

# ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES

*January 12, 2023 – DRAFT  
In person Meeting (The Landing)  
4-6 PM*

**Members Physically Present:** Chair, Michael Schuster; Barbara D’Agostino, Canek Aguirre, David Kaplan, Dawn Higgins, Jessica Lefevre, Jim Lindsay, Joy Kone, Lois Steele, Mary Lee Anderson, Ray Biegun, William Campbell, William Thomas Reeder

**Members Attending Remotely:** Jenn Stowe, Karen Mckeon

**Members Attending Remotely for Medical Reasons:** Joanne Broderick

**Members Excused:** Barbara Huelat, Ellen Nelson, Gerri Wallace

**Members Unexcused:** Michael Kamin

**Liaisons Present:** Anne Coyne, St. Martins Senior Center; Ian Torrance, Alexandria Police Department; Pamela Guerra, Senior Center @ Charles Houston

**Guests Present:** Bob Eiffert, Housing Committee; Jan Macidull, Housing Committee; Rachel Kone; Susan Ross-O'Brien; Martina James, V4A; Tiffany Green, Brandy Care

**Staff Members Present:** Chris Moore, Ashley Johnson, Pam Austin, Division of Aging and Adult Services; Ashley Sellman, Workforce Development Center

1. **Call to Order.** Chair Michael Schuster called the January meeting of the Commission on Aging ("COA") to order at 4:03 PM.
2. **Approval of Agenda.** The agenda for the meeting was approved unanimously.
3. **Approval of Minutes.** Correct the spelling of Ray’s and Jessica’s surnames. The corrections were noted. The minutes of the November and December meetings were approved. No other changes needed.
4. **Alexandria Police Department Liaison Report.** Sgt. Torrance did not have any updates for the commission. Michael asked about having the new police chief come and visit at an upcoming COA meeting. Sgt. Torrance tentatively agreed on the March or April meeting, preferably April.
5. **Special Presentation:** Chris Moore introduced Martina James- legislative liaison for the Virginia Association of Area Agencies on Aging, (V4A). The presentation topic was on

how to be an impactful advocate. She explained the details of the Virginia General Assembly makeup. The current session will run to the end of February, for a total of 45 days. There are resource links in the Power Point that can direct individuals where to review legislative updates. [VPAP](#)—is a great resource to find a curated list of statewide legislative news; [www.viriniageneralassembly.gov](http://www.viriniageneralassembly.gov); [whosmy.viriniageneralassembly.gov](http://whosmy.viriniageneralassembly.gov); Chris will send a PowerPoint after the meeting. To find your elected representatives, go to [www.viriniageneralassembly.gov](http://www.viriniageneralassembly.gov); [Who is your Legislator?](#)

6. **Executive Committee Report.** Materials and minutes were distributed as part of the Agenda.

### **Discussion/Action Items**

- **Covid-19 Updates** – Gerri Wallace was not present. Michael gave her report, as follows:

#### **CITY OF ALEXANDRIA**

Covid-19 Measures: COVID-19 Community Level Transmission rate is **LOW** as of January 5, 2023. The City of Alexandria reports 80.3% or 126,465 fully vaccinated residents and 86.7% or 136,537 partially vaccinated residents.

Hospital admissions per 100k is 7.7 = **LOW**. Inpatient bed rate is 7.80% = **LOW**.

**Demographics included City-wide: Ages 65+ = 95.1%** have vaccinations.

#### **STATE OF VIRGINIA**

As of January 5, 2023, in the state of VA, 37.5% were fully vaccinated.

Demographics included State-wide: Ages 65+ = 95.1% have vaccinations.

CDC website for Health Topics from A-Z:

<https://www.cdc.gov/health-topics.html>

- **Age Friendly Plan** – Jane King was not present. Michael gave an update. The priority is moving quickly to get the draft of the final evaluation to the City Council and AARP. Lois asked what the deadline date for the new plan was. It was explained that while the existing plan expired in 2021, not all goals were met. The plan is to finish the evaluation and get the outcomes documented for a presentation to the City Council. Additionally, COA needs public input via a survey or focus group for the new or revised plan. The Final Evaluation must be approved before we can fully engage on developing the new 2022-2024 plan.
- **Excellent on Aging Awards-** Barbara D’Agostino- the date for the ceremony will be May 9, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. It will be in person; she is checking with the mayor for his availability. As we approach the event, we will work on the details; in late March the Excellence on Aging Committee will be formed to make selections.
- **City Budget Process-**Canek Aguirre– Individuals are welcomed to attend the budget sessions, as they are open to public. Bob Eiffert gave details on the timeline- February 28<sup>th</sup>- the City Manager’s proposed budget will be posted. Ideally, between March 2<sup>nd</sup>- March 8<sup>th</sup>—Advocacy Committee meeting will meet with Mr. Morgan Routt, the

Director of the Office of Management and the Budget (OMB) to discuss the proposed budget. The Commission meets on March 9<sup>th</sup>—so it needs the report from the Advocacy Committee to consider what positions the COA should take. **March 13<sup>th</sup> or March 18<sup>th</sup>**—the dates that the public hearings will take place. If you are interested in joining the Ad Hoc Advocacy Committee, send Michael an email after the meeting. This is a good opportunity to learn about the city budget process. Michael asked about Mayor’s proposal to rename the confederate street names and the resources needed. Approximately 41 streets need to be renamed. Michael suggested looking to COA for recommendations for other major historical figures/names related to African Americans advancing aging issues. The Naming Committee meetings are open to public, dates are listed on the city calendar.

Bob asked that at the next city council public hearing that COA can speak up about the new Intrastate Funding Formula or IFF to show support of a proposed supplemental budget, holding harmless Alexandria and other jurisdictions from losing federal and state Older American Act aging funds. Canek doesn’t think it’s a bad idea and will talk to Sarah Taylor about it next week in Richmond. Chris gave his input about the impact of the raw population numbers vs. percentage of 60+ allocation. Mary Lee Anderson suggested developing a one pager that outlines the specific impact of the \$19,000 budget cuts on older Alexandrians. The City Council will meet on **December 21<sup>st</sup> 9:30 a.m.**

**Motion** made by Tom Reeder:

*“I move to approve that a representative from COA make a public statement on behalf of the Commission at the DECEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup> public hearing, supported by facts and details that outline the impact of the budget cuts required under the proposed IFF, provided by DAAS. The statement will also show support for V4A’s \$700,000 supplemental budget proposal.”*

Jessica Lefevre seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously, the motion passed.

## **Liaison Reports**

- a. Division of Aging and Adult Services (<https://www.alexandriava.gov/Aging>) – Chris Moore, Director of the Division of Aging and Adult Services, introduced Ashley Johnson, the Division’s new Long Term Care Coordinator. She will be helping with the Age Friendly plan and assist Pam in her COA duties. DCHS is moving to 4850 MARK CENTER DRIVE, on February 2nd. The new location will be on the 9<sup>TH</sup> Fl. All services will continue virtually. Limited capacity for walk ins. The Division will work remotely for the first two weeks in February. All DCHS will now be in one building. There will be an open house, possibly in the Summer of 2023 for COA and others to visit.
- b. INOVA Alexandria Hospital- no one present to report.
- c. Arlington legislative committee meeting – Louis Steele – the annual report was approved at the last legislative committee meeting- the proposed NVAN 2024 platform was discussed.
  - i. Question if final copy of NVAN platform was given and used.

- ii. 2023 Alexandria/Arlington Legislative Forum- whether to continue it. And in what form of meeting? Virtual or in person or at all. It was tabled until September. None of the senators were present because of scheduling conflicts.
- d. Human Rights Commission – Tom Reeder. December meeting focused on the LGBTQ+ task force. The speaker was Ericka Kliener, City Staffer/Task Force. He also learned about other LGBTQ+ activities specifically for youth. Marc Bendick- gave update on the Alexandria Fund for Human Services.
- e. At Home Alexandria (AHA)--update from Bob Eiffert- Continuing Happy Hours for the group; also wanted to point out that this initiative is more than that one activity but is primarily focused on educating and promoting social connectedness.
- f. AARP – Jane King not present. Michael has been attending meetings regularly.
- g. NVAN – Bob Eiffert-NVAN will be active with special weekly meetings during the current General Assembly session, starting in January 2023 and ending at the end of February.
- h. St. Martin de Porres Senior Center - Anne Coyne reported that the Center is open and running normal; attendees slowly coming back from the holidays.
- i. Senior Center at Charles Houston – Pamela Guerra, nothing else to add. Still practicing social distancing.
- j. Senior Services of Alexandria - Mary Lee Anderson, 2023 speaker series started yesterday; about 50 people in attendance for the ‘Caregiving Workshop’; Speakers included AARP, Insight Memory Care, a financial planner, and Synergy. There was a consultant for the city digital equity committee that was present. Encouraged survey participation. SSA has been handing survey out to Meals on Wheels clients to get a better response from everyone. January 15<sup>th</sup> is the deadline. Save the date; SSA Gala March 25<sup>th</sup>.
- k. Alexandria Commission on Employment. Mary Lee Anderson Introduced Ashley Sellman, who just started her new role at the Workforce Development Center,
- l. Successful Aging – Mary Lee Anderson –Committee met this morning and decided to host an event on Feb 14<sup>th</sup> at the Lee Center with a box lunch. Invited both Senior Centers to participate.
- m. Alexandria Adult Day Services Center, ADSC – Darryl not present.
- n. Economic Development Committee. Mary Lee Anderson- group asked why the 55 plus entrepreneurship initiative was not thriving; she alluded to the lack of support—another non-profit started it. COVID delayed the progression of the group; marketing struggles. Structure needed. Committee skipping its February meeting because of the move.

- o. Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee, AHAAC – Jan Macidull. The next meeting will be held on January 19<sup>th</sup> 7-9pm, virtually. If you want to attend, reach out to Jan directly. The agenda will include updates on the Samuel Madden Project; replacement of housing, and loan request(s); presentation given by Nancy Williams about zoning for housing and updates. Committee will also be reviewing and updating bylaws. Upcoming Events/Announcements:
  - a. AHRA- Redevelopment Workgroup- all properties review January 26<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm at City Hall, Council Workroom
  - b. Condominium Training Workshop, Office of Housing-Virtual Meeting on January 28<sup>th</sup> at 9:30am (Condo Owners, board members or other groups)
  - c. Current Vacancies for AHAAC- Financial professional and a representative from Commission for Persons with Disabilities.
- p. Commission for Women- Jenn Stowe; Human Trafficking Event on Monday January 23 at Lee Center. Please share with your other organizations to encourage community participations. Mayor will be in attendance with opening remarks. Impressive panel line up. January is human trafficking awareness month; proclamation was made on this past Tuesday. Looking to record program for public viewing online; New subcommittee has been formed within the commission in preparation to Celebrate 50 years of service.

## 7. **Committee Updates.**

- a. *Outreach.* The Committee – Co-Chair Ray Biegun and Dawn Higgins reported. The group met on Dec 15<sup>th</sup> to discuss communication, social and relationship building; Dawn presented a new initiative that would mimic other “Mindfulness” projects – idea stemmed from book- “Before I Die”. The project would focus on isolation concerns; Idea is to post “Today I am grateful for\_\_\_\_\_” around the city, possibly using chalk paint. Community art walls might be available; additionally, COA could place marketing ideas next to installations for further outreach. Dawn asked about funds being allowed to be sponsor project or how can other organizations donate to fund project. COA will discuss further with Chris or Ashley from DAAS.
- b. *Transportation* – Co-Chairs David Kaplan & Bill Campbell. There is no January meeting, and the committee will meet again in March 2023. David asked about hot topics or ideas for speakers; DASH updates- Effectiveness of Fare Free Program Report; initial findings show that ridership has significantly increased but there are some concerns of overcrowding and negative ridership issues surrounded by school dismissal time windows; DASH is looking at all details to address it.
  - i. Additional comments from Bill Campbell regarding New Bike Initiatives; State Bills around safety concerns are proposed including light delay & clarifying language on stopping/right hand turns; Alexandria moving towards protective bike lanes- which would move the lanes to be on the inside next to parked cars to better protect bikers.
- c. Housing Committee- Lois Steele- Updates on the Ladrey project. Michael and Chris attended presentation that highlighted the project that consist of 170 units to be rebuilt vs renovated; there will remain 170 units for low-income older adults; another 98

units will have higher income requirements; ongoing conversation about the relocation plan; attempting to get a speaker from the developer or city for an update for the COA; Goodwin Living's View has 24 units possibly available for affordable housing.

8. **Other Business.** Regarding the Alexandria Fund for Human services- David. suggested that we ask city staff person to present at upcoming meeting. Michael agrees and will reach out.
9. **New Business.** February meeting will be at DASH Headquarters; future topics we are interested in hearing about: Rent Relief; report from the new police chief; Ladrey updates.
10. **Public Comments.**  
  
Welcome to the new commissioner. Joy Kone- moved from Springfield, city resident-mother is a home health owner; has some cohousing projects upcoming.
11. **Meeting Adjournment.** There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:41 PM.

The minutes will be presented for approval at the COA meeting on Thursday, February 9, 2023, at DASH headquarters.

**February COA Meeting:** at DASH headquarters, on February 9, 2023, at 4:00 p.m., located at 3000 Business Center Drive, across from Bishop Ireton High School, off Duke Street.

The next Executive Committee meeting date is JANUARY 30<sup>TH</sup>.

*Minutes prepared by Ashley Johnson, DAAS, Long-Term Care Coordinator.*

