

**Alexandria Commission on Aging Minutes
March 10, 2016**

Members Present: Carol Downs, Bob Eiffert , Jane King, Mary Lee Anderson, Sharon Dantzig, Alan Dinsmore, Joan Dodaro, Cedar Dvorin, Anestacia Graham Evans, Christine Fulgencio, Elisabeth Palmer Johnson, David Kaplan, Michael Kreps, Jim Lindsay, Lois Lipson, Jan Macidull, Mary Parker, Del Pepper, Babs Waters

Members Excused: Charles Bailey

Members Unexcused: Pat Killeen

Liaisons Present: Vanessa Greene, Senior Center @ Charles Houston; Kathryn Toohey, St. Martins Senior Center; Margaret Orlando, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities; Darrell Wesley, Alexandria Adult Day Services Center; Mary Belanich, Virginia Hospital Center; Mitch Opalski, Arlington Commission on Aging; Ian Torrance, Police Department;

Staff Members Present: Terri Lynch and Debbie Ludington, Division of Aging and Adult Services; Katie Leonard, Health Dept.

Guests Present: Many participants from the Senior Center @ Charles Houston were in attendance as well as others; Jim Durham, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

Meeting called to order at 4:10.

Introductions of Commission on Aging members

Minutes for February 11, 2016 Meeting: Approved unanimously

Public Comments and Commission Discussion of Senior Programs at Charles Houston Community Center and Proposed Cuts in 2017 City Budget:

Veronica Pace opposed the cuts in programs or leadership of the Krunch Bunch, which has existed for 43 years and is a vital part of the community. Its members believe that it could be a model. Social engagement is a key to healthy aging and congregate meals are an integral part of the Older Americans Act. Boomers are known for being more intellectually engaged. The program is not just about eating, but includes cultural, art, and physical programs. The Krunch Bunch has received education on arthritis, crocheted lap quilts for donation. The group gives back and is proud of partners throughout the community. AARP, the faith community, and Burgundy Farms' intergenerational programs are an example. The Charles Houston area is a historic location where Parker Gray School stood. It's on sacred ground.

Rosa Byrd of the Krunch Bunch reported that the program participants met with Kate Garvey, Director, DCHS. She can provide \$80,000, but \$100,000 is needed. Roy Priest is reviewing the ARHA budget and is happy that the Commission is supporting continuance of the program. ARHA will be at the Council meeting on Saturday. Rosa reported that education about FAST signs of stroke (face drooping, arm weakness, speech difficulty and time) at Charles Houston alerted her to the fact that she was having a stroke.

Elisabeth noted that the Commission for Women Is in support of no cuts. Carol suggested that those from Charles Houston share their stories with the City Council. The pastor of First Agape Church, Daniel Brown, said that he has seen much over thirty years and has some concerns about whether the Commission is behind 100 percent funding for all programs. The African American population has felt pushed out. If this goes through, African Americans will be pushed out socially. We get great awards as a city. Maybe the Chamber would pay to continue the program.

Councilwoman Del Pepper reported that she and Kate Garvey met with the Krunch Bunch. Kate has said there will be two senior centers serving food. She hopes to identify the rest of the funding. Del is working toward this goal also. Jan Macidull said we could use their perspectives. Jan is chair of the housing committee and noted that we have other committees and we would like to have those attending today participate on committees. Bob explained the Commission's concerns re: three issues. See attached. Bob asked that the many Charles Houston Krunch Bunch members attend the City Council meeting and some should speak.

Alan explained that the Complete Streets program enables all to use streets and sidewalks and encourages uses beyond autos, including better signals, crosswalks that are more visible. Progress has been made in the city, but the proposed 2017 budget would slow it down. The program is fairly new, and not a lot of projects were getting done initially. The city spent \$1,500,000 in 2015 on Complete Streets projects. Many projects are done when repaving is done. Jim Durham, chair of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, said that the budget moves us away from walking and biking and ADA improvements. A budget memo has been requested. The Commission on Persons with Disabilities also opposed these cuts. It should be funded at \$1.5 million level as it was in 2015. Congregate meal programs are partially funded by the Older Americans Act. City money is needed as well. The Krunch Bunch activities would still include meals.

Commission Motions Related to the 2017 City Budget Proposals:

It was moved and seconded that the Commission would support full restoration of the Charles Houston Krunch Bunch program. Wordsmithing of testimony would be completed after the meeting. With the exception of Councilwoman Del Pepper, who abstained, all other members of the Commission who were present agreed to support the motion.

A motion to restore proposed cuts to the dental program was made and seconded. The Commission members present approved, with an abstention by Councilwoman Pepper. It was moved and seconded that the Commission advocate for restoration of budget cuts for Complete Streets. Alan noted that the advocacy position, in terms of numbers, would rely on the budget memo. All Commission members present approved, with the exception of Councilwoman Pepper, who abstained.

Police Report: Ian Torrance, who represents the Police Department, reported a problem with some Apple accounts. Customers are receiving false notices via Apple email (phishing). Email asks for name, SS#, etc. Customers need to go through Apple if they need to change their account. By opening link they may get a virus. Those whose accounts have been compromised should go through Apple at <http://www.apple.com/legal/more-resources/phishing/>

Vanessa reported to Ian that officers are needed on parts of Route 1. She said that some intersections are very dangerous. Ian told Vanessa how to lodge a complaint through Call, Click, Connect and mentioned that the code requires crosswalk adherence.

Explanation of FOIA requirements: Debbie Ludington, Terri Lynch and Carol Downs attended a training meeting for City Boards and Commissions officers and staff on February 29 and shared the information they learned. City Council obligated by the same. Del explained how difficult it is to recover FOIAble files.

LIASONS:

ADSC – Darrell Wesley distributed an updated report - see attached

Human Rights Commission – Send your concerns / questions to Michael Kreps.

Senior Center @ Charles Houston – Vanessa Greene expressed her thanks to the Commission for their support and encouraged everyone to visit the program.

Commission on Women – Elisabeth invited everyone to attend the Commission awards celebration on March 28, 6pm at the Patent Trade Center. Discount and pro-bono tickets are available. Contact Elisabeth for more information.

Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria – Mary Parker sent info to Carol Downs.

ACPD – Mary Parker distributed a written report- see attached

DAAS – Debbie Ludington reported that the Senior Taxi program has exceeded its budget due to higher program usage. Changes to the program will need to be implemented.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Housing – report previously distributed.

Communications/Outreach – Jim Lindsay asked that comments on the new city web design be sent to him.

Transportation – committee is meeting immediately after the COA meeting.

AARP / WHO – COA members will be meeting with the Mayor soon to discuss this project.

New Business

Mary Parker stated that the city should pay more attention to older adults and persons with disabilities as part of designing the new City Cultural and Artistic Plan.

Meeting adjourned: 6:15pm

FY 2017 Commission on Aging Budget Positions, March 14, 2016
Presented by Bob Eiffert, Carol Downs and Alan Dinsmore

Charles Houston Senior Center: One of the proposals in the City Manager's budget is to end the congregate meals program at the Charles Houston Senior Center and consolidate the senior congregate meals programs at the Saint Martin de Porres Senior Center in the West End. The Commission on Aging opposes this proposal. We know that City staff is discussing the continuation of some of the programs at Charles Houston, but we urge you to fully restore funding for the programs and the current staff at Charles Houston. The City Manager's proposed budget reduces the total \$180,000 senior center budget by \$100,000. We urge you to restore the \$100,000 cut to continue the current ARHA staff and programming for \$180,000 at Charles Houston.

As I'm sure you know, the Charles Houston "Krunch Bunch" has been in existence for 43 years in the City. It is a historically African American community program that dates back to the first Older Americans Act programs established in the City. In a neighborhood that is rapidly gentrifying, the Charles Houston Senior Center stands out as an important symbol of the rich heritage of the Parker Gray community. I believe you will hear personal stories from some of the program participants that will highlight its importance. The cut in City General Funds that support the program sends the wrong message to the community that has been there for so long. We urge you to fully restore the \$180,000 funding for current staff and programming at the Charles Houston Senior Center.

Dental Program: The Commission is concerned about the \$57,914 cut in funds for the Dental Services Program. This cut will eliminate **all** City financial support for individual clients who need dental services. The City will only continue to support the Northern Virginia Dental Clinic in Fairfax by providing funds to the clinic to provide 1,300 appointments for very low income City residents, but clients will have to fully fund their own care, which many can not do. In addition, funds to cover an additional 375 new appointments are also eliminated. That will increase the wait time for services, which is already over five months. Oral health is critical to the overall health of older adults. Poor oral health contributes to and exacerbates chronic health conditions such as heart disease. We believe that the \$57,914 should be restored so that very low income Alexandria adults can receive the care they need but cannot afford.

Complete Streets Program: In the few years since the Complete Streets program was created, the Commission on Aging has been pleased to see parts of our road network made safer and more accessible for those who use them, especially older residents. Many challenges and opportunities remain when we examine pedestrian safety, access to schools, parks and transit, and connectivity within and between neighborhoods. The 2013-2017 Strategic Plan on Aging clearly outlines a goal of providing a variety of mobility options, including

pedestrian-safe streets to make moving in and around the City and region possible for Alexandrians of all ages.

The Complete Streets program has funded important transportation projects to move the City along the way to this goal. In addition, the scheduled update to the bike and pedestrian master plan coming to the Council later this spring includes many recommendations envisioning Complete Streets actions and studies to make streets safer for all people who walk and bike. These recommendations include many pedestrian safety recommendations of vital importance to older residents.

We are appreciative that the City Manager has included funding in the Capital Improvement Program to continue funding Complete Streets, but we are concerned that the amount proposed is inadequate to meet existing needs. In FY2016, Complete Streets has been able to spend almost \$1.5 million on projects according to a February 17 memo from the Complete Streets Coordinator to the Transportation Commission. In FY17, the Manager has proposed just \$557,000 for Complete Streets after subtracting \$230,000 for staff salaries and benefits from the total amount recommended. The Commission on Aging is concerned that this amount will require the City to forego necessary safety and accessibility improvements.

Therefore, the Commission on Aging requests to the Council that a budget memorandum on the Complete Streets program that addresses the level of funding necessary to keep up with road resurfacing schedule for FY17, respond to citizen requests for street and sidewalk improvement, and to begin moving forward on the bike and pedestrian master plan safety improvements. With this information, we hope that Council will be able to come up with a way forward for FY17 and in the 10 year Capital Improvement Program that continues the critical and sometimes lifesaving work done by the Complete Streets program.

Alexandria Adult Day Services Center
Report to the Commission on Aging
March 2016

Spring is almost here and I know everyone is ready. The Adult Day Services Center is looking forward to the spring season as well. First, we are preparing for our annual Department of Social Services inspection which should be coming soon. We hope this year's inspection outcome will be the same as the last, perfect.

We recently had our health department inspection and of course we passed with flying colors. I was pleasantly surprised when the inspector said to me that you all do such a great job at this center. She added that she could have called and conducted the inspection via phone and we would have passed. I know she was joking but I have to admit it was good hearing it.

I would like to inform the commission that our Activity Dept. has added an outstanding new yoga instructor along with a couple of new entertainers that will absolutely wow you.

I would like to remind everyone that we facilitate a caregiver support group on the first Wednesday of every month from 4pm until 5:30pm.
If you are interested in this group please call Jennifer Sarisky, LCSW on Wednesdays only at 703.746. 5676.

As always, if know of anyone who need our services or have questions about the program, please have them give me a call at 703-746-5676.

If you would like to volunteer at the Alexandria Adult Services Center, please call the number above between the hours of 8:00am and 5:00pm.

Darrell Wesley,
Program Director, Alexandria Adult Day Services Center

COA LIAISON REPORT: ACPD MEETING MARCH 9, 2016

FROM: MARY H. PARKER, PHD, LIAISON

The Commission on Persons with Disabilities voted to oppose budget cuts in the Safe Streets Program and to recommend the Safe Streets Program should be funded at the 2015 level, \$1.5 million. The Commission will testify at the City Budget Hearing.

The Commission received a report on planning for the Potomac Yard Metro Station from Jason Kacamburas, Potomac Yard Metro Coordinator. This Metro Station is being planned as an “urban community” station, with the intent that passengers will “walk” to the Station. No parking lot or ‘Kiss and Ride’ area is planned. Cars are intended to use the on-street parallel parking on Potomac Avenue. The Commission recommended that a pull-in curb parking area be provided so that handicapped vans and other vehicles will be able to safely discharge passengers, out of the traffic flow. The Commission also discussed way-finding assistance at the station for persons with disabilities, sight/hearing, etc.) Doug Goist, Vice Chair, discussed his difficulties finding the entrance at the Braddock Street Metro with obstacles, bike racks, fences and the noise of the wide open space. Mr. Kacamburas said he would return to discuss the plans at about 30% completion, prior to submission to the Council.