

RESOLUTION NO. 94

TITLE: SUPPORTING AGE-FRIENDLY SCHOHARIE COUNTY FOR THE BENEFIT OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS OF ALL AGES

OFFERED BY: Sandra Manko Who moved its adoption

SECONDED BY: Richard Lape Chairman Rules & Regulations Committee

WHEREAS, Age-Friendly Communities are defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the American Association of Retired People (AARP) as committed to improving their communities by addressing the 8 Domains of Livability: 1. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings; 2. Transportation; 3. Housing; 4. Social Participation; 5. Respect and Social Inclusion; 6. Civic Participation and Employment; 7. Communication and Information; 8. Community and Health Services; and

WHEREAS, Age-Friendly Communities are great places to grow up and grow old and are well-designed, livable communities that promote health, sustain economic growth, and make for happier, healthier residents of all ages; and

WHEREAS, there are numerous social and economic benefits to building a community that is inclusive and meets the needs of residents and visitors of all ages, backgrounds and ability levels; and

WHEREAS, an Age-Friendly approach benefits multi-generations because safe healthy communities make it possible for young children and elders to navigate independently and this independence promotes active aging and healthy child development, but it also relieves the pressures of caregiving on other family members; and

WHEREAS, in 2017 New York became the first state in the nation to be designated an Age-Friendly state and is supporting communities around the state to be more Age-Friendly via a grants program; and

WHEREAS, Schoharie County was one of the grant recipients and has used the grant to raise awareness and interest in Age-Friendly principles and create a collaboration of county and community partners to consider priorities and strategies to further the County's desire to be Age-Friendly; and

WHEREAS, Schoharie County already is engaged in promoting Age-friendly policies and activities such as accessibility improvements at public buildings and recreational facilities and meeting the needs of vulnerable populations in the face of the COVID 19 pandemic and beyond; and

WHEREAS, Schoharie County hired a consultant to prepare a Feasibility Study for Social Adult Day Care Center; and

WHEREAS, an Ad-Hoc Age-friendly Committee comprised of representatives from Office for the Aging, Office of Community Development Services, Public Health, Department of Public Works, and Youth Bureau with the intention of identifying strategies that will bolster Schoharie County's Age-Friendly position and recommends adoption of this resolution; and

WHEREAS, Schoharie County is experiencing an estimated 23% increase in residents age 55 and over between 2010 and 2019 and an estimated 28% of the County's population is over the age of 60 (Source: 2010 U.S. Census, 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, and NYSOFA Projections); now therefore be it hereby

RESOLVED, that Schoharie County is committed to intentionally transforming the social and physical environments to support the health and well-being of community members across the lifespan and hereby declares our support for an Age-Friendly initiative in Schoharie County that will enhance livability across the lifespan and support growing number of older adults; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors advises all appropriate County departments and entities to consider Age-Friendly implications of decisions and investments and to incorporate Age-Friendly strategies, priorities, and principles into departmental, village, town or county plans, contracts, programs, policies, procedures, grant funded activities and procurements where practicable and feasible to further the goals of the Age-friendly initiative; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Board does adopt the following statement of policy and actions to promote Age-friendly development and operations within Schoharie County:

- A. Continue to improve accessibility of county facilities and services and incorporate enabling features as facilities are remodeled, including but not limited to access to building and outdoor spaces, easy to understand and well-located signage, appropriate lighting, and purchase of accommodating furniture and fixtures;
- B. Pursue funding for Age-Friendly home modifications and work with municipalities to identify and pursue neighborhood modifications to make them more Age-Friendly;
- C. Identify and pursue funding for various programs and improvements to allow older adults and individuals with disabilities to remain in their homes, including home services such as vaccine administration, therapy, and medical/vision/mental health services;
- D. Work with municipalities to incorporate Age-friendly policies and standards, including a complete street policy, into local comprehensive plans, zoning, design of recreation facilities, and adopt other local policies to promote Age-friendly housing, including zero-step access housing, affordable housing options, and accessory dwelling units by right, and accessibility of municipal facilities and services;
- E. Add Age-friendly design as a standard consideration by staff for all reviews performed by the Schoharie County Planning Commission pursuant to General Municipal Law 239 k, l, & m;
- F. Continue to pursue opportunities to enhance mobility of older adults and others without access to private transportation;
- G. Identify and use communication channels available to those without digital access for County communications with the public and when seeking public input on projects and environmental reviews;
- H. Support and sponsor Age-friendly training and provide education resources for design professionals, contractors, developers, and municipal boards, such as through municipal training programs;
- I. Increase opportunities for intergenerational engagement;
- J. Incorporate Complete Street principals to better accommodate the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized modes of transportation into design of County roads where appropriate, and continue to work to make roads safer for bicyclists and pedestrians;
- K. Work to expand older adult use of existing municipal and community spaces for weekday social participation and civic engagement, including, but not limited to, removing hurdles such as insurance requirements;
- L. Identify and implement other initiatives related to civic engagement and employment, respect and social inclusion or social participation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the County OFA shall at least annually convene said Ad Hoc Committee and report to the Board of Supervisors in conjunction with annual review of operating and capital budgets on Age-friendly activities, additional policy recommendation, and the advisability, costs, and sources of funding to pursue Schoharie County's certification as an Age-friendly community in accordance with AARP/WHO requirements; and further

Dated: December 16, 2021
Filed: December 16, 2021

County Attorney

Sheryl L. Dwyer Clerk
Board of Supervisors