

# ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES

*April 13, 2023 – DRAFT*  
*In person Meeting at The Landing in Potomac Yards*  
*4-6 PM*

**Members Physically Present:** Chair, Michael Schuster; Barbara D’Agostino, Barbara Huelat, Mary Lee Anderson, Ray Biegun, Alan Dinsmore, Joy Kone, Jessica Lefevre, Lois Steele, Thomas Reeder, Gerri Wallace.

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

**Members Excused:** David Kaplan, Jim Lindsay, Jenn Stowe

**Members Absent:** Caneck Aquirre

**Liaisons Present:** Ian Torrance, Alexandria Police Department; Pamela Guerra, Senior Center @ Charles Houston; Darrell Wesley.

**Guests Present:** Bob Eiffiert, Marshall Hesse, Jan Macidull

**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 4:05 PM.
2. **Approval of Agenda.** The agenda for the meeting was approved.
3. **Approval of Minutes.** The minutes of the March 9th meeting were approved.
4. **Alexandria Police Department Liaison Report.** Sgt. Torrance discussed issues concerning speeding in Old Town and distracted driving.
5. **Special Presentations:** Natalie Talis, Population Health Manager, Alexandria Health Department. Natalie discussed the role of the Health Department. She said it is not to regulate, but to provide guidance and support to health care providers and city residents. Their current health priorities include focusing on chronic conditions, such as asthma and COPD, access to care around dental, vision and hearing, protection against the flu and Covid-19, promoting vaccines and treatment, and emergency preparedness. She noted their ongoing collaboration with the Senior Services of Alexandria.

Natalie noted several areas where older persons could make contributions to public health, such as participating in the Medical Reserve Corps and by having the COA provide representation for the Healthy Homes Network. She discussed the issue of poor ventilation in homes that could worsen a person's health. In response to a question about the structure of the Health Department, she said that Alexandria is one of 35 districts that are part of the State Health System, and that she is technically a state employee, but that Alexandria supplements their salaries, so they are paid on a comparable level as city employees.

6. **Executive Committee Report.** The draft of the minutes from the meeting on April 3, 2023 were attached as part of the agenda.

7. **Discussion/Action Items:**

- **Covid-19 Updates** – Gerri Wallace gave her report. The transmission rate in Alexandria continues to be low. See Gerri's spreadsheet, attached.
- **Age Friendly Plan** – No update as Jane King was absent.
- **City Budget Process**- Michael and Bob Eiffert reported that the \$19,000 to cover the gap in Older American Act funds, or to be used to eliminate the waiting list for personal care services has been added to the Add/Delete list. Chris Moore said that although this money is very important, so is recruiting personal care attendants.

8. **Liaison Reports**

- a. **Division of Aging and Adult Services** (<https://www.alexandriava.gov/Aging>) – Chris reported on DAAS' new mission statement focusing on Core Values: DAAS is mission driven, has integrity, engages stakeholders, supports honest communication and believes every employee has a vital role in the agency's success.
- b. **INOVA Alexandria Hospital**- no one present to report.
- c. **Arlington legislative committee meeting** – There was nothing to report.
- d. **Human Rights Commission** – Tom Reeder. Tom discussed the Commission's current activities.
- e. **At Home Alexandria (AHA)**- Nothing to report.
- f. **Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria**- Joanne Broderick – No new report.
- g. **AARP** – Nothing to report.

- h. **NVAN** – The April 12<sup>th</sup> meeting will focus on legislative brainstorming.
  - i. **St. Martin de Porres Senior Center** – Juanita Balenger, the new director of the Center, said she has only been there for four weeks, but has been busy with various field trips and will have more to report at the May COA meeting.
  - j. **Senior Center at Charles Houston** – Pamela Guerra, nothing else to add.
  - k. **Senior Services of Alexandria** - Mary Lee Anderson- Mary Lee reported that to address the reduction in SNAP benefits, SSA has partnered with Alive to provide food assistance to older adults who are food insecure. Chris mentioned that DAAS is sponsoring a Farmer’s Nutrition Program where needy older persons can obtain a \$50 coupon book to purchase food at a local farmer’s market. Mary Lee said that the Health Fair will be on May 18<sup>th</sup> at the Lee Center. Free health screenings and Covid boosters will be available. SSA just completed another Senior Ambassador training. They now have over 130 trained ambassadors. On May 9th, there will be a Robust Walkathon at Brenman Park. A \$10 donation is requested.
  - l. **Northern Virginia Fall Prevention Alliance, NVFPA.** Mary Lee Anderson said there nothing to report.
  - m. **Alexandria Commission on Employment.** Mary Lee Anderson introduced Ashley Sellman from the Workforce Development Center,
  - n. **Successful Aging** – Mary Lee said there is a Dance for All Ages at Alexandria City High School on April 14<sup>th</sup>.
  - o. **Alexandria Adult Day Services Center, ADSC** – Darrell Wesley reported that they passed their state inspection, and are good for three years.
  - p. **Economic Development Committee.** Mary Lee Anderson- nothing to report.
  - q. **Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee, AHAAC** – Jan Macidull. Nothing new to report.
  - r. **Commission for Women-** Jenn Stowe said an event is being planned to celebrate their 50-year anniversary.
  - s. **Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities.** – Nothing to report.
9. **Committee Updates.**
- a. **Outreach.** The Committee – Co-Chair Ray Biegun and Barbara D’Agostino reported. The committee did not meet.

- b. **Transportation** – Co-Chairs David Kaplan & Bill Campbell. Bill reported that on April 24<sup>th</sup>, there will be a bike rodeo, on May 19<sup>th</sup> the Bike to Work Day, and on May 20<sup>th</sup> and E-Bike demonstration.
  
- c. **Housing Committee**- Lois Steele and Bob Eiffiert discussed the committee’s March meeting with the Office of Housing concerning proposals for affordable assisted living units at the View. The Committee’s next meeting will be on April 17<sup>th</sup> at The View, part of Goodwin Living, which will focus on affordable assisted living units there. Bob encouraged all COA members to attending this Committee meeting.
  
- d. **Health/Dementia Friendly**. Barbara Huelat – –Meeting held on April 5 at Goodwin Living in Alexandria. Meeting date has changed to the fourth Thursday of the month at 4pm. We will meet monthly as required. The committee will focus on four potentially attainable goals including: a. access to mental health, b. access to vision programs, c. access to oral health and d. access to hearing programs. The next meeting will be April 6 at Goodwin Living.

10. **Other Business.** None

11. **New Business.** None

12. **Public Comments.** None

13. **Meeting Adjournment.** There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:50 PM.

The minutes will be presented for approval at the COA meeting on Thursday, April 13, 2023, at the Landing.

**February COA Meeting:** at The Landing on March 9, 2023.

The next Executive Committee meeting date is TBD (since it falls on Memorial Day), at the Landing.

*Minutes prepared by* Barbara Huelat, COA Secretary.

