

ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING

Meeting: Thursday, February 12, 2026 4:30 PM – 6:30 PM

Location: Virtual

Members Attending Remotely:

Co-Chairs, Michael Schuster, DT Oliver; Vice Chair, Ana Rivas Beck, Secretary, Kimberly Koch, Alan Dinsmore, Barbara D'Agostino, Barbara Huelat, Canek Aguirre, Gerri Wallace, Ginny Kalish, James Bruen, Jane M. King, Jessica Lefevre, Kathleen Demik, Kim Koch, Marshall Hespe, Michele McLaughlin, Ray Biegun, Victoria Rutson, William Thomas Reeder

Members Excused:

Jim Lindsay

Members Unexcused:

None

Liaisons Present:

Gaynelle Diaz, Ladrey Senior High-Rise; Juanita Balenger, St. Martins Senior Center; Tricia Rodgers, Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria; Pamela Guerra, Senior Center @ Charles Houston; Darrell Wesley, Adult Day Services Center; Jan Macidull, Housing Affordability Advisory Committee

Guests Present:

Lois Steele, Housing Committee; Glen Harriott, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities/Patrick Henry Community Center; Sofia Iriarte; Coral Knehans; Evelyn; Janice Lee; Lisa Sun; Madibutler; iphone; 703.216.4802

Staff Members Present:

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

Call to Order Meeting called to order at 4:32 pm

Approval of Agenda as is.

Approval of Thursday, January 8, 2026 Minutes approved as is.

Alexandria Police Department Liaison Report – Sgt. Ian Torrance

No report.

Special Presentation: Glen Harriott (Regional Program Director) with Patrick Henry Recreation Center

Glen provided an overview of the programming available to older adults at Patrick Henry Recreation Center, as well as offerings of the larger Parks and Recreation ecosystem. Highlights include:

- They work closely with the Division of Aging, St. Martin de Porres, Goodwin House and also Senior Services of Alexandria when it comes to programming for active older adults.
- The mission at RPCA is to enhance the City of Alexandria by creating meaningful experiences through public spaces, cultural activities, and programming.

- There are seven different sites across the City. Each one is uniquely positioned to offer different programs that meets that community's needs.
- There is a program guide that includes all RPCA activities (produced seasonally). You can request it be mailed to you or it is available at the Rec Centers. The RPCA values the importance of creating opportunities for older adults to engage in activities of interest to them. Program registration is available online or you can register in-person.
- They do offer senior discounts of 20% off the actual price of the program, but only when you register in-person.
- There is fee assistance and they will not turn anybody away, regardless of ability to pay. The front desk staff will assist with the process of filling out the paperwork.

Executive and DAAS Reports

Ashley provided an update on issues with SNAP Implementation. Highlights include:

- There is much discussion on just how are we going to support our clients with this new work requirement that went into effect back in November 2025. The Fifth Floor Center for Economic Support, workforce development, just trying to figure out how we can make opportunities available.
- For the age group of 55 to 64, this is something new, and when they go to recertify they will have to show that they have worked or volunteered up to 20 hours a week, and 80 hours a month.
- They are working with Volunteer Alexandria to see if there's any matchmaking services, per se, that they can assist as they have the infrastructure to be able to match people with opportunities based on their skills and talents. The division is also thinking of some creative ways of how we can identify those volunteer opportunities.
- AARP is working to have informal caregiving included as a part of the work requirement.
- This same requirement is set to impact the Medicaid Expansion Program in 2027.
- There's a formula to calculate how many hours you are working, when you earn money, you then may lose eligibility for these same benefits. They are also looking into the creation of a form to verify hours.

Ashley also shared an update:

- from the V4A meeting: there are new nutrition guidelines that might impact our Meals on Wheels and Congregate Nutrition programs.
- The Alexandria Fund for Human Services is recruiting volunteers to review grant proposals. The commitment is 16 to 20 hours over the period of 6 weeks. It starts at the end of February. If you're interested in reviewing grants let Ashley know and she will make the connection to Federico.

Discussion and Action Items

Age Friendly Plan and February 24 City Council Legislative Public Meeting – Next Steps

Chris shared the presentation to City Council will be in March - either March 10th or March 24th and are working to confirm. It was originally scheduled for February 24, but that is when the City Manager will present his proposed budget to the City Council.

Michael mentioned we will have to convene the ad hoc Advocacy Committee to start talking about what things we should be proposing, or how we should be commenting on the proposed City budget. A next step would to then schedule a meeting with Morgan Routt (OMB Director.)

Michael will share the timeline and opportunities related to the City budget e.g. public comment, budget work sessions, add/delete sessions etc. Canek shared the process for the add/delete sessions related to budget amendments and made recommendations with a timeline on how the COA and its members can be involved.

Excellence in Aging Update

Ana reported the Mayor is committed to attend the event (May 12.) She also put out the call for one more volunteer for the Nomination Committee. Alan raised his hand to be a part of the Committee. Ana will take offline the question of reducing the number of references to 2.

Development and Use of COA Membership and Committee Information

DT led a discussion on a system we implemented where COA members have access to members' contact information. He and Michael shared examples of when this list could be used. Historically the list was maintained by Staff. DT proposed ownership live with himself, Ashley, Pam and Michael. Ashley reminded the members that when you email more than two COA members you need to BCC recipients.

Action: Committee chairs were asked to fact check the list and update as necessary.

Demonstration of new system for recording COA member activities

DT walked us through a proposed system to track on community-based event/activities of interest to the COA. Members can email DT events/opportunities and he will add to the sheet.

Action: The question came up about giving access to the Senior Ambassadors to this spreadsheet. Marshall began to brainstorm options and will talk with his team and the Outreach Committee on interest and feasibility.

DT also shared the tracking document for implementation of the Age-Friendly Plan. Included in this document are: domain, goals, objectives, actions and movement towards completion and changes made to the plan (6-month time frame.)

Action: create a plan of action/process document on who will have access to update/edit the document.

Future Speakers

Our next speaker will be Laurel Beedon. She is with WISE, a program that focuses on helping older women deal with financial security and caregiving issues. She is also on the Board of Directors at SSA. Michael suggested she cover these topics: caregivers/family caregivers and what their challenges are and solutions for dealing with the emotional, financial, and other challenges of being a caregiver. Laurel suggested these topics to further define/refine the presentation: building financial confidence and retirement security for caregivers of all ages or managing finances for both caregivers and those cared for. The consensus was to focus on managing finances for both caregivers and those cared for.

We do not have speakers scheduled after March. Recommendations were made and Michael asked they be sent to himself and DT for discussion and follow-up.

Committee Updates

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

The Committee met last week with Tamara Jovovic, Program Manager for affordable housing in the Office on Housing and the two consultants working on a report dealing with affordable options for older adults. They shared that before the meeting on February 28 they're going to send out a draft of the principles and goals that they have at this point, and then we'll have 30 days to comment.

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

The Committee met in January. The next meeting is virtual on March 15.

Economic Security and Civic Engagement – Chair, Jessica Lefevre

The Committee met last Thursday. The majority of that meeting was spent bringing Michael Briscoe up to speed on their work and priorities.

Health /Dementia Friendly Committee – Chair, Barbara Huelat

Barbara reported she and Lois attended the Mental Health and Wellness meeting last week, where they voted on the issues presented at our last meeting. None of those selected to carry forward were issues for older adults.

The Committee met last on January 8. The next meeting is March 12 at 3 p.m.

Liaison Reports – Please limit comments to **one minute** (during virtual meetings liaisons are encourage to give oral reports) and/or provide a written summary to agingcommission@alexandriava.gov -

Ladrey Senior High-Rise – Gaynelle Diaz

Gaynelle reported that since our last meeting everyone has been successfully relocated. They continue to make sure all of their services are transferred and that people are settling in. There was conversation on resource available onsite to assist residents with medical care. There are social workers onsite, but not medical care (e.g. clinic.)

Human Rights Commission – Tom Reeder: shared the Commission will be meeting with the Chief of Police next Tuesday He also mentioned the vacant COA positions on the **Commission on Persons with Disabilities**. Action item: identify a COA member to fill the position.

AHA – Alan Dinsmore

Alan shared that the new Executive Director has been in the role for a month and a half. He also shared they plan to be looking at a lot of opportunities that we have not been able to take really full advantage of in terms of other places to expand, and we're working with some partners and also some of the organizations in the City on how to approach that.

NVAN – Michael Schuster

Bob and others went to Richmond on Monday to meet with legislators on the NVAN agenda. He is waiting on the final report. The March 17th NVAN meeting will be hosted by the Alexandria City Commission on Aging. Michael and DT are charged with finding a speaker.

Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria – Tricia Rodgers

At the last CHIP meeting, the one on mental wellness, five focus areas were agreed upon:

- Create safer spaces for vulnerable communities
- Strengthen community connections, support systems and belonging
- Reduce access barriers for services and care
- Expand early intervention and screening for child and youth mental health
- improve crisis and serious mental health illness services

She noted none of these is age-bound, except for the early intervention and screening for children and youth.

The Landmark Van Dorn Coalition is meeting this Saturday from 10-1. It's an open house. We are partnering with, the Prevention of Blindness Society and CCNA. They are hosting an eye clinic, and so we hope to reach a different population and have a more informal conversation with people who are attending.

St. Martin Senior Center– Juanita Balenger

Juanita shared more about the exciting happenings at the Center, to include: reopening after the snow storm on February 5th, following the Winter Olympics, the Valentine's Day Party, as well as upcoming events, e.g. a Black History Month performance and Irish dance performance, both at the Lee Center.

Senior Center @ Charles Houston – Pam Guerra

Pam shared: the group went to the African American museum, are attending the Valentine's Day Party, and next week are celebrating Mardi Gras and the Chinese New Year.

Senior Services of Alexandria – Marshall Hesper

Marshall shared that SSA on Wednesday at 10 a.m. (Beatley Library) is hosting a workshop to explore Horizons Senior Education and Travel.

Alexandria Adult Day Services Center, ADSC – Darrell Wesley

Darrell shared that despite staffing challenges the team is doing a yeoman's job in getting programming, engaging participants and stuff like that. The Black History Variety Show will be on February 27, and will be hosted by Jackie McCoy and two employees of the Recreation Department.

Housing Affordability Advisory Committee, AHAAC – Jan Macidull

Jan provided an update on the Wesley Potomac Yard, applications for 89 new affordable housing units. This is right across from the Giant on East Glebe Road on Route 1.

There is an open house scheduled for February 28 at the Lee Center for the Housing 2040 plan.

Other Business

None

New Business

None

Public comments

None

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Next Commission on Aging Meetings:

Executive Committee: March 2, 2026 – 1:30 – In-Person

Commission on Aging: March 12, 2026 - 4:30 –In-Person

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

The business of the Commission on Aging is largely conducted by its committees. ALL COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. Please call the Division of Aging and Adult Services at 703.746.5999 for more information. In addition, the Commission has official liaisons with several other commissions, organizations or activities.

The City of Alexandria complies with the terms of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). An individual with a disability who wishes to request a reasonable accommodation may contact the Division of Aging and Adult Services at 703.746.5999, email DAAS@alexandriava.gov

Visit the Division of Aging and Adult Services website for Commission on Aging agendas and minutes and other aging information: www.Alexandriava.gov/aging

**The Alexandria Commission on Aging Racial Social Equity Committee
(as of June 01, 2021)**

No one should be denied the opportunity to engage fully in our community.

We encourage people of different cultures, races, nationalities, immigration status, ages, abilities, sexual orientation, gender identities, and religious affiliation in Alexandria to be informed about and have access to the range of services available in the City, and to be engaged in civic life.

We are committed to representing a diverse community that represents the rich heritage of our city.

We are committed to ensuring older persons have access: to affordable housing, transportation, health care, broadband, nutrition services and to opportunities for meaningful employment and related training.

Older adults and persons with serious medical conditions often experience various degrees of inequity, particularly in obtaining access to health care. It is essential to support older persons, family caregivers, and direct care workers since these residents face additional biases and hurdles.