

ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION ON AGING

MEETING MINUTES

April 14, 2022 – DRAFT [April 17, 2022]
Virtual Meeting

Members Present: Babs Waters, Barbara D’Agostino, Michael Schuster, Barbara Huelat, Canek Aguirre, David Kaplan, Gerri Wallace, Jenn Stowe, Jim Lindsay, Karen Mckeon, Lois Steele, Mary Lee Anderson, Michael Kamin, Ray Biegun, William Thomas Reeder

Members Excused: Dawn Higgins, Michael Kreps

Members Unexcused: Ellen Nelson, Lynette Foster, William Campbell

Liaisons Present: Darrell Wesley, Adult Day Services Center; Ian Torrance, Police Department; Margaret Orlando, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities; Pamela Guerra, Senior Center @ Charles Houston

Staff Members Present: Chris Moore, Pam Austin, Division of Aging and Adult Services

Guests Present: Bob Eiffert, Housing Committee; Charles Bailey, Housing Committee; Gaynelle Diaz, ARHA; Jan Macidull, Housing Committee; Jane King, COA Housing Committee; Kevin Coleman, City of Alexandria Office of Emergency Management; Jessica Lefevre

1. **Call to Order.** Chair Babs Waters called the March meeting of the Commission on Aging (“COA”) to order at 4:00 PM.
2. **Approval of Agenda.** The agenda for the meeting was approved unanimously.
3. **Approval of Minutes.** The February minutes were approved unanimously, with one correction.
4. **Alexandria Police Department Liaison Report.** Sgt. Torrance discussed the recent accident in Old Town involving a older pedestrian, the stealing of catalytic converters, and the use of body cameras by the Alexandria City police. The older pedestrian was seriously injured. Sgt. Torrance said that to prevent the theft of catalytic converters you should park in lighted areas, and near a home surveillance camera if possible. The police department is in the early stages of identifying the kind of body cameras it will purchase. They are looking at what others have done like Arlington and Fairfax counties. It may not be until December when they would be used.
5. **New Commission Members.** Chair Babs Waters welcomed the new Commission members, Karen McKeon, Joanne Broderick, and Tom Reeder.
6. **Executive Committee Report.** Materials previously distributed.

7. **Special Presentation:** Kevin Coleman, Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator with the Alexandria City Office of Emergency Management discussed the city’s efforts at addressing major emergencies. The four-person office is headed by Captain Ray Whatley, a 31-year veteran with the Alexandria Fire Department. The Office focuses on saving lives, protecting property, and speeding recovery before, during and after major emergencies. They coordinate within government as well as outside of it; they collaborate with the community; and they communicate information on emergencies throughout the city. Mr. Coleman mentioned some of the types of major emergencies they would address, such as flooding, tornados, winter storms, domestic terrorism and mass shootings. Major emergencies can cause power outages, health care systems breakdowns, and home damage.

He mentioned things residents can do to prepare for major emergencies. He said, be prepared, make a plan, build an emergency kit containing water, food, documents and flashlights, and practice, practice and practice. You need to plan to be self-sustaining for at least three days – have a gallon of water per person per day (including pets), make sure you car’s gas tank is full, have another place to go if necessary, write down important information, have two weeks of necessary medicine, have cash on hand, and identify a power source for essential medical equipment and cell phones.

8. **Discussion /Action Items**

- a. **Update on COA Excellence in Aging Awards, scheduled for Tuesday, May 10, 2022 via Zoom – Barbara D’Agostino.** Barbara said that the selection committee, comprised of Babs Waters, David Kaplan, Bob Eiffert, Michael Schuster, and herself will meet on April 15th at 2:00 to make the selections. There has been 14 nominations for the four awards: Public Service Award; Excellence in Aging Award for an Organization; Lois Van Valkenburgh Excellence in Aging Award for an Individual; Annie B. Rose Lifetime Achievement Award.
- b. **Age-Friendly Final Reports to be sent to AARP.** Jane King said that the AARP Age-Friendly website has 8 videos on Age-Friendly Plans that commission member can view to learn more about how to craft their new goals and to finish their evaluations. She also noted that Bob Eiffert and her just finished doing a Home Fit presentation with AARP, and they will do another one in 2 weeks. The purpose of the Home Fit program is to help older adults make their homes safe and more attractive in which to live.
- c. **Draft Testimony on the 2023 FY Draft Annual Plan for Housing and Community Development.** Michael Schuster summarized the proposed written testimony that would highlight aging in place and the importance of having a Mixed Income and Affordable Assisted Living Facility (MIAALF) in Alexandria. He moved “that the Commission approve the draft testimony as well as its presentation before the City Council at the April 23, 2022 public hearing on the Draft Annual Action Plan for Housing and Community Development.” It was seconded and approved unanimously.
- a. **Covid-19 Vaccination Updates.** Gerri Wallace reported that under the new CDC criteria that Alexandria remains in the Low range. The city has 1.9 Covid-19 hospital

admissions per 100,000 residents; the inpatient bed utilization is 1.00 per 100,000 residents. In the past 7 days, there has been 133 transmissions per 100,000 residents.

The City of Alexandria reports that 76.6% or 117,886 residents are fully vaccinated, and 84.5% or 130,089 are either partially or fully vaccinated. In Virginia, over 7 million or 81.6% received at least one vaccination, and over 6 million or 73% are fully vaccinated. She provided the following information on booster vaccinations: Under Pfizer and Bio Tech, 5-11 year olds may get a booster three weeks a part; under Moderna, 18+ may get a booster, 4-6 weeks apart. She referred meeting attendees to the following websites for more information:

Tracking COVID

Disparities: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/2021/11/15/tracking-covid-19-disparities/>

COVID County Check: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/community-levels.html>

9. **Liaison Reports**

- a. *Division of Aging and Adult Services.* Christopher Moore, the director of the division, updated the commission on activities within the division. He recently attended a meeting of other directors of aging and the hot topic was the hiring of a demographer, who would develop a needs assessment to help them when applying for aging funds. He said a good website to access information about aging and state programs is <https://easyaccess.virginia.gov/>. The city Adult Daycare program reopened on April 4th. St. Martin de Porres has relocated to Patrick Henry for three weeks while their facility's renovation is completed. This temporary move offers an opportunity for intergenerational interactions. He will be involved with outreach at various cookouts in May, along with the Departments of Parks and Recreation, and the Alexandria City Police. He said that all of the mental health facilities are now at full capacity. Finally, he mentioned that the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is looking for volunteers to visit assisted living and nursing facilities.
- b. *AHA.* Bob Eiffert said they are doing in-person events; however, he felt they got a better response with the virtual ones. He noted that the Spring-to-Action campaign is starting – the biggest fundraising campaign for non-profits in the city.
- c. *Commission for Women.* Jenn Stowe said they had a meeting on Tuesday – their first in-person meeting since the pandemic began. They had a robust discussion concerning in-person meetings. They are working on one-page fact sheets for the City Council on their two priorities: affordable housing and domestic violence. They discussed how the Commission for Women has gone away from events and community visibility to being more engaged in policy issues. The Commission will have a retreat in August or September to discuss their future direction and purpose. Their next meeting is on May 10th.

- d. *Commission on Persons with Disabilities.* Michael Kamin reported on their meeting last night – their first one, in-person. Unfortunately, they did not have a quorum to conduct any business. Four guests attended. They discussed the problem with unsafe sidewalks in Alexandria, and how the Virginia building code appears to be less stringent than the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act.
- e. *AARP.* Jane King said that AARP will be doing more in-person events.
- f. *NVAN.* Babs Waters said that the next NVAN meeting will be on April 19th, starting at 9:30 a.m. She described the geographical scope of the network: Alexandria City, and Arlington, Fairfax, Prince William and Loudon Counties.
- g. *Senior Center at Charles Houston.* Pam Guerra said they should be back to in-person events by the end of the month, and will be using air purifiers to minimize the spread of the Covid-19 virus. Materials previously distributed
- h. *Arlington Legislative Committee.* Michael Schuster said at their last meeting on April 4th, they discussed the results of the current General Assembly, and what platform priorities to propose at the NVAN legislative brainstorming session on April 19th.
- i. *St. Martins Senior Center.* Anne Coyne submitted a written report as part of the Agenda packet. Materials previously distributed
- j. *Senior Services of Alexandria.* Mary Lee Anderson said their first in-person event will be a workshop at the Alexandria Central Library by the Red Hill Garden Club on flower arrangement. It has already reached full capacity, but there is a waiting list. She said they are in the midst of planning for their Annual Gala fundraiser on May 6th. It will be in person and the honorees will be the Honorable Del Pepper, Janet Barnett, Gerry Cooper and Vanessa Greene. There will be live entertainment, a sit down dinner and a silent auction. She said they have had a data issue with the amount of giabytes for the grandpads. Last week, local Channel 4 did a special on an Alexandrian who just turned 100 years of age. Mary Lee reported that she will be a panelist at the “Agenda: Alexandria” event at the George Washington National Masonic Memorial on April 25th. She will be joined by representatives from the Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS), Christ Church and Legal Services of Nothern Virginia. The theme of the event is: “Surviving the Cost of Living.” Materials previously distributed
- k. *Alexandria Commission on Employment.* Mary Lee reported on the recent work of ACE. She discussed the back to work program that places individuals in local businesses for up to three months at \$18-20 per hour. The Work Development Center will announce soon the new director.

- l. *Northern Virginia Fall Prevention Alliance, NVFPA*. Mary Lee Anderson said the alliance will be presenting in a health and fitness fair, and they are discussing an in-person event in the Fall.
- m. *Successful Aging*. Margaret Orlando said they are planning for the intergenerational dance in the Spring in collaboration with the Alexandria High School.
- n. *Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities*. Margaret Orlando said the programs will be in-person.
- o. *Alexandria Adult Day Services Center*. Darrell Wesley said that participants are slowly coming back to the center. They reopened on April 4th, but due to social distancing guidelines, the number of participants per day will be limited. **Materials previously distributed**
- p. *Housing Affordability Advisory Committee*. Jan Macidull said that at their last meeting, they discussed affordable assisted living, and the Art Community's request to use bonus height density for ground level space for dedicated for artists. They also discussed the Hillco development of the old power plant land.

10. **Committee Updates.**

- a. *Housing*. The next Housing Committee meeting is April 18st at 1:30. The agenda features a presentation from Gaynelle Diaz with the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA) regarding the Ledrey redevelopment project. **See attached materials**
- b. *Outreach*. The Committee meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 11:30am. **See attached materials**
- c. *Transportation*. Nothing new to report. They meet on the fourth Monday of each month.
- d. *Economic Development*. Mary Lee Anderson gave a brief report. **Materials previously distributed**
- e. *Strategic Planning*.
- f. *Health/Dementia Friendly*. Barbara Huelat reported that they met on April 7th. They plan on once a month Dementia Friendly trainings, starting in June. Their in-person meetings will be at the Lee Center. June is Alzheimer's Awareness Month.

11. **Other Business.** None.

12. **Meeting Adjournment.** There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:53 PM.

Minutes will be presented at the May 12, 2022, COA meeting for approval. The next Executive Committee meeting is on May 2, 2022 at 1:30 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Michael Schuster, COA Secretary.
