

ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES

*October 12, 2023 – DRAFT
In person Meeting at Del Pepper Community Center
4-6 PM*

Members Physically Present: Chair, Michael Schuster; Vice Chair Barbara D’Agostino, Secretary Thomas Reeder, Barbara Huelat, James Bruen, Ray Biegun, Enid Borden, Alan Dinsmore, Jessica Lefevre, Jim Lindsay, Gerri Wallace, Jennifer Stowe, Lois Steele, Marshall Hespe, Jane King, Kathleen Demik, Ana Rivas-Beck, Staff Liaison Ashley Johnson.

Members Excused: Canek Aguirre, William Campbell, David Kaplan

Members Absent: Joy Kone

Liaisons Present: Ian Torrance, Alexandria Police Department; Juanita Balenger, St. Martin de Porres Senior Center; Pamela Guerra, Senior Center @ Charles Houston.

Guests Present: Bob Eiffiert

Staff Members Present: Chris Moore, Director of the Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS), Ashley Johnson, Deputy Director of DAAS, and Pam Austin, DAAS.

1. **Call to Order.** Chair Michael Schuster called the January meeting of the Commission on Aging ("COA") to order at 4:00 PM. All commissioners introduced themselves for the benefit of the new members.
2. **Approval of Agenda.** The agenda for the meeting was approved.
3. **Approval of Minutes.** The minutes of the June 8, 2023, meeting were approved.
4. **Alexandria Police Department Liaison Report.** Sgt. Torrance discussed public safety issues.
5. **Special Presentation:** Nechelle Terrell, Community Outreach Specialist, and Lina Zimmerman, Population Health Epidemiologist, both from the Alexandria Department of Health, as well as Anthony Gutierrez, HIV Community Liaison at Gilead Sciences, presented on Aging with HIV/AIDS. Noting that 43% of those who are HIV positive are over 55 (and over half of those are African Americans and 75% are men) and 10% of the new reported cases are over 50, they focused on the growing stigma facing older Americans and prevention and management of the disease.
6. **Discussion/Action Items:**

- **Legislative and Budget Platform** – The attached platform, which matches that adopted by the Northern Virginia Aging Network (NVAN), was approved unanimously by the Commission.
- **Arlington-Alexandria Joint Legislative Forum:** Michael Schuster announced that the Forum will meet virtually on November 14, 2023.

7. **Liaison Reports**

- a. **Commission for Women-** Jenn Stowe reported on the activities of the Commission on Women, including the Silent Witness Candlelight Vigil occurring the same evening commemorating those lost to domestic violence, the rescheduling of the program “Can I Afford to Live in Alexandria,” and planning for the 50th anniversary of the Commission for Women.
- b. **Division of Aging and Adult Services** (<https://www.alexandriava.gov/Aging>) – Chris Moore reported on numerous activities of the Division, including the distribution of Senior Farmers Market Coupons, the imminent hiring of a full-time coordinator for the Virginia Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program (VICAP), and the hiring of a nutritionist.
- c. **INOVA Alexandria Hospital-** no one present to report.
- d. **Human Rights Commission** – Tom Reeder indicated that the last meeting of the Human Rights Commission was a public forum presented by Karen Loewy, Mindy Weinstein and Matt Harris on recent Supreme Court decisions affecting civil rights and the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act.
- e. **At Home Alexandria (AHA)-** Bob reported on the neighborhood village program of the AHA.
- f. **Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria-** Nothing to report.
- g. **AARP** – Jane King reported on AARP activities in Northern Virginia.
- h. **St. Martin de Porres Senior Center** – Juanita Balenger reported on the September open house and other activities at the Center.
- i. **Senior Center at Charles Houston** – Pamela Guerra, nothing else to add to the written report presented.
- j. **Senior Services of Alexandria** – Marshall Hespe reported on the recent and upcoming activities at SSA, including the Ethiopian Festival, the Staying Safe for Seniors program on October 19.
- k. **Northern Virginia Fall Prevention Alliance, NVFPA.** Nothing reported.
- l. **Alexandria Commission on Employment.** Nothing reported.

- m. **Successful Aging** – Nothing reported.
 - n. **Alexandria Adult Day Services Center, ADSC** – Nothing reported.
 - o. **Economic Development Committee.** Nothing reported.
 - p. **Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee, AHAAC.** Nothing reported.
 - q. **Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities.** – Nothing reported.
8. **Committee Updates.**
- a. **Housing.** Lois Steele reported that the Committee would meet on Monday, October 16 and topics that will be discussed, including the possibility of publicizing the availability of auxiliary dwelling units, and an update on the Ladrey redevelopment.
 - b. **Outreach.** Co-Chair Barbara D’Agostino reported that the committee would meet on October 26 at 11:30 at Goodwin House. With unanimous approval of the Commission, Timaeus Reed was added as a member of the Outreach Committee.
 - c. **Transportation** – Nothing reported.
 - d. **Economic Security.** Jessica Lefevre reported on issues involved with food security (including SNAP benefits) ageism in employment, and the cost of living.
 - e. **Health/Dementia Friendly.** Barbara Huelat reported that the next meeting would be virtual on November 2 at 4 pm.
9. **Other Business.** None
10. **New Business.** None
11. **Public Comments.** None
12. **Meeting Adjournment.** There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:25 PM.

The minutes will be presented for approval at the next COA meeting.

November COA Meeting: on November 9, 2023, at the Del Pepper Community Center.

The next Executive Committee meeting date is October 30, 2023 at 1 PM at Goodwin House.

Minutes prepared by Thomas Reeder, Secretary.