacking in the Arnprior area. Funding is a necessity from both federal and provincial governments. Shared and co-housing options would assist residents to remain in their own homes with maintenance and renovation supports in place.

Pam can supply a copy of our submission to anyone interested.

Sandra advised that at the end of summer Robin had asked her to participate in a Zoom round table discussion hosted by the consultant. Attendees represented the Renfrew County Real Estate Board, Veterans Affairs, Whitewater Region and the Riverview Heights Retirement Residence in Pembroke. Sandra reiterated the concerns as presented in the GASC document. It was the concensus from all present that Seniors Councils throughout the County are all struggling with the same problems. The County needs to take a bigger role and that governments need to attract builders by reducing red tape to make it easier.

As an aside, the representative from the Seniors Task Force of the Whitewater Region said that they were interested in following the example of the GASC. He felt we were making serious inroads in our community and were well respected and recognized by other municipalities.

Darrel reported that Arnprior has been selected, along with Toronto and Brantford, to actively participate in a CMHA initiative on a Seniors Housing Strategy. Darrel met recently via Zoom with Sue Lantz, Managing Director, Collaborative Aging at CMHA and he is currently waiting on some official notice as to what our participation will involve. Darrel has invited Sue to attend a meeting of our Housing sub-committee to meet our members for some preliminary discussions. We would also like to involve the mayors of Arnprior and McNab Braeside and Eric Hanna at that meeting.

5.10 Chamber of Commerce Not-for-Profit Excellence Award

Back in March, Darrel was asked on behalf of the GASC to formally nominate ARH for the Chamber of Commerce Excellent Award, which he gladly did. To date we have not heard the result of this nomination. Kaila offered to follow up.

5.11 Arnprior Recreation

- **Jump Start Accessibility Grant**

Graeme advised that due to COVID this grant has been frozen and there is currently no activity on our application. It was hoped to use this grant to provide a mat for access to the beach at Robert Simpson park, a mobile chair to allow those with disabilities to enter the water and also paths in the park to allow those with mobility devices to better access the gazebo and other areas. There are however still funds available in the budget to go ahead with some or all of these initiatives if our application is denied.

- **ICIP Grant**

Unfortunately in July we were informed that our application for this grant is not going forward. It was hoped to use these funds to upgrade the change rooms at the pool, provide accessible washrooms in the NSC, upgrade dressing rooms, and pave the parking lot. The Town of Renfrew is apparently still in the running.

As an overview however, Graeme reported that the NSC is up and running. The pool and the two ice surfaces are busy. The free seniors exercise program offered in the past by LHIN has not resumed. Apparently the LHIN are concentrating on on-line courses and the instructor has moved on to a different role. Tracey from the Island View said she would forward information to Graeme on access to a possible instructor for this exercise program.

Ralph reiterated that the swim programs at the pool are well attended and fully booked.

5.12 McNab-Braeside

Geoff advised that there was still limited use of the JAG and Yantha community centres other than a day program through the Grove Nursing Home. They have reached out to Renfrew County for an activities instructor at the Yantha Centre. Tracey offered to follow up here as well.

Currently McNab-Braeside is focusing on waste reduction and a community clean-up of hiking and bike trails. The Ontario Action Day of Litter will be held on Saturday, October 24 and participants are asked to pick up litter at various locations throughout McNab-Braeside. The Township will provide garbage bags and gloves at the former Township office on Russett Dr.

5.13 Dementia Society

Audrey advised that the majority of their programs offered to dementia patients have moved online via Zoom which they find challenging. Some exercise programs were able to utilize parks in Arnprior, Renfrew and Deep River in the summer.

Another exciting venture being introduced is a Life Saver Project that can track the whereabouts of clients who wander. Partnering with Lions Clubs throughout Renfrew County, OPP, and the Dementia Society of Renfrew Count, they are initially offering bracelets to clients who are referred through the OPP, Doctors, emergency responders, or through the Dementia Society. Each client has a unique client number linked to their bracelet. The bracelets work on an Am/FM radio frequency which works better than GPS which has limited capabilities in bush or remote areas. The family would call 911 and state to the dispatcher that they are a client with Project Lifesaver. The OPP did training last week and can locate a person within 35 minutes. This program is being offered in Renfrew and Arnprior and soon in Pembroke. The Dementia Society are in the process of having 2 clients sign up and Audrey and her team are meeting with these families and will have them register with the OPP. There is a sign- up fee and a monthly charge to be on the program.

Refer to <https://projectlifesaver.org/>

5.13 Succession Planning

We are currently actively looking for a Chair and Vice Chair and Darrel asked that everyone be on the lookout for anyone who would like to join the GASC with a view to taking over either of these roles. If you have any suggestions, please contact Darrel.

6. New Business

6.1 Age Friendly Community Outreach Program

Darrel recently had a teleconference with representatives from the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility (MSAA) concerning a review of this program which covers our work with the SALC, the Men's Shed and the Town of Arnprior. Topics included Outdoor Spaces & Public Buildings, Transportation, Housing, Social and Civic Participation, Communication & Information and Community Support and Health Services, particularly during Covid. Darrell was asked by the Ministry to participate as a senior living in the town of Arnprior.

The MSAA participants could not believe what we have achieved in such a short period of time, our Downtown revitalization (accessibility), Transportation (new

vehicles, drivers and support staff), Social Participation (the development, accomplishments and services of the SALC and Men's Shed) and the community support we receive from ARH, the Town of Arnprior and the township of McNab-Braeside, as well as the support we receive from local service groups and organizations.

Congratulations to all involved.

- 6.2 Kaila just learned from the Town that the Chamber of Commerce Excellence award was awarded back in May to the Opportunity Shop. This Award is now open for applications for 2021.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 am

***The next meeting of the GASC will be held on
Wednesday, November 18 , 2020 at 9:00 am.
Location or via Zoom to be determined***