

ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING

When: Thursday, June 11, 2026 from 4:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Location: Virtual

Members Attending Virtually:

Co-Chairs Michael Schuster, DT Oliver, Vice Chair, Ana Rivas Beck, Secretary, Kimberly Koch, Alan Dinsmore, Coral Knehans, Gerri Wallace, Jane M. King, Jessica Lefevre, Jim Lindsay, Marshall Hespe, Michele McLaughlin, Richard Merritt, Tricia Rodgers, Victoria Rutson, William Thomas Reeder

Members Excused:

Councilman Canek Aguirre, Ginny Kalish

Members Unexcused:

None

Liaisons Present:

Ian Torrance, Police Department; Bob Eiffert, AHA; Juanita Balenger, St. Martin's Senior Center; Pamela Guerra, Senior Center @ Charles Houston; Cheryl Elliott, Adult Day Services Center

Guests Present:

Lois Steele, Housing Committee; Cedar Dvorin, Hilda Naranjo, VICAP; Nora Rideg, Health Department; Lori Cooper; Brandon Hare, DCHS CES Dental Program

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 as is.

Approval of Thursday May 14, 2026 Minutes as is.

Alexandria Police Department Liaison Report – Sgt. Ian Torrance

Sgt. Torrance provided an update on the actions he took related to the scooter discussions from the last meeting. Related, on May 29th the Street Smart Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Campaign kicked off. He then opened the floor and took questions from Commission members and attendees.

He also provided an overview on the new police enforcement policy – GREAT (Geographical, Relationships, Evidence-based Strategies, Assessment, Technology.)

Special Presentation: City of Alexandria Oral Health Services presented by Brandon Hare (City's Department of Community and Human Services)

Brandon reported on the City-supported program for residents in need of oral health services.

DAAS Updates–Staff

Chris shared they recently hired their new Special Transportation Unit Supervisor, Tammy Jones.

Cheryl Elliott, a long-time employee with the, division is currently doing double duty. She's still a family services specialist, that works primarily with our assisted living clients, but she's also the acting adult day center supervisor. The adult day center supervisor resigned on Friday and they will soon be convening an interview panel.

Ashley shared an update on the Senior Farmers' Market program, e.g., income requirements, vouchers remaining, as well as the Cool Care program. There will be a pop-up farmers' market on June 24th at Goodwin House.

Discussion/Action Items

Age Friendly Plan – Update and Next Steps – DAAS staff and Co-Chairs

DT will send an update on progress made on the plan based on what he knows for the last six months, for Commission members to react to and provide edits as needed.

Chris will follow-up with the Mayor's office on sending the approved plan to AARP.

Approval of Testimony on Housing 2040 for June 2nd Planning Commission and June 13th City Council Public Meetings

Michael sent out the draft testimony, which had been approved by the Executive Committee. His testimony will focus on housing issues for older Alexandrians. The Commission officially approved the testimony as presented.

Future Speakers

Recommendations from the May meeting include Northern Virginia Families for Safe Streets and a Trualta presentation on From Surviving to Thriving, A Caregiver's Guide to Recognizing and Overcoming Burnout.

Additional recommendations include:

- Tricia asked for a future panel discussion with dental providers.

- Jessica recommended a representative from Transportation, Environmental Safety, perhaps with someone from Alexandrians for Safe Streets.
- Lois recommended presentations from representatives from Inova and Virginia Hospital Center on their senior programs.
- Michele recommended a speaker from Leading Age.
- Lois suggested a speaker from the new hospital and housing development on the West End and the plans for the senior population.
- A tour of Birmingham Green.

New COA Members and Officers

Swearing in of new Commissioners as well as officers will be rescheduled for a future time.

Committee Updates

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

Lois provided a synopsis of the topics discussed at their last meeting, e.g. Housing 2040 plan, Trilogy report. They do not have a meeting scheduled for June.

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

The Committee met in May and welcomed Coral as a new member. Their next meeting is in July. They are working on adding items to the Age-Friendly Plan calendar, working on focus groups related to oral health.

There was a discussion on forming a task force to work on the 3-day rule discharge process. Ashley is taking the lead on next steps. There was robust discussion on possible solutions to patient and caregiver education.

Economic Security and Civic Engagement – Chair, Jessica Lefevre

The Committee met last Thursday. A final decision is imminent for the 50-plus Training position. The committee discussed how family caregivers can get credit for their hours towards the SNAP and Medicare benefits eligibility. This has led to an interest in pursuing a new senior employment opportunity, caregiver.

Jim is continuing to work on Shark Tank – through the summer and on Fall cohorts.

Ashley shared they received a grant from NCOA related to food security, which ended in May. They reached 967 individuals to register for SNAP benefits.

DT shared a brief overview on the Farm Bill, which impacts SNAP and TEFAP. He is interested in learning how the COA can get involved in advocacy on the national-level.

Bob clarified the COA is responsible for advising City Council on what they should be advocating for. Michael will explore if NVAN is an option for the asked for advocacy.

The committee will explore how food co-ops function in other communities.

Health/Dementia Friendly Committee – Co-Chair, Tricia Rodgers and Ginny Kalish

The Committee is stepping back and re-assessing the committee's membership, goals and objectives, focus, priorities, etc. The Commission will be invited to participate in an information gathering session.

Liaison Reports –

In addition to submitted written reports, verbal reports were provided by:

- Juantia Ballenger (St. Martin's de Porres Senior Center)
- Pamela Guerra (Charles Houston Senior Center)
- Marshall Hespe (Senior Services of Alexandria)
- Tom Reeder (Alexandria Human Rights Commission)

Other Business

None

New Business

None

Public comments

None

Meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Next Commission on Aging Meetings:

Executive Committee: August 31, 2026 @ 1:30 p.m. (In-person)

Commission on Aging: September 10, 2026 @ 4:30 p.m. (In-person)

Northern Virginia Network Meetings

To be updated

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.

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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.