

ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING AGENDA

Meeting Minutes

Meeting: Thursday, May 8, 2025, 4:30 PM – 6:30 PM

Mark Center

- Del Pepper Community Center, 4850 Mark Center Drive – Alexandria VA 22311

9th Floor

Members Attending In-Person:

Chair, Michael Schuster, Vice Chair, Barbara D'Agostino, Alan Dinsmore, Barbara Huelat, Kimberly Koch, DT Oliver, Jane M. King, Jessica Lefevre, Jim Lindsay, Kathleen Demik, Michele McLaughlin, Ray Biegun, Victoria Rutson, William Thomas Reeder

Members Attending Remotely With Approval From The Chair:

James Bruen, Gerri Wallace, Ray Beigun

Members Excused:

Canek Acguirre, Ana Rivas Beck

Members Unexcused:

Joy Kone

Liaisons Present:

Juanita Balenger, St. Martins Senior Center; Darrell Wesley, Adult Day Services Center; Officer Daniel Schultz, Alexandria City Police Department (APD); Gaynelle Diaz and Pamela Guerra, Senior Center @ Charles Houston, Jan Macidull, AHAAC, Kathy Turner, VHC

Guests Present:

Lois Steele; Erik C. Johnson, CEO, Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA); Kenneth Turscak, Housing Analyst with the City's Department of Planning and Zoning; Robert Brant, an attorney with Walsh Colucci Lubeley & Walsh; Andrew Cretal, Goodwin Living.

Staff Members Present:

Chris Moore, Ashley Johnson, Pam Austin, Division of Aging and Adult Services

Call to Order – 4:32 pm.

Approval of Agenda – Change in Agenda by Michael Schuster to move up a special presentation, adopted and approved

Approval of Thursday, April 10, 2025, Minutes – Approved

Sergeant Daniel Schultz - APD is running a crime suppression detail that is running for the last two months. They are waiting on the numbers from their analysts. Retail thefts are happening in Old Town and Richmond Highway. APD is doing a new patrol schedule. They are hoping to reallocate their officers. They will be having police officers on bicycles. Immigration status has zero impact for a victim or witness.

One Commissioner said CVS and Safeway managers aren't seeing much of a larceny reduction.

One Commissioner asked about getting charged a fee for a wellness check and being taken in an ambulance?

One Commissioner asked has APD observed or knows about in Alexandria any implications for deportation, or any incidents or issues that are going on with the Alexandria immigrant population? Officer Schultz stated that they do not enforce directly immigrant status. An illegal border crossing is not a criminal matter, but a civil matter. They are working on a clarification of protocols in handling detention of illegal immigrants. If there is a criminal matter pending on an illegal person, then they would detain them.

Special Presentation One – An Update on Ladrey

Eric C. Johnson CEO for ARHA –

Erik Johnson, CEO of the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA) gave an update on the Ladrey Senior Housing Facility. He stated that ARHA has determined it is not economically feasible to demolish and redevelop the facility, so they will completely renovate it. He asserted that the new construction project that was proposed had “like a 35-million-dollar gap in funding that we just couldn’t figure out how to solve.” There are approximately 132 residents 62 and older. While the renovation is being done, older residents will be relocated to a 133-unit age-restricted (62+) independent living community located on First Street – which ARHA has named “Silver Fox,” – and is on the market for sale. It has about a 15% occupancy rate. The moves there would be voluntary.

ARHA is seeking a partnership with the City to acquire the facility; the City will have no financial obligations, but a moral one to honor the commitment. Mr. Johnson compared the commitment to co-signing a car-loan or an apartment. Those who do not want to be relocated there will be given housing vouchers. ARHA hopes to take possession of the “acquisition” by August 2025. The plan is to transfer the older residents to the new acquisition before the holidays in 2025, and then start the renovation of the existing building beginning the second quarter of 2026.

Once the facility is renovated, it will have 140 (down from 170 units) affordable units with new amenity spaces. Mr. Johnson said the goal for ARHA is to increase the number of accessible and affordable older adult units that they serve from 170 to about 270, once they finish the Ladrey renovation, and add the “Silver Fox” acquisition. The move of residents to Silver Fox would be permanent. It is anticipated that they would not be moving back to Ladrey.

One Commissioner raised concerns about the track record of the current developer for Ladrey. Mr. Johnson did not disagree with those concerns. ARHA will be renegotiating its agreement with the current developer – Winn Companies, since they will no longer be building a

completely new facility. ARHA will be seeking state issued bonds to finance the acquisition, which will require City Council sign-off. The state bond program has a very competitive interest rate. Alternatively, they could seek the more expensive option of conventional financing through market debt and equity, with vouchers as a back stop. Commissioners raised concerns about how residents will be monitored after being relocated, noting that repeated relocations can cause emotional distress in older adults. In addition, Chris Moore, Director of DAAS, asked about how those needing a higher level of care will be transitioned. He said DAAS wants to be involved in the process of relocating residents from Ladrey, and be part of the solution. Mr. Johnson said this is something ARHA needs to figure out and he is open for ideas on how to make this work. ARHA has a meeting with the City Council on May 13th. A Board resolution would be required that they hope to have in June. The Board resolution would require the City to assume the moral authority for ARHA's financing plan – like a co-signer on a loan. In worst case scenario, the City would be repaying the financing that they anticipate getting from the state. Mr. Johnson said they should have a decision on their preferred financial model by June 2025.

Mr. Johnson said he wants to be as transparent as possible and values “the senior community.” He noted that Ladrey has six people 90 years of older, and that their families have or want places to go that makes sense. He believes with this plan, residents will know soon where they will live – that is in the new acquisition – in contrast to the old plan where they would be temporarily placed, and then not knowing when or if they would return to Ladrey in three to five years.

Special Presentation Two – An Update on The View-Alexandria

Kenneth Turscak, Housing Analyst with the City's Department of Planning and Zoning, introduced **Robert Brant, an attorney with Walsh Colucci Lubeley & Walsh**, who gave an update on the development of an expanded Independent Living facility at The View-Alexandria. It will have 257 new units – 217 independent living (68 new units); 16 assisted living; and 24 skilled nursing and memory care. The existing building, which will not be demolished but renovated, now has 124 independent/assisted living units. Once the development is completed, the existing building and the two new towers will have a total of 383 units.

Since they will be seeking additional height for the two towers (North Tower – 156 ft.; South Tower – 175 ft.) and increased density, under City Ordinance section 7-700, they are negotiating with the City to make 7 units affordable. A Commissioner pointed out that section 7-700 does not clearly define what affordable is in this context. The representatives from Planning and Zoning agreed that this ordinance is focused on traditional market rate rental and ownership models. Senior facilities are more complicated because they involve services, not rent. The Office of Housing will likely address this issue in the 2040 Master Plan. Thus, the City has negotiated contributions of equivalent value in housing for older adults, based on consultations with the COA and DAAS, and the results in similar senior projects.

Goodwin Living, the owner of The View, proposes to provide seven one-bedroom independent living units within the new building at a reduced buy-in rate of \$175,000 (about half of the regular rate or \$200,000 less) and a reduced monthly services payment up to 60% of Area Median (approximately \$1740) Income for 40 years or five turnovers per unit (based on an 8-year turn average), whichever comes first. The buy-in will be amortized downward, so if residents leave the facility prematurely, either they or their estate would receive back whatever remains on the buy-in amount. They are also requesting to reduce the number of parking spaces from approximately 517 spaces (1.35 spaces per unit) to approximately 441 (1.15 spaces per unit) since they anticipate for this type of housing fewer residents will have cars. Goodwin Living is winding down operations of the medical building to be demolished. If there are any residents remaining at the time of construction of the proposed project, they will be relocated to either Goodwin House Alexandria or Goodwin House Bailey's Crossroads.

Liaison Reports

Chris Moore - DAAS Director, talked about Older Americans month (OAM) - this is the 60th anniversary of OAM. The theme this year is "Flip the Script on Aging." He mentioned the advocacy of NVAN on aging programs. The summer will be busy for DAAS. They will be launching a caregiver support platform, and holding the rescheduled Age Friendly Plan Town Hall meeting.

Tom Reeder. Human Rights Commission and VICAP - there will be presentations on Medicare in May, June and July. The mayor said she is committed to human rights.

Alan Dinsmore – AHA- said there are a lot of volunteer services for transportation. They have 121 volunteers. He emphasized the importance of transportation for medical appointments.

Jane King – AARP- There will be AARP events in the summer for caregivers.

Juanita Balenger, St. Martins Senior Center - Saint Martin's had a lot of events for seniors (Bingocize, mobile dental, walkathon, health and fitness fair. A nurse is on site to check blood pressure. On May 14th, someone from the FCC will come to talk about scams.

Kathy Turner -VHC - the director of Senior Health, says she has housing information for the Commission. Tomorrow they will have a seminar on senior options with Positive Aging. On June 6th in person, they will be having an in-person senior living fair. There will be an opportunity for seniors or people who work with seniors to talk with reps from assisted living and independent living facilities to talk to people about aging in place. On May 28th they have a 55+ health fair at Lubber Run Community Center.

Jen Stowe from Commission on Women had to resign for personal reasons.

Pam Guerra - Charles Houston Senior Center - had events for the older adults, they played trivia, etc. They had a trip to the "People's House" and learned a lot about White House Trivia. They will have a health fitness fair at Charles Houston next week.

Marshall Hespe – Senior Services of Alexandria - Senior Law Day is on June 7th – at First Baptist Church, 2932 King Street. On May 14th, there will be a Walkaton at Benman Park. On May 22, there will be a senior health and fitness fair at the Lee Center. They will start a new food program with Capital Food Bank. They have a monthly food delivery program serving many senior high rise housing facilities.

Mary Lee Anderson gave an update on the Marymount University Fall Prevention Study or ALOHA (Arlington Longitudinal Optimal Healthy Aging) - [About the ALOHA Study - Marymount University](#). It is a long term study for those age 65 and over, with rolling enrollment. SSA will have a presentation on the study at a June Senior Ambassador program.

Darryl Wesley gave an update for the Adult Services at the Lee Center – he said they are busy with acclimating their new staff. They have been doing trips. He wanted to shout out for all of their volunteers for Volunteers Month. He mentioned a volunteer who have been with them for eight years.

Jan Macidull said that AHAAC meets next week.

COA Discussion and Action Items

Jane and Michael gave an update on the progress of the Age Friendly Plan.

Ashley mentioned the temporary position of the older adult SNAP Enrollment Coordinator. And Michael said that under the currently approved City budget, there will be a full time coordinator for food programs through the City.

Vice Chair Barbara D'Agostino said everything is going according to schedule for the May 13th Excellence in Aging Awards at City Hall at 5:30 p.m. Commissioners should RSVP.

Michael mentioned the May 17th City Council meeting at which Mayor Gaskins will issue a proclamation honoring May as Older Americans Month. He encouraged Commission members and friends to attend.

Jessica Lefevre, the Chair of the Nominating Committee announced the nominations for the following positions: Co-Chairs – DT Oliver and Michael Schuster; Vice Chair – Ana Rivas Beck; and Secretary – Kimberly Koch. The Commission unanimously approved all of the nominations.

Committee Updates

Housing Committee - Co-Chairs, Michael Schuster and Lois Steele

Lois Steele gave an update. The next meeting is on May 19th at Mark Center at 1:00 p.m..

Outreach Committee – Co-Chairs, Marshall Hespe & Barbara D’Agostino

- Meeting scheduled for May 15th, starting at 11:30 at Goodwin House. They will be discussing their goals and objectives.

Transportation – Chair, Alan Dinsmore

- They will be meeting on May 21st at 4:00 at Charles Houston, in the small conference room.

Economic Security and Civic Engagement – Chair, Jessica Lefevre

- Met last Thursday and Jim is working forward with Entrepreneur program for older workers. Jim Lindsay reported he had the first Shark Session with nine participants. He is scheduling follow-up meetings. Jessica said one goal for their domain will be securing funding for the 50+ Work-Based Learning Program that was previously funded. The program entailed giving older workers support to develop skills, and be placed in temporary employment with a stipend from the City. Jim gave a presentation to the City Council’s Workforce Development subcommittee. Two participants in the Workforce Development program came in and gave an emotional report about how the mentor program helped them regain confidence in looking for work after being laid off. One is now with the State Department; the other is now a consultant to the City. The Committee’s next meeting is May 28th and it will be virtual.

Health /Dementia Friendly Committee – Chair, Barbara Huelat

- They met right before the COA meeting tonight and discussed their goals. Their next meeting is June 12th right before the COA meeting, starting at 3:00 p.m. They continue fleshing out their proposed goals and objectives.

Other Business None

New Business None

Public comments – no Comments.

Adjournment – 6:28 PM

Next Commission Meeting: Thursday, June 12, 2025 – 4 PM, VIRTUAL

Executive Committee Meeting: June 2, 2025– 1:30 p.m. VIRTUAL

NVAN Meetings: May 27, 2025 9:30 – Virtual – Host: NVAN Legislative Platform for 2026 will be voted on.

COMMISSION OFFICERS: Michael Schuster, Chair

Barbara D'Agostino, Vice Chair
Ana Rivas Beck, Secretary

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