

ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING AGENDA

Meeting: Thursday, June 12, 2025, 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Virtual

Members Attending Virtually:

Chair, Michael Schuster, Vice Chair, Barbara D’Agostino, Secretary, Ana Rivas, Alan Dinsmore, Barbara Huelat, Canek Aguirre, DT Oliver, Gerri Wallace, James Bruen, Jane M. King, Jennifer Stowe, Jim Lindsay, Kathleen Demik, Kimberly Koch, Marshall Hespe, Michele McLaughlin, Ray Biegum, Victoria Rutson, William Thomas Reeder

Members Excused:

Jessica Lefevre

Members Unexcused:

Joy Kone

Liaisons Present:

Juanita Balenger, St. Martins Senior Center; Darrell Wesley, Adult Day Services Center; Cynthia Hurley, Police Department; Pamela Guerra & Gaynelle Diaz, Senior Center @ Charles Houston

Guests Present:

Jan Macidull, AHAAC;

Staff Members Present:

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

Call to Order – 4:00 pm

Approval of Agenda –Approved: the changes to the Agenda.

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

Alexandria Police Department Liaison Report – Sgt. Ian Torrance

Sgt. Torrance discussed Alexandria’s approach to the federal’s program of detaining undocumented individuals and its impact on city resources, the rate of criminal larceny in the City, which is a problem, the City’s Night Out events on August 5th, and the protest demonstrations next weekend – a group has already obtained a permit to gather in Alexandria.

Special Presentation: Alexandria City Department of Transportation and Environmental Services – Bryan Hayes, Complete Streets Coordinator for Alexandria.

- Bryan said that “complete streets” are designed for all users – pedestrians, cyclists, motor vehicles, etc. It is a toolkit the City uses to find the best designs to use for a variety of locations. Unfortunately, streets have been designed mostly for vehicular traffic. Bryan said

that complete streets involve designs that would allow pedestrians and others to use them safely along with motor vehicles. He said the most unsafe parts of streets are intersections; that there's no singular design prescription for complete streets. Each one is unique in response to its community context, what does that mean? Implementation for Old Town is going to look and feel different than appropriate complete streets implementation for other parts of Alexandria like Carlisle, Del Ray or Seminary Hill. Complete Streets is relatively low cost, but high impact.

The city adopted a complete streets policy that directs transportation planners, engineers, and developers to design and operate the entire right of way within complete streets, design principles. So what that effectively means is that whenever a street is repaved, we are obligated to kind of improve that street with some complete streets principles. When a new development project is coming in, the city will work with those developers to make sure that the sidewalks are wide enough.

Vision Zero is another City policy. It's a policy that the City Council adopted in 2017 that aims to eliminate all traffic, related deaths and severe injuries by 2028. These programs work together to create a comprehensive safety approach. They look to things like the Alexandria mobility plan which guides development, they look to Vision Zero to identify high risk locations where there's been a history of crashes where there's unsafe conditions. Under the mobility plan, the City looks at things like e-bikes and scooters and how they pose safety issues on sidewalks, especially for older adults. These three plans – Complete Streets, Vision Zero, and Mobility - work together to create a comprehensive safety approach.

Bryan and Canek Aguirre discussed the developments at both the Power Plant and the Landmark. Canek said that one of the most dangerous intersections in the City is at Duke and Walker. He said there are plans for ensuring safe use of walkways, bike lanes and public transit. More information can be found at the [Duke Street Corridor Project](https://www.alexandriava.gov/DukeInMotion) webpage. <https://www.alexandriava.gov/DukeInMotion>. Commissioners raised concerns about aggressive cyclists, e-scooters, and little respect shown for walkers.

Installation of New COA Officers

- **Councilmember and COA Commissioner, Canek Aguirre** swore in the newly elected COA officers: **Michael Schuster** and **DT Oliver**, as co-chairs, and **Ana Rivas Beck** as vice-chair. **Kim Koch**, the newly elected secretary will be sworn in during the Fall.

Liaison Reports

- **DAAS** – Chris Moore gave an update on the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Plan for Alexandria. He said there will be a public hearing on it in July, and then some updates that will be brought to the COA in the Fall, and then submitted to the City Council for its approval. After that approval, it will be submitted to the Virginia Department of Rehabilitation and Aging Services (DARS). Chris discussed the launch of a new caregiver platform called Trualta. He

gave a live demonstration of it. It has resources, live events, etc., on caregiving. He encouraged everyone to sign-up and use it. He mentioned two personnel changes, including the retirement of Phil Caldwell on September 1st who oversees the work of the DAAS. Ashley Johnson reported the start of the farmer's market for older adults, enabling up to 366 older adults to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables. Ashley presented a plaque of recognition to Barbara D'Agostino, who ended her two years as vice chair of the COA, but will remain on the COA.

- **Human Rights Commission** – Tom Reeder said that they had a presentation from the Legal Aid Justice Center on the rights of undocumented Alexandrians. The Office of Human Rights has a new director.
- **At Home in Alexandria** - Bob Effiert said that Alan Dinsmore is the new chair of the board. Alan gave interesting statistics on what AHA volunteers are doing. They have as many as 60 volunteers, providing thousands of hours of volunteer service, 80% of which is providing transportation services. (Alan is the Chair of the COA Transportation Committee.).
- **AARP** – AARP Virginia published a one-pager on its 2026 legislative priorities – focusing on prescription drug costs and caregiving.
- **NVAN** – it has approved seven legislative and budget priorities for the 2026 General Assembly session. The NVAN Legislative Breakfast with Northern Virginia delegates and senators is scheduled for October 3rd at the Country Club of Fairfax County, at which the NVAN legislative platform will be officially launched.
- **St. Martin de Porres** – AARP sponsored a workshop on the Six Pillars of Brain Health which their participants attended, ten participants of her program attended a play at the Little Theatre in Alexandria, and Mayor Gaskins will speak to their participants on July 22. Her Center is busy with many social engagement activities.
- **VHC Health** – Kate Chutuape did not have anything to add from its last report.
- **Charles Houston** – Pamela Guerra mentioned its robust walkaton, and Mayor Gaskins did spend Mother's Day celebration with the center, so that was really nice. Participants really had a good time asking her questions about her vision for the city.
- **Senior Services of Alexandria** – Marshall Hespe reported that Senior Law Day on June 7th was a great success with over 200 Alexandrians attending. Mary Lee Anderson said SSA is officially launching the friendly caller program; they have been invested in a pilot phase since January, and this is designed to have new volunteers making phone calls to socially isolated older adults - kind of an extension of their friend Visitor program, which is an in-home personal visit. This is designed for older persons, who maybe aren't comfortable with somebody in their home, or would like more frequent contact than just once a week. And so we've invested in a platform called Monami. which has been used by many other Meals on Wheels programs around the country, and it will allow volunteers to make the phone calls without having their phone numbers identified. It will allow SSA to monitor the length of the phone calls and allow them to also report back to us any issues or concerns that may come out of the calls. And they can make the phone calls a quick phone call, every day to just check in and make sure people are feeling okay, or they can make a little lengthier phone calls several times a week, so SSA will be starting to issue marketing materials and get those out to the community in the next couple of weeks.

- **Workforce Development Center** – Clarence Parkinson reported on WDC activities. They are working on workshops for displaced federal workers. He is looking for more employer partnerships.
- **Alexandria Adult Day Services Center** – Darrell Wesley said that participants joined caregivers in a buffet luncheon on the Potomac River, and that they have an inspection coming up with the departments of health and social services.
- **AHAAC** – Jan Macidull reported. They had a presentation on Housing 2040. She said half of Alexandrians rent, evictions are up, and most landlords have attorneys, while few tenants do. The eviction process is confusing for most people. She said outreach to tenants is important, especially at the court house. The major topics they covered included ARHA's purchase of The Alate through bond funding from the Virginia Resources Authority - \$56 million. The Alate has 133 units, whereas Ladrey has 168 units, so not all of the Ladrey residents can locate there. The City Council will vote on the proposal on June 24th. AHAAC supports the proposal, but members raised concern about whether there will be project vouchers in the future. Chris said this proposal and process would be good for insertion in the Age Friendly Plan – he said it could be an incubator for novel approaches for affordable housing.

Public Statements on The View-Alexandria and the Paratransit Grant Proposal

- The COA approved both public statements filed with the City Council and the Planning Commission.

Letter to the City Council on the Ladrey/ARHA Proposal

- The COA approved sending a letter to the City Council that would focus on the relocation process – that it should be done in a methodical and safe manner. The City Council will vote on the proposal at its June 24th public meeting.

Report on Alexandria Fund for Human Services

- The Department of Community and Human Services will recommend changes to the Fund before the City Council on June 14th. There would be three tranches of services: essential, striving or thriving, and innovative. They would also ask for more money, and issue fewer grants. Mary Lee expressed concern that there has been insufficient time for those most impacted by the recommendations to read and comment on the 70-page report.

Committee Updates

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

Lois reported – Jan Macidull gave AHAAC updates; the committee discussed developments regarding The Alate and The View; and changes to the City ordinance on Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).

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

The Committee discussed Age Friendly goals and objectives, and ways to improve collaboration. They will meet on June 26th, and talk with SSA about their outreach efforts.

Transportation – Chair, Alan Dinsmore

Next meeting is scheduled for 4:00 on the 18th.

Economic Security and Civic Engagement – Chair, Jessica Lefevre

They discussed the Shark Tank project. The members also talked about food insecurity, and Ashley has started the fresh fruits and vegetables program over the summer along with the farmer’s market.

Health /Dementia Friendly Committee – Chair, Barbara Huelat

They met today and approved goals and objectives.

Other Business- no comments

New Business – no comments

Public comments – no comments

Adjournment – 6pm.

Next Commission Meeting: Thursday, September 11, 2025 – 4:30 PM, Mark Center

Executive Committee Meeting: August 25, 2025– 1:30 p.m. In-person – Mark Center

NVAN Meetings: October 3, 2025 8:30 – NVAN Legislative Breakfast – Country Club of Fairfax

COMMISSION OFFICERS: Michael Schuster, Chair
Barbara D’Agostino, Vice Chair
Ana Rivas Beck, Secretary