

ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES

June 8, 2023

*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, James Bruen, Ray Biegun, Enid Borden, Bill Campbell, Alan Dinsmore, Jessica Lefevre, Jim Lindsay, Thomas Reeder, Gerri Wallace.

Members Attending Remotely for Medical Reasons or Personal Reasons: Joanne Broderick

Members Excused: Lois Steele, Jenn Stowe. Jim Lindsay

Members Absent: Joy Kone, Kathleen Demik

Liaisons Present: Ian Torrance, Alexandria Police Department; Juanita Balenger, St. Martin de Porres Senior Center; Pamela Guerra, Senior Center @ Charles Houston; Darrell Wesley, Program Director at the Alexandria Adult Day Services Center.

Guests Present: Council member John Chapman, Jacqueline Burrell, Gaynelle Diaz, Bob Eiffiert, Marshall Hesper, 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 4:02 PM.
2. **Approval of Agenda.** The agenda for the meeting was approved.
3. **Approval of Minutes.** The minutes of the May 11, 2023 meeting were approved.
4. **Alexandria Police Department Liaison Report.** Sgt. Torrance discussed issues concerning suspicious visitors at an independent living facility and car racing at night.
5. **Special Presentation:** Colonel James Paige (Retired), Executive Director of Concerned Citizens Network of Alexandria gave a presentation of the work of his non-profit. It originally worked on educational issues, especially the poor academic performance of students at Alexandria City High School (formerly T.C. Williams High School). More recently, the Network has been working on mental health issues, particularly concerning veterans. Colonel Paige welcomed the opportunity to work with the Commission and on aging issues. Jane King said she would contact him soon for their help on the updated Age Friendly Plan for Alexandria.

6. **Executive Committee Report.** There was not a meeting in June.
7. **Discussion/Action Items:**
 - **Covid-19 Updates** – Gerri Wallace gave her report. The transmission rate in Alexandria continues to be low. Eighty-one percent of Alexandrians are fully vaccinated, and 87% are partially vaccinated. Ninety-five percent of Virginians 65 and older have been vaccinated. She also gave information about the rollout of the second bivalent booster. Mary Lee added that those 65 and over, and those immunologically compromised are entitled to the second bivalent booster. Now that the pandemic is officially over, Gerri will no longer be giving a Covid-19 update. Chris Moore suggested using this time for other health or wellness issues.
 - **Age Friendly Plan** – Jane King said that she has edited the draft of the final report that must go to the City Council and AARP for approval. Ashley Johnson will work on formatting it so that it is readable for the public and the City Council.
 - **Update on NVAN’s 2024 Legislative and Budget Platform** – Bob Eiffert gave a summary of the new NVAN platform, which features supporting virtual meetings for advisory commissions, as was proposed last year by Delegate Elizabeth Bennett-Parker. The NVAN Legislative Breakfast with local representatives and candidates will be on September 20th at the Country Club of Fairfax. Registration opens on August 1st.
 - **Alexandria’s Healthy Homes Initiative** – Barbara Huelat gave a summary of the meeting last week convened by the Alexandria Department of Health and Rebuilding Together. Approximately 30 people attended from both non-profits and local government agencies. The focus of this initiative will be on improving the air quality within homes and buildings and offering assistance to low and moderate income residents. There will be three workgroups to propose how to move forward with this initiative: Focus Groups; Metrics; and Databases.
 - **Installation of New Officers** – Councilmember John Chapman swore in the newly elected officers: Michael Schuster, Chair; Barbara D’Agostino, Vice Chair; Tom Reeder, Secretary.
8. **Liaison Reports**
 - a. **Division of Aging and Adult Services** (<https://www.alexandriava.gov/Aging>) – Chris Moore reported on the Aging Needs Town Hall Meeting scheduled for June 15th from 4:00 to 6:00 at the Del Pepper Building – 4850 Mark Center Drive. The meeting will discuss the current DAAS services, the recent needs assessment on aging issues, the current Age-Friendly Plan, what services are currently doing well, and where there needs to be improvements. Finally, there will be a public comment period.
 - b. **INOVA Alexandria Hospital-** no one present to report.
 - c. **Arlington legislative committee meeting** – The committee met on June 5th to discuss the upcoming NVAN events – the Arlington/Alexandria Legislative Forum in November, and the NVAN Legislative Breakfast in September.

- d. **Human Rights Commission** – Tom Reeder discussed the presentation of Kim Cadena from the Alexandria Office of Housing, the progress of the rainbow sidewalk, and the announcement of the winners of the awards from the Alexandria Commission on Persons with Disabilities, including the recognition of Cherry Blossom Pace for the Disability Awareness Award.
- e. **At Home Alexandria (AHA)**- Bob mentioned the AHA moderated interview of Mayor Justin Wilson at 5:00 p.m.
- f. **Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria**- Nothing to report.
- g. **AARP** – Jane mentioned that AARP sponsors many events in the area and to check with her or Amber Sultane for more information. Earlier in the day, AARP sponsored a workshop at the Beatley Central Library entitled, “Strategies to Help Enhance Your Job Search,” attended by approximately 20 older adults.
- h. **NVAN** – See above about current developments.
- i. **St. Martin de Porres Senior Center** – Juanita Balenger, said she has been busy with various field trips and the Center has planted a new herb garden. An Eagle Boy Scout raised fund to build a fence around it. They celebrated Older Americans Act Month, as well as Cinco de Mayo.
- j. **Senior Center at Charles Houston** – Pamela Guerra, nothing else to add.
- k. **Senior Services of Alexandria** - Mary Lee Anderson- Mary Lee said that the Health Fair was on May 18th at the Lee Center. Free health screenings and Covid boosters were available. SSA just completed another Senior Ambassador training. They now have over 120 trained ambassadors. The June 8th Robust Walkathon at Brenman Park was cancelled due to poor air quality and will not be rescheduled. On May 17th, from 9:00 to 4:00, SSA held an open house for its 55th year anniversary. The Senior Law Fair was held on June 3rd, and the theme was “Expect the Unexpected - When Life Throws You a Curveball.” Approximately 150 people attended. On June 7th, SSA hosted a luncheon for its new and current board members.
- l. **Northern Virginia Fall Prevention Alliance, NVFPA**. Mary Lee Anderson said there was nothing to report.
- m. **Alexandria Commission on Employment**. Ashley Sellman gave an update.
- n. **Successful Aging** – Mary Lee handed out three fliers, including the Senior Health and Fitness Fair, Senior Mental Health, and Senior Law Day. Woodbine provides a Guided Meditation Program, and the Health Department provides a Booster Clinic.
- o. **Alexandria Adult Day Services Center, ADSC** – Darrell Wesley gave a brief update on the Center’s activities. The Center participants have been using DASH to both see the city and to greet other riders on DASH buses.

- p. **Economic Development Committee.** Mary Lee Anderson said the committee met on June 7th, and that Jessica Lefevre will succeed her as chair of the committee.
 - q. **Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee, AHAAC** – Jan Macidull. reported that the Committee would like a presentation from the Commission on its housing priorities, and that the Office on Housing would like to make a presentation to the Commission on affordable housing.
 - r. **Commission for Women-** Jenn Stowe reported on the webinar later in the day on reproductive rights.
 - 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 met last week and went over its proposed Age-Friendly goals.
 - b. **Transportation** – Co-Chairs David Kaplan & Bill Campbell. Nothing to report.
 - c. **Housing Committee-** The committee met on May 15th at Duncan Library.
 - d. **Health/Dementia Friendly.** Barbara Huelat – –Next meeting will be held on the last Thursday of the month, May 25, at 4:00 pm at the Goodwin House.
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 September 14, 2023.

September COA Meeting: on September 14, 2023; location TBD

The next Executive Committee meeting date is August 28, 2023; location TBD.

Minutes prepared by Michael Schuster, Chair and Tom Reeder, Secretary.