



## COMMISSION ON AGING

c/o Agency on Aging, DHS

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### MEETING SUMMARY

December 15, 2014

Approved at the January 26, 2015 meeting.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Nels Andersen, Valerie Crotty, James Feaster, Gordon Hasenei, Joan McDermott, Mitchell Opalski, Patricia Sullivan, Andrea Walker, Lena Wang, Erica Wood, Laurie Young

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Lincoln Cummings\*, Barbara Favola\*, Cragg Hines\* \* Excused

**STAFF PRESENT:** Maimoona Bah-Duckenfield, Glenda Blake, Meredith Eisenhart, Erik Gabriel, Aaron Kocian, Susan Lane

I. **Call to Order:** 9:05 a.m.

II. **Presentation: Transportation Services for Older Adults, Steven Yaffe, Transit Services Manager, DES**  
Ms. Bah-Duckenfield opened with a summary of the transportation services in the Area Plan for Aging Services. Mr. Kocian gave budget figures for the transportation services. Mr. Yaffe spoke on transportation options, starting with ART, Metrobus and Metrorail, and the accommodations that make them viable for older adults and people with disabilities. Senior/disability half-fare rides on ART were up 50% from FY13 to FY14. The ENDependence Center of Northern Virginia offers travel training to people with disabilities. ART Bus schedules are in the green rectangular boxes at stops. 81 out of 351 ART-only stops feature an electronic bus finder. About one-quarter of Arlington bus stops are fully accessible. He reviewed bus stop improvement objectives and the Complete Streets project. STAR and MetroAccess offer shared-ride options for persons who cannot use regular fixed-route service due to a disability. Mr. Yaffe discussed STAR fares, aspects of using the service, and demographics of rides provided. The Super Senior Taxi program provides half-price cab vouchers for persons 70 and older. Arlington Neighborhood Villages provides transportation to its members. The Shepherd Center is a volunteer organization that offers free rides. Door-Thru-Door Assisted Transportation provides an aide to help a person prepare for a medical appointment, accompany the person to the appointment and back home. He ended with his long-term vision on transit for seniors.

III. **Minutes Approval:** Unanimously approved the November 17, 2014 meeting minutes with 2 changes – correct the meeting date at top; Section V, last bullet, HAP stands for Health and Aging Program.

IV. **Chair's Report (Joan McDermott)**

- NVAN Meeting: At the November 18 meeting, there was a presentation by Gay Hanna and Ace Everett from the National Center for Creative Aging, an organization dedicated to fostering the vital relationship between creative expression and healthy aging. Research has shown that people who are involved in creative activities have better health and are more socially active.
- Meeting with Maimoona Bah-Duckenfield: Discussed ways to expand the advocacy list.
- Other: Distributed the Financial Check-Up list from Senior Law Day. Quoted new life expectancy numbers. Listed the leading causes of death. In *The Beacon's* December edition, Ms. McDermott

**The Arlington Commission on Aging, a body of residents experienced in matters concerning older people, advises the Arlington Agency on Aging and the Arlington County Board on aging issues.**

was quoted on page 26 about Arlington's Elder Readiness Plan. Dr. Davis resigned from the CoA.

#### V. Director/Staff Report (Maimoona Bah-Duckenfield)

- Thanked the CoA for their passionate work on behalf of Arlington's older residents.
- The County is looking for ways to close a projected budget short-fall in FY16. An early retirement option was offered to qualified staff. Other steps may be necessary, too.
- At the January meeting, representatives from the Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program and Legal Services of Northern Virginia will do presentations. In February, the CoA will hear from the Congregate and Home Delivered Meals programs. These are all Area Plan services.
- Ms. Bah-Duckenfield and Ms. Eisenhart have completed six of the aging informational one-on-one meetings and have two more scheduled soon. They will report back on emerging themes.
- Ms. Eisenhart mentioned that DHS has a Secret Santa program in which donated gift cards up to \$25 are distributed to DHS's needy clients during the holidays. More information is on the website.
- Ms. Blake reported the good news that Mary Marshall, which has been open for three years, was recently licensed for two years and is full, both of which took a lot of hard work by many people.

#### VI. Committee Reports

- Budget (Mitch Opalski): Shared some of the FY16 budget preparation guidelines. Ms. McDermott and Mr. Feaster will represent the CoA at the County Manager's budget meeting.
- Legislative (Joan McDermott): At the December 8 meeting, the committee reviewed its one-on-one meetings with the members of the Virginia legislative delegation, each of whom supports the 2015 NVAN platform and will patron a bill: Sen. Ebbin – Notice of Hospital Observation status; Sen. Favola – Study of dental needs of older adults in long-term care settings; Del. Krupika – Study requiring insurance companies to cover the cost of hearing aids; Del. Lopez – Budget Amendment to expand the cap on the Livable Homes Tax Credit and to create a Livable Homes Grant Program; Del. Hope – Work with Del. Krupicka on insurance companies covering the cost of hearing aids and a bill on Medicaid Expansion; Del. Sullivan – Notice of Hospital Observation status and no excuse in-person absentee voting for all or those 65+. The Committee is discussing a trip to the General Assembly on January 27 or 28 to advocate for the NVAN 2015 Legislative Platform.
- Membership (Joan McDermott): Will meet to fill the position vacated by Dr. Davis.
- Public Information and Outreach (Gordon Hasenei): The ADSD speakers' bureau has done about double the number of presentations that they did all of last year. The Committee is editing one last slide in its PowerPoint presentation and then will send it to Ms. Bah-Duckenfield for review.
- New Media/Technology (Laurie Young): The photo of the meeting with Delegates Hope and Lopez received 875 hits. Will post the CoA photo and the Dominion Virginia Power scam press release.
- Senior Centers (Andrea Walker): The Culpepper Garden Senior Center Director, Chrylle Bluford, is retiring on December 31 and will be sorely missed. Lucy Matzner will be the Acting Director. Ms. Bluford began a collaboration effort with the residence that has increased senior center participation by 25%. The issue of limited parking needs attention.
- Strategic Planning (Joan McDermott): The next meeting will be on January 15.
- Supportive Services and Housing (Erica Wood): Mary Rouleau, Executive Director of the Alliance for Housing Solutions, will attend the committee's December 16 meeting to participate in a discussion on the Affordable Housing Study. The committee will draft comments on older residents' housing needs for the CoA to review and send to the Affordable Housing Study in the spring. They are planning a committee retreat on February 24 to refine their focus. The Assistive Technology subcommittee will meet on December 19 to look at new items purchased for the AT

suitcases and work on their PowerPoint for presentations at senior centers starting in May.

- Transportation (Jim Feaster): On December 9, County Board Chair, Jay Fissette, spoke of the county's commitment to making Arlington a good place to age in place, including transportation options. Steve Yaffe will offer another tour of transportation projects for CoA members next June. Robby Werth spoke about the new wheelchair accessible taxis and about competition from UBER and LYFT reducing calls for traditional taxi services. There was discussion of newspaper boxes and other items on sidewalks making it difficult for riders to access vehicles.

## VII. Liaison/Meetings Reports

- Alexandria Commission on Aging: No report.
- Alliance for Arlington Senior Programs: No report.
- Arlington Interfaith Council: Still need a liaison. Does not meet in December.
- Arlington Neighborhood Villages (ANV) (Patricia Sullivan): ANV membership continues to grow and services continue to expand. Since the last meeting, ANV has had 150 calls for transportation. ANV vets their drivers. They now have three people who do free home inspections for home modifications. Social activities include such varied activities as hockey, opera, tango, and bocce.
- Community Development Citizens Advisory Council (CDCAC): No Report.
- Emergency Preparedness Advisory Commission (Valerie Crotty): Ms. Crotty attended the meeting on Infectious Diseases at Virginia Hospital Center. Main takeaways: wash your hands; flu shots this year may only be 50% effective, so if you have symptoms, see your doctor.
- Housing Study: No report: (See comment by Patricia Sullivan under Announcements and Public Comment.)
- Long-Term Care Residences Commission (Nels Andersen/ Lynwood Sinnamon): Had a presentation by Dean Montgomery, Executive Director of Health Systems Agency for Northern Virginia (HSANV). Had staff reports from EMS, APS, and ADSD. Heard about the Lifespan Respite program. The LTCRC is recruiting new members and is working on its PowerPoint to merge it with the CoA's.
- Pedestrian Advisory Committee (Jim Feaster): Is raising the issue of sidewalk impediments.
- Senior Adult Council (Andrea Walker): Chair, Cynthia Miller, attended the County Manager's December 16 meeting on the FY16 budget. With the Baby Boomers aging, Senior Center registrations increased 14% from FY13 to FY14. Reported openings that will need to be filled. The New Year's Eve party will go on as scheduled, despite a last-minute need for change of venue.
- Steering Committee/Older Persons (Jim Morris): The January meeting topic is Depression, Dementia, and Delirium.
- TRIAD (Maimoona Bah-Duckenfield): An informational meeting will be planned in the new year.
- Transit Advisory Committee (Fran DeSilva): At the December 9 meeting, Bee Buerkler gave an update on Transitway construction in Crystal City Potomac Yard. The proposed 2016 Metro Budget assumes no fare increase. There is currently no project to replace the streetcar. The Accessibility Subcommittee inspected the new vehicles that will accommodate three wheelchairs.
- Vertical Village: No report.

VIII. **Old Business:** None.

IX. **New Business:** None.

## X. Announcements and Public Comment

- Patricia Sullivan: Started to look at the survey results of the Affordable Housing Study and the statistics on seniors show that the CoA will definitely need to advocate.

- Joan McDermott: Nearly half of all senior homeowners wish to age in place. Of those, nearly half will need home modifications to be able to do so.

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.