

ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES

*February 10, 2022 – DRAFT [February 17, 2022]
Virtual Meeting*

Members Present: Babs Waters, Barbara D’Agostino, Michael Schuster, Barbara Huelat, Canek Aguirre, David Kaplan, Dawn Higgins, Ellen Nelson, Gerri Wallace, Jenn Stowe, Jim Lindsay, Lois Steele, , Mary Lee Anderson, Michael Kamin, Michael Kreps, Ray Biegun, William Campbell

Members Excused: Lynette Foster

Members Unexcused: None

Liaisons Present: Anne Coyne, St. Martins Senior Center; 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: Terri Lynch, Chris Moore, Kim Taylor and Pam Austin, Division of Aging and Adult Services; Evelyn Quiles, Workforce Dev. Center

Guests Present: Bob Eiffert, Housing Committee; Charles Bailey, Housing Committee; Gaynell Diaz, ARHA; Jan Macidull, Housing Committee; Jane King, COA Housing Committee; Pat Killeen, PHAC; Debra Collins, Deputy City Manager

1. **Call to Order.** Ms. Waters called the February 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.** The January minutes were approved unanimously.
4. **Alexandria Police Department Liaison Report.** Sgt. Torrance responded to a question from Darrell Wesley about financial exploitation of older persons. He said that some criminals steal mail with bills and checks in them, wash them with a chemical, insert their information on them, and then cash them at non-traditional financial institutions. He said it is best to pay your bills electronically to avoid this type of financial fraud.
5. **Special Presentation:** Debra Collins, Deputy City Manager. Chair Babs Waters introduced Ms. Collins. She has been with the Alexandria City government since 2003, formerly as the Director of the Department of Community and Human Services. Ms. Collins described her wide ranging portfolio that included, among many other responsibilities, the Office of Human Rights, the Department of Community and Human Services, the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities, and the Police Department. She said she is one of the three Deputy City Managers. Ms. Collins described the City’s efforts in developing and implementing a new race and social equity

policy for the city. She mentioned the new collective bargaining agreement for city workers, and the new Independent Community Policing Review Board as matters on which she will focus. She said that the new city manager is a strong proponent of body-worn cameras for police officers. In response to some questions about the City's efforts around Covid mandates, she asserted that the city has no immediate plans to relax its current mandate for public facilities. Gerri Wallace asked about the availability of free N95 masks. Mr. Caneck Aguirre said that many grocery stores and pharmacies, like Safeway, Harris Teeter, and CVS, have or will soon be distributing these free masks. He expressed concern about the lack of uniformity in their distribution. In at least one store, the masks were not individually wrapped, exposing them to the air and human touching.

Dawn Higgins asked whether Alexandria would implement a program like Albuquerque's Community Safety department, which responds to mental health crises on behalf of the police department. Ms. Collins said the city does have a small co-response program that started up in September or October of last year where a therapist rides along with a crisis-trained police officer. Ms. Collins noted that the police department has said that the majority of calls they go on are mental health focused. She thought that in the proposed city budget there are positions to expand the program.

6. **Executive Committee Report.** see attached

7. **Discussion /Action Items**

- a. Welcome to Mr. Christopher Moore, the new Director of DAAS. Chair Babs Waters warmly welcomed the new director. He took office on February 7, 2022. From 2018 until 2022, Mr. Moore was program director of the Maryland Access Point Program for Howard County's Office on Aging and Independence, Department of Community Resources and Services. He created the continuity of operations plan that served as the template for the entire agency as it transitioned to remote work during Covid-19, and he retained 100% of his workforce within his first year of employment.
- b. Thank you Barbara D'Agostino, Co-Chair of the Outreach Committee. Ms. Waters thanked Barbara for stepping up to take on this new role. Ms. Waters also commended Barbara Huelat for assuming the chair position of the Health/Dementia Friendly Committee.
- c. Update On DCHS: Bob Effiert. Bob said that he and Mary Lee Anderson attended a virtual tour of the new facility in January, which is located on Beaugard Avenue near the Mark Center. It is near the new Cherry Blossom PACE building. Mary Lee said that it will house not only DCHS, but other city agencies. Caneck Aguirre said that the agency will provide a shuttle from the bus hub to the new facility.
- d. Covid-19 Vaccination Updates – booster shots. Gerri Wallace gave an update on Covid-19. She said that there have been 28,000 transmissions in Alexandria. In the last seven days, the rate in Alexandria has dropped to 251.8 per 100,000 residents. 74.7 percent of residents have been fully vaccinated and 83 percent have been either partially or fully vaccinated. In Virginia, 47,000 people have been hospitalized, and

1.6 million have been vaccinated in the Commonwealth. Mary Lee Anderson added that 64 per cent of older adults (65+) have received booster shots.

8. **Liaison Reports.**

- a. *Division of Aging and Adult Services.* Terri Lynch welcomed the new director of the Division, Christopher Moore. She said that Senior Services of Alexandria will now administer the Grandpads program through September 2024 with funds from the American Rescue Plan. Although she will be leaving Alexandria City government, she said she will remain active in NVAN.
- b. *Commission for Women.* Jean Stowe said they had a meeting on Tuesday at which Debra Evans gave a briefing on legislation. They also discussed their two core issues: domestic violence and affordable housing. She said they are intricately linked together.
- c. *Human Rights Commission* – Lynette Foster. There was no report.
- d. *AHA.* Bob Eiffert said they have gone back to virtual programs. He mentioned the stronger memory program administrated through Goodwin House. Thirty-four people have signed up for information. He lauded Goodwin House for its outstanding service to the community.
- e. *AARP.* Jane King said that AARP's programs are still virtual. Anyone interested in their programs should contact either her or Amber Sultane from the AARP Virginia state office.
- f. *NVAN.* Babs Waters and Terri Lynch. Babs said that the next meeting will be March 15th at 9:30 a.m., hosted by Alexandria. The presenter at the meeting will be from Cherry Blossom PACE. At the April meeting, they will brainstorm about ideas for the NVAN platform priorities. Terri said that she will remain involved in NVAN as its emailer. Anyone interested in the network should contact Terri to be placed on NVAN's email list.
- g. *Senior Center at Charles Houston.* Pam Guerra submitted a written report and had nothing else to report. Materials previously distributed.
- h. *Arlington Legislative Committee.* Michael Schuster reported that they met last Monday to discuss progress on the NVAN platform in the current session of the General Assembly. The one priority which has made positive steps towards enactment deals with electronic meetings. Delegate Elizabeth Bennett-Parker's proposal on electronic meetings passed the House by a vote of 98-0, but a similar bill was defeated in the Senate by a vote of 19-21. The successful House bill will probably cross over to the Senate for its consideration. David Kaplan asked whether the bill addresses virtual meetings beyond the Covid emergency. Michael said it does

and would allow a public body to hold up to two virtual meetings a year outside a declared emergency.

- i. *St. Martins Senior Center.* Anne Coyne said they have been involved in partnerships with the Charles Houston Senior Center and the Alexandria Day Care Center, shopping trips and weekly walking events at the Springfield Mall. Materials previously distributed.
- j. *Senior Services of Alexandria.* Mary Lee Anderson said they will have a virtual cooking with Kole event on February 17th at which Kole will guide participants through easy-to-follow recipes that they can make. They have five new Senior Ambassadors, including Councilperson Sarah Bagley. They are planning for a training in Spanish later this month. Materials previously distributed.
- k. *Alexandria Commission on Employment.* In their meeting this week, Mayor Wilson discussed what is happening around Alexandria. Evelyn Quiles gave an update on the work experience initiative. It has 26 participants so far, well along its way toward their goal of 140 participants by 2024. They have placed participants in several city agencies. Some of the specialties include administrative work, cooking, accounting, and information technology. The educational levels of the participants range from high school graduates to those with master's degrees. The average wage in the program is \$18,25.
- l. *Successful Aging.* Margaret Orlando said they are planning dances and health fairs.
- m. *Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities.* Margaret Orlando said everything is open. You can register now for upcoming programs, including for camp registration for children. Margaret said that Pickle Ball has become enormously popular. There are upcoming public hearings regarding opening additional courts on which to play.
- n. *Alexandria Adult Day Services Center.* Darrell Wesley said they have hired a registered nurse. He also thanked Senior Services of Alexandria for taking over the Grandpads program.
- o. *Housing Affordability Advisory Committee.* Jan Macidull reported that the Committee met on February 3rd. There was no specific discussion about senior affordable housing. However, there was a report on the Ledray Building. The city is putting out a request for proposals to renovate the 170-unit building. The biggest challenge will be the relocation of residents during the redevelopment. Jonathon Frederick discussed the Mount Vernon project on Glebe and Mount Vernon Avenues. Both the Planning Commission and the City Council have approved the development. It will have 196 housing units, of which 58 will be designated as affordable housing. Earlier, he made a presentation on this development to the Housing Committee.

9. Committee Updates.

- a. *Housing.* The next Housing Committee meeting is February 21st at 1:30.
 - b. *Outreach.* The Outreach Committee will meet on February 23rd at 11:30 a.m. The Committee meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month. Final report attached.
 - c. *Transportation.* David Kaplan said that he and Bill Campbell will alternate chairing committee meetings. They meet on the fourth Monday of each month.
 - d. *Economic Development.* Mary Lee Anderson said that the IRS has approved the tax-exempt status of the group proposing to help older persons to become entrepreneurs. Materials previously distributed. Additional report attached.
 - e. *Strategic Planning.*
 - f. *Health/Dementia Friendly.*
 - g. *Advocacy – ad hoc* – Babs Waters said that at 1:30 p.m. on February 25th, the Committee will meet with the city Budget Director, Morgan Routt, to review the City Manager’s proposed budget. All commission members are encouraged to attend.
10. **Other Business.** Commission members took some time congratulating Terri Lynch on her retirement from the Department of Adult and Aging Services, as well as thanking her for her stellar work on behalf of older persons in both Alexandria and Northern Virginia.
 11. **Meeting Adjournment.** There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:25 PM.

Minutes will be presented at the March 10, 2022, COA meeting for approval. The next Executive Committee meeting is on February 28, 2022.

Minutes prepared by Michael Schuster, COA Secretary.

**Alexandria Commission on Aging (COA)
Executive Committee (ExCo) Meeting (Virtual via Zoom)
Monday, January 31, 2022 1:30 – 2:55 PM**

This meeting was held electronically. A determination was made that it was not safe enough to be held in person.

MEETING NOTES

Members Present:

Barbara "Babs" Waters (COA Chair), Barbara D'Agostino (COA Vice Chair), Mary Lee Anderson, Raymond "Ray" Biegun, Michael Schuster, Lois Steele, Gerri Wallace

Staff Members Present:

Terri Lynch

Guests Present:

Bob Eiffert, Jane King

1. Welcome

2. Call to Order: COA Chair, Babs Waters called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM.

3. The Agenda was approved with two Information Item additions. (DCHS update by Bob Eiffert; CoA Advocacy Committee meeting with Morgan Routt, Budget Director, on February 25th at 1:30 PM)

4. Committee Reports (see individual Committee Meeting Notes)

A.	Economic Development Committee	Mary Lee Anderson, Chair. Meets 1st Wednesday, 10am
B.	Outreach Committee	Ray Biegun, Barbara D'Agostino, Co-Chairs. Meets 4th Wednesday, 11:30am.
C.	Housing Committee	Michael Schuster, Chair. Meets 3rd Monday, 1:30 pm
D.	Strategic Planning Committee	Babs Waters. All committee chairs are members.
E.	Transportation Committee	William Campbell, David Kaplan, Co-Chairs. Meets 3rd Monday, 4:30pm.
F.	Health/Dementia Friendly Committee	Barbara Huelat, Chair. Meets as needed.

5. COA Executive Committee (ExCo) Business Meeting

A.	Presentation - None
B.	ExCo Information only
(1)	Chair Report.
(a)	Three (3) vacancies on COA
(b)	COA New Member Orientation: Thursday, February 03, 2022 at 1:30pm via Zoom
(c)	Excellence in Aging Awards. Date: Tuesday, May 10, 2022, Time TBD. Theme: "Age My Way"
(2)	DAAS Staff Report
(a)	Terri announced that there will be a contract with SSA to administer the GrandPad Program through September 30, 2024

- (b) The new Director of DAAS, Christopher Moore, starts February 7 and Terri plans to be around for a few weeks after he starts.

C.	ExCo Discussion Items
(1)	Committee Leadership opportunities and vacancies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) New Chair of the Health/Dementia Friendly Committee: Barbara Huelat (b) New Co-chairs of the Outreach Committee: Ray Biegun and Barbara D'Agostino (b) New Co-chairs of the Transportation Committee: David Kaplan and Bill Campbell (d) Covid-19 update: Gerri Wallace
(2)	<p>Age Friendly Plan Evaluations - Jane King, Michael Schuster. Gerri Wallace is providing much needed support.</p> <p>The current June 2018 Age Friendly Plan covered the years 2019-2021, and has ended. Committee evaluations for our three-year accomplishments will need to be completed by the committees (Goals, actions, accomplishments, obstacles, and what we were not able to accomplish). AARP has not provided criteria/formats for the evaluations of completed three year plans. Two draft evaluation documents for the Housing committee were sent to committee chairs as a model that could be used. Feedback on those drafts are welcome. After evaluations are completed, an updated plan can be prepared, submitted to City Council for approval, and then submitted to AARP for the years 2022-2024. We are aiming to finalize a new plan by late spring 2022. Committees should continue to plan future goals and actions.</p> <p>The COA can be proud of its accomplishments having completed or exceeded items in the 2018 plan. This has resulted in major accomplishments in support of the aging population in the City of Alexandria.</p>
(3)	Discussed a new Wesley Parkview Housing project. Not specifically for older adults.
(4)	Bob Eiffert provided some details on a new DCHS at 4850 Mark Center Place.
(5)	CoA Advocacy Committee is meeting with Morgan Routt, Alexandria Budget Director, on February 25th at 1:30 PM

D.	ExCo Action/Decision Items – None.

6. Planning for Thursday, February 10, 2022 Commission on Aging Meeting

A.	Presentation
(1)	Ms. Debra Collins, Deputy City Manager
(2)	Q & A
B.	COA Information only Items
(1)	<p>Chair Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Welcome Mr. Christopher Moore - New Director, DAAS (a) COVID-19 vaccinations update (b) Age Friendly Plan Update (d) Committee Leadership vacancies filled: Outreach Committee (Co-chairs): Ray Biegun and Barbara D'Agostino Transportation Committee (Co-chairs): David Kaplan and Bill Campbell
(2)	DAAS Staff Report
C.	COA Discussion only Items
D.	COA Decision only Items

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7. Planning for future COA meetings

A.	Possible Future Speakers
(1)	March: Cherry Blossom PACE (Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly)
(2)	April: TBD
B.	Additional items - Please submit other proposed speakers to babswaters@comcast.net

8. Other Business – None.

9. Announcements

A. Next two (2) COA Executive Committee (ExCo) Meetings

(1)	Date: Monday, February 28, 2022 Time: 1:30 PM – 3:30 PM via Zoom
(2)	Date: Monday, April 4, 2022 Time: 1:30 PM – 3:30 PM via Zoom

B. Next two (2) COA Monthly Commission Meetings

(1)	Date: Thursday, March 10, 2022 Time: 4:00 – 6:00 PM via Zoom
(2)	Date: Thursday, April 14, 2022 Time: 4:00 – 6:00 PM via Zoom

C. Other Alexandria COA events

	Senior Ambassador training conducted by SSA on Monday, February 7, at 10 AM via Zoom.
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D. Other non-Alexandria COA events

(1)	NVAN Meeting Date: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 Time: 9:30 – 11 AM via Zoom Host: Alexandria COA

10. Public Comment – None.

11. The meeting was adjourned by Babs Waters at 2:55 PM.

(Notes prepared by Ray Biegun.)

City of Alexandria, Commission on Aging
Outreach Committee Notes
January 26, 2022 11:30 a.m. Via Zoom

This meeting was held electronically. A determination was made that it was not safe enough to be held in person.

Members Present: Ray Biegun, Gary Hacker, Jane King, Margaret Orlando, Gerri Wallace.

Absent: MaryAnne Beatty, Dawn Higgins, Barbara Waters

Hosting staff: Pamela Austin

The meeting was called to order at 11:32 a.m. by Ray Biegun.

Introductions were made due to recent changes in the committee. Ray Biegun reported this was his first time as co-chair of the Outreach Committee and another co-chair is currently being recruited. A former co-chair, Victoria Almquist, has agreed to stay on the Committee for a while to assist Ray during the transition. Gerri Wallace has joined as a new committee member. Ray pointed out that all committee members at the meeting are also Senior Service of Alexandria (SSA) Senior Ambassadors.

1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as proposed.

2. Updates on Outreach to:

Faith Community: SSA is updating its contacts to the faith community. One of the churches reported exceptional assistance from the city in providing updated Covid-19/Omicron guidance needed in the decision to reopen for inhouse services.

LGBTQ community: There are still concerns within the LGBTQ community regarding support and information needs within the larger community. For example, there are the needs of those within the LGBTQ community who also serve as caregivers.

Senior Ambassadors: SSA reports there are currently 100 ambassadors. The next new ambassador training will be on February 7. In addition, there will be a Spanish language new ambassador training on February 22. The Senior Ambassador program offers a good way to get plugged into the Alexandria senior community. The emails MaryAnne sends out several times a week to the ambassadors keeps them informed. Also, the weekly Wednesday ambassador zoom meetings continue to cover a wide range of topics and speakers.

Age Friendly Plan: The three year Age Friendly Plan expired December 2021. COA anticipates a new three year plan will be created and will go to the City Council for review and approval sometime in the spring (see Committee Planning for 2022).

3. Review of Past Accomplishments

Letter on Bullying Presentation: A presentation was offered by the Mayor's Campaign to End Bullying Committee that addresses bullying in senior communities. A letter was drafted in 2021 on bullying from the former Outreach Co-chairs to go to senior continuing care facilities throughout Alexandria. The distribution spreadsheet still needs to be completed. Ray will follow up with Victoria Almquist. Margaret reported that the bullying presentation information has been sent to the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities and that the bullying presentation will be considered when the recreation centers return to normal.

Recent City Outreach: Margaret reported that the "Winter at a Glance" brochure recently went out and included a variety of recreation activities, classes, programs, etc. Pam added that calls are coming in from seniors regarding recreation programs. People continue to be unsure what is or is not happening within the city.

SSA and the Department of Aging and Adult Services continue to contribute/support articles in local publications, such as Alexandria Times, Alexandria Gazette Packet, Zebra, etc. Speakers on relevant subjects, such as preventing falls, have been sought out and appeared in Zoom presentations.

4. Committee Planning for 2022

Opportunities for Outreach: Pam reported that a new attorney at Alexandria Law wants to meet with Alexandria seniors and do a presentation.

Committee Goals: The last 3-year plan (2018-2021) included various diversity and communications goals. Accomplishments need to be reviewed and decisions made. Should the old goals be retained or should they be revised? Are there any new goals that need to be added?

Outreach Committee Needs: Current members include MaryAnne Beatty, Ray Biegun, Gary Hacker, Dawn Higgins, Jane King, Margaret Orlando, Gerri Wallace, Barbara Waters (COA Chair) and Pam Austin (staff). Outreach efforts to recruit new members continues. In, addition, efforts are underway to recruit a co-chair.

5. Public comments: None

6. Date of next meeting: Wednesday, 23th February, 2022 at 11:30 a.m. via Zoom.

7. The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Minutes from February 2, 2022 meeting of the Economic Development Committee

Attending: Mary Lee Anderson; Sandy Freedman; Annabelle Reitman; Sylvia Benatti, Gerri Wallace, Jane King, Evelyn Quiles (City Staff Coordinator).

Absent: Jim Lindsay, Pat Miller

The meeting began at 10:02 a.m.

It was noted that Committee meetings continue via Zoom.

Senior Consumers. Renewed focus in January on adding businesses to the Silver Service Card program. Committee members are encouraged to get involved. Pat Miller will work with Mary Lee to get more Del Ray businesses. Mary Lee needs to follow up with Pat.

Senior Employment. *Goal is to help seniors find employment and to encourage businesses to hire.* Evelyn Quiles is managing the Work Based Learning Initiative in addition to her responsibilities as Senior specialist. Several residents in the programs are older adults, so there is some cross-over. Annabelle and Sylvia would like to get a resume workshop scheduled for March, and will confirm possible dates with Evelyn.

Seniors as Entrepreneurs. Annabelle Reitman and Sylvia Benatti have received IRS approval of the 501(c)3 status! Focus is now on website development, confirming office space (Jim Lindsay has offered to help). Launch is targeted for late April. The draft business plan has been circulated to the committee and they would like feedback from everyone.

SNAP for Seniors. Sandy Freedman and Margaret Shetler are working with St. Martin's, WDC and DCHS on strategies to increase SNAP enrollment by older adults. Two new SNAP clients in SSA's grocery program in January. Evelyn is exploring WDC using the Work Based Learning program to hire someone to work on the issue with SSA. Possible expansion into ethnic food stores has been hampered due to the current supply chain issues.

Senior Ambassadors Next training is scheduled for Monday, February 7. SSA will be reaching out to everyone who has been trained to determine their level of engagement.

Livable Community Plan Jane King is preparing final report for AARP and will send information to Evelyn so that she may update goals, accomplishments and outcomes from a WDC perspective. Goal is to have all input by end-February.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:47 a.m.

The next meeting will be held Wednesday, March 2 at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom.

Submitted by: Mary Lee Anderson