

ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING

Meeting: Thursday, April 9, 2026 4:30 PM – 6:30 PM

Location: Virtual

Members Attending Remotely:

Co-Chairs Michael Schuster, DT Oliver, Secretary, Kimberly Koch, Alan Dinsmore, Barbara D'Agostino, Councilmember Canek Aguirre, Gerri Wallace, Ginny Kalish, James Bruen, Jane M. King, Jessica Lefevre, Jim Lindsay, Kathleen Demik, Marshall Hespe, Michele McLaughlin, Ray Biegun, Richard Merritt, Tricia Rodgers, Victoria Rutson, William Thomas Reeder

Members Excused:

Barbara Huelat

Members Unexcused:

Ana Rivas Beck

Liaisons Present:

Ian Torrance, Police Department; Gaynelle Diaz, Ladrey Senior High-Rise; Bob Eiffert, AHA; Juanita Balenger, St. Martins Senior Center; Tricia Rogers, Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria; Pamela Guerra, Senior Center @ Charles Houston

Guests Present:

Natalie Talis, Nora Rideg, Health Department; Toby Edelman, Center for Medicare Advocacy; Coral Knehans; Cedar Dvorin, Florina Reynoso-Ray, Hilda Naranjo, VICAP; Irv Katz

Staff Members Present:

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

Call to Order Meeting called to order at 4:30 pm

Approval of Agenda with edits.

Approval of Thursday March 12, 2026 Minutes approved as is.

Swearing In of new AOC Members – Michael

Tricia Rodgers and Richard Merritt will be sworn in at a future date.

Alexandria Police Department Liaison Report – Sgt. Ian Torrance

No report.

Special Presentation: Toby S. Edelman, Senior Policy Attorney - Center for Medicare Advocacy

Highlights include:

- Toby Edelman has been representing older people in long-term care facilities since 1977. As a Senior Policy Attorney with the Center for Medicare Advocacy since 2000, she provides training, research, policy analysis, consultation, and litigation support relating to nursing homes and other long-term care facilities.
- The Center for Medicare Advocacy is a non-profit, nonpartisan law office, and a basic focus on trying to make sure that people get the Medicare coverage they need.
- The main focus of the presentation was the 3-day inpatient hospital stay requirement for outpatient skilled care, plus some additional time spent on discharge issues and *Jimmo*.
- **BLUF:** For the 3-day inpatient hospital stay requirement patients need three midnights, at least, in the hospital, in order to qualify for Medicare coverage of a skilled nursing facility. Medicare Advantage Plans are permitted to waive that 3-day requirement, and most do, and accountable care organizations do as well. What they have seen that's interrupted this three-day stay is the issue of observation status not counting towards the three-day requirement. Observation status is not defined in the Medicare statute or regulations.
 - There was a law that was passed called the Notice of Observation Treatment and Implications for Care Eligibility Act, the Notice Act. This was enacted in 2025, and this said that patients who were in observation for 24 hours needed to get a notice. They needed to be told, with a written notice and orally, in a language they could understand, or their families need to be told. Somebody needs to be told that they are outpatients and in observation and what the consequence would be. There is no appeal process.
- She shared additional detail on the rationale behind repealing the three-day requirement, to include changes in modern day health care compared to that when the statute was first implemented.
- Related to the issue of discharges from skilled nursing facilities and hospitals:
 - From the 1987 nursing home reform law, there are comprehensive protection with only certain permissible reasons for transfer or discharge:
 - The resident doesn't need the care or services that the facility provides, the resident needs more care and services than the facility provides, the resident is a danger to himself, herself, or other people, non-payment of the bill, or the facility is closing.
 - The facilities are required to give advance written notice of the transfer discharge, and it specifies in the regulations exactly who has to sign it, what it has to say, how much time has to be done in advance.
 - There's an opportunity to appeal and request a fair hearing.
 - There's an opportunity to appeal and request a fair hearing.
 - And if somebody is being transferred or discharged the facility has to prepare them and make sure that they're going to a location that is appropriate.
 - The federal government has guidance for surveyors, the State Operations Manual, which they revised it recently. The January revision says if the person was discharged to an unsafe setting, or in a manner that puts the resident at risk then it is immediate jeopardy, and that is the highest level of noncompliance.
- Related to hospital discharge planning, they have to do timely planning if they have a patient that they believe is going to need some kind of care after the hospital, isn't going to just go home and be done with everything. The plan has to be done by appropriately qualified personnel, nurses or social workers.
- Related to the *Jimmo v. Sebelius* (D.Vt.) court settlement (Medicare coverage of maintenance care): Medicare will pay if you're expected to improve, but for maintenance care, and the settings that were covered by *Jimmo*, nationwide class action, skilled nursing facilities, home health, outpatient therapy the question is. Does this person need professional nursing or

professional therapy services? Are they medically necessary to **maintain** function or to prevent or slow a patient's decline or deterioration? If these are true, if that's what the patient needs, then Medicare will cover that care. <https://www.cms.gov/medicare/medicare-fee-for-service-payment/snfpps/downloads/jimmo-factsheet.pdf>

Discussion and Action Items

DAAS Updates – Ashley Johnson and Chris Moore

Ashley provided a reminder on the process Commissions members need to register for future meetings.

Chris shared the main focus this month has been to fill the vacant Transportation Director position. From the Adult Day Program, they are still trying to hire a Therapeutic Recreation Leader.

He also shared that SE4A Virginia is hosting the conference in September in Williamsburg.

Age Friendly Plan and March 24 City Council Legislative Public Meeting – DAAS staff –

The plan was approved at the March 24th meeting. Next steps include a press release and a letter from the Mayor to AARP. Additional detail is available in the March 30, 2026 Executive Committee Minutes.

Excellence in Aging Awards – Barbara D'Agostino and Ana Rivas Beck

Barbara provided an update. We have approximately nine nominations. The Committee meets this coming Saturday to discuss and select the winners. Ashley will share the event flyer with Commissioners and post on their website.

Recruitment for Nomination Committee for new COA Officers

Barbara is the Committee chair. The Committee does have names for each of the positions. Nominations will also be taken from the floor at the May meeting. New officers are installed in June.

Future Speakers

We are still booking speakers for June. For May we have a panel on small assisted living facilities lined up.

Committee Updates

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

No report. They meet on April 20th.

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

Marshall provided an update from their most recent meeting. He sees a great deal of opportunity for partnership across committees. His ask was if committee chairs have information they want shared at future outreach events to send that to him.

Economic Security and Civic Engagement – Chair, Jessica Lefevre

The committee met last Thursday. Jim, Alexandria Economic Development Committee and Workforce Development have formalized an MOU on the Shark Tank project. The next cohort will be marketing focused.

An interview panel is being formed to fill the 50-plus Employment and Training Specialist position.

The committee spent time on what could be recommended to the City or State related to SNAP. A focus could be on people who receive their renewal notices. Jessica requested a meeting with Michael and DT to discuss a related agenda item for the NVAN platform. Ashley confirmed that if caregiving as a responsibility can be documented it counts towards the 20 hours/week requirement.

The Northern Virginia Virtual 50 Plus Employment Expo will take place next Thursday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Health /Dementia Friendly Committee – Chair, Barbara Huelat

Nora Rideg and Natalie Talls presented on Nora's Oral Health Care work on this topic. Nora, a Master's of Public Health student at George Mason University, has taken this on as part of her class project. Ashley will share the presentation with the Commission members.

Liaison Reports

Please refer to submitted reports for additional details.

Ladrey Senior High-Rise – Gaynelle Diaz

No major updates to share. Work has begun with the architect on future design plans, with input from former residents.

Human Rights Commission – Tom Reeder

Tom shared the City has revised its webpage on the status of ICE operations in Alexandria. They have gone into more detail about what a citizen can do if they want to report something and observe something going on, when to call the standard number. There's a special number just for reporting ICE operations. There is also information on the certain circumstances when you call 911.

The Commission did submit input into the Housing 2040 proposal.

The Commission has been working with three organizations helping Afghan refugees.

At Home Alexandria – Bob Eiffert

Spring2Action is on April 22, but is open now for donations.

AARP – Jane King & Michael Schuster

Michael shared the next AARP advocacy meeting is next week. They will be talking about state legislation, mainly about what's going on now, but also maybe what we can be doing in 27. He shared he can at least start talking to some of the state agencies about whether or not AARP Virginia wants to do something on SNAP.

Jane shared AARP will be participating in the Senior Health Fair in May.

NVAN – Michael Schuster

Michael shared the NVAN legislative brainstorming meeting is April 21. The Legislative Breakfast is scheduled for October 9.

Arlington Commission on Aging – Michael Schuster

The Arlington County Commission on Aging will meet on April 20. It's an in-person meeting at the Sequoia Plaza in Arlington.

St. Martins de Porres Senior Center – Juanita Balenger

Please see submitted report for March activities. Juanita shared the next dental clinic, offered in partnership with the Fenwick Foundation, is April 29. On April 30, in partnership with the Migrant

Refugee Services Office, to host a visit with senior Afghan refugees at the Center. She also shared updates on upcoming fitness classes.

Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria – Tricia Rodgers

The Landmark Van Dorn group is going to be meeting on April the 18th from 11 to 1 at Patrick Henry Rec Center. They will decide on their focus areas at this meeting.

There is still opportunity to join the Mental Wellness Group and the Arlandria Group. Information is available on the Health Department's website.

Senior Center @ Charles Houston – Pam Guerra

Please see submitted report for March activities. The Senior Dance is on April 17 at Alexandria City High School. There is an upcoming health fair in May and a Mother's Day event on May 8.

Senior Services of Alexandria – Marshall Hesper

Marshall provided an update using the chat function.

Northern Virginia Falls Prevention Alliance, NVFPA – Marshall Hesper

Marshall provided an update using the chat function.

Housing Affordability Advisory Committee, AHAAC – Jan Macidull

No report.

Other Business

Tom took time to recognize and thank both Kathleen Demik and Ray Began as both of their terms are ending.

New Business

None

Public comments

None

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Next Commission on Aging Meetings:

Executive Committee: May 4, 2026 – 1:30 – In-person

Commission on Aging: May 14, 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.