

ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING

Meeting: Thursday, January 08, 2026 4:30 PM – 6:30 PM

Location: Del Pepper Center @ 4850 Mark Center Drive. 9th Floor

Members Attending In-Person:

Co-Chairs, Michael Schuster, DT Oliver; Vice Chair, Ana Rivas Beck, Secretary, Barbara D'Agostino, Barbara Huelat, Gerri Wallace, Ginny Kalish, Jessica Lefevre, Jim Lindsay, Kathleen Demik, Marshall Hespe, Michele McLaughlin, William Thomas Reeder

Members Attending Remotely with Approval from the Co-Chairs:

Medical/disability Exception (counts towards quorum) - James Bruen, Jane M. King, Ray Biegun, Victoria Rutson

Personal Exception (does not count towards quorum) – Secretary, Kimberly Koch

Members Excused:

Alan Dinsmore, Canek Aguirre

Members Unexcused:

None

Liaisons Present:

Constance Carelli, Police Department; Gaynelle Diaz, Ladrey Senior High-Rise; Bob Eiffert, AHA; Juanita Balenger, St. Martins Senior Center; Tricia Rodgers, Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria; Pamela Guerra, Senior Center @ Charles Houston; Jan Macidull, Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee

Guests Present:

Lois Steele, Housing Committee; JeanAnn Mayhan, Public Health Advisory; Cedar Dvorin; Tamara Jovovic, Office of Housing; Bill (unknown last name); Bryan Porter, Alexandria Commonwealth Attorney; Ashley Milanes, Director of Special Programs, Office of the Commonwealth Attorney

Staff Members Present:

Chris Moore, Ashley Johnson, Pam Austin, Division of Aging and Adult Services; Clarence Parkinson, Workforce Development Center

Call to Order Meeting called to order at 4:40 pm

Approval of Agenda as is.

Approval of Thursday, December 11, 2025 - Minutes approved with no changes.

Alexandria Police Department Liaison Report – Sgt. Constance Carelli

No official update. A question was asked if there is a protocol in place for addressing when an Alexandria Police Officer observes a police officer from another jurisdiction physically harming or abusing human rights of an Alexandria resident. Sgt. Carelli shared the City does have a Directive to Intervene in these instances. She recommended that if you observe this type of action you can call 911.

Special Presentation: Bryan Porter, Alexandria City Commonwealth Attorney and Ashley Milanes, Director of Special Programs

Bryan provided an overview of the structure and charge of the Alexandria City Commonwealth Attorney's Office. Highlights include:

- He is the elected prosecutor for the City of Alexandria, now serving his fourth term (four-year terms.)
- The City is an independent political entity. His office is responsible for every criminal offense that occurs in the City from murder and all jailable offenses. They are not responsible for minor things, e.g. speeding tickets.
- He has 45 staff, to include attorney, paralegals, advocates and program staff. Attorneys are assigned to cases based on skills, areas of expertise and experience, and what they are interested in working on.
- Funding for his office is from the state and supplemented by the City.
- Ashley oversees all federal, state and hybrid grant programs e.g. VWEF, VAWA/V-STOP, Operation Ceasefire. She is also involved in Recovery Court. For victim services their primary goal is for victims to know their rights. Ashley is also the office's Equity Coordinator.
- Bryan shared his experience with the Charles Severance case and the book he wrote about it: *The Parable of the Knocker*.
- The Community Academy of the Office of the Commonwealth Attorney will be in April 2026.
- Bryan and Ashley answered previously submitted and live questions from Commission members and meeting attendees. Questions posed covered topics such as: pedestrian safety and charging guidance, financial/credit card fraud and elder abuse, elder abuse at nursing homes/long-term care facilities, domestic violence victims and question about how they leave their environment and available resources to support.

Executive Report – DAAS Staff

On January 29 Arlington and Alexandria have joined forces to present a panel discussion at the No Wrong Door Advisory Council meeting on the topic of combating food insecurity. DT will be one of the panelists.

Building Blocks of Mobility: Current Conditions and Our Role in in Shaping Pathways to Stability and Upward Mobility is happening Thursday, February 5. Ashley had provided the link to register in a separate communication.

Discussion/Action Items

Age Friendly Plan – Update and Next Steps (DAAS staff, DT Oliver, Jane King)

Chris shared Kate is reviewing and editing the Age-Friendly Plan. The City Manager also wants to review. The goal is to present to Council on February 24. Once approved, the main focus will be on promotion of the plan through relevant channels and opportunities. The question was raised as to who would present to Council. Chris made the recommendation that in addition to him Michael, DT or Jane should also present. Chris also recommends COA members attend the Council meeting when the plan is presented.

Housing 2040 Master Plan (Tamara Jovovic, Office of Housing)

Tamara briefed the Commission with an update of the 2024 Housing Master Plan. The goal of this work is to update the City's current housing master plan, which is codified in City ordinance, to address housing needs over the next 15 years. City Council work session is January 27. She anticipates releasing a full draft of principles and goals, recommendations and strategies on February 20. They are hosting a Community Open House on February 28. All are invited to attend. Tamara shared Housing 2024 Phase 1 Project, some which tie to the Age Friendly Plan and COA priorities.

Draft recommendations are currently being refined for public review, but a high-level include: 1) building awareness of and access to housing options, 2) strengthening and expanding regulatory control to maximize affordability, 3) encouraging a range of housing options, and 4) assisting homeowners and renters to remain in their homes safely.

Tamara provided information on registering for the February 28 Community Open House, registering for eNews, and links to the website and social media.

Creating a calendar of COA member and liaison related aging activities (DT Oliver)

DT shared his vision for tracking actions and wins/key events using standardized tools. He asked the Commission to review the links he provided and share feedback for areas of improvement. Lois asked about including external meetings and opportunities that relate to COA's work but are not our initiatives, e.g. NVAN.

The goal of the calendar is to have a one-stop shop for upcoming opportunities COA members may want to be a part of. Proposal was to have a demo of the tools at the next COA meeting.

How to Navigate Alexandria City Social Media for Official Events (DAAS staff)

Members are interested in learning more about the DAAS website and social media platforms. These could be good channels to promote opportunities.

Excellence in Aging Awards– May 2026 at Mark Center: A Preliminary Discussion (Barbara D'Agostino and Ana Rivas Beck)

The event is typically the second Tuesday of May. Recommendation is to get the City Manager's approval for May 12. Once approved the next step is to get the awards on City leaders' calendars. A committee needs to be formed to plan and execute the event. One near term need is to identify a location and reserve a room at the Del Pepper Center, as City Hall will be unavailable.

Vote on CHIP Mental Wellness Vision Statement by January 9th -

DT reminded Commission members to vote on the vision statement by completing the survey by January 9th: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/public-health/project/community-health-improvement-plan-2030-focus-area-backgrounds>.

Future Speakers

We discussed framing the special presentations around a specific theme instead of speakers randomly selected. The first one recommended is a focus on the many facets of caregiving as they align to the Age-Friendly Plan – legal, emotional, health, dementia, etc. Michael has asked Marshall for assistance in securing a speaker from his Board. One recommendation was to have a panel presentation. COA members had many great ideas for potential speakers and areas of expertise to consider, e.g. housing, Ombudsman, senior law attorney, etc. Michael posed the idea that perhaps rather than COA meeting special presentations that instead we look at a community-based event.

We do have a speaker lined up from the Rec Center and the ask is to have that special presentation in February.

Committee Updates

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

Their next meeting is February 9 (virtual.)

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

The Committee meets next Thursday, January 15, in-person at Goodwin House.

Economic Security and Civic Engagement – Chair, Jessica Lefevre

The Committee meets next Thursday, January 15.

Health /Dementia Friendly Committee – Chair, Barbara Huelat

The Committee met today, January 8. Barbara verbally shared the meeting minutes.

Liaison Reports

Written reports were submitted by liaisons. Additional verbal updates were provided by: St. Martins de Porres Senior Center, Partnership for A Healthy Alexandria and Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee (AHAAC).

Gaynelle reported that they have been able to relocate everyone from Ladrey by December 31, except for one person who does have an executed lease agreement. 91 of the 161 Ladrey residents went to The Alate; others went to other options in the City or moved out of state. They still have units available at The Alate.

Marshall shared the transition to the new Meals on Wheels food vendor is going well.

Meeting adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

Executive Committee Meeting: Monday, February 2, 2026 – 1:30 p.m. @ Virtual
Next Commission Meeting: Thursday, February 12, 2026 – 4:30 p.m. @ Virtual

Northern Virginia Network Meetings

Meeting Schedule / Rotation of Chairmanship	
2025- 2026	
September 16, 2025	Arlington
November 18, 2025	Loudoun
January 20, 2026	Prince William
March 17, 2026	Alexandria
April 21, 2026	Legislative Brainstorming
May 19, 2026	Legislative Platform
July 21, 2026	Fairfax

COMMISSION OFFICERS: Michael Schuster, Co-Chair
DT Oliver – Co-Chair
Ana Rivas Beck, Vice Chair
Kim Koch, Secretary