



ARLINGTON COMMISSION ON AGING

c/o Agency on Aging, DHS
2100 Washington Blvd. Arlington, VA 22204
TEL: 703-228-1700 FAX: 703-228-1174 TTY: 703-228-1788
EMAIL: arlaaa@arlingtonva.us

**Meeting Summary
February 27, 2017
Arlington Mill Senior Center**

PRESENT: Mitch Opalski, Erica Wood, Carl Brooks, Valerie Crotty, Jim Feaster, Pamela Hawkins, Gordon Hasenei, Cragg Hines, Mary Ann Johnson, Sophie Shen, Martha Villanigro-Santiago, Laurie Young

EXCUSED: Senator Barbara Favola, Lynwood Sinnamon, Patricia Sullivan

STAFF: Glenda Blake, Maimoona Bah-Duckenfield, Rachel Sparico

GUESTS: Gwendolyn Beck, Jim Morris, Cheryl Beversdorf

I. Call to Order and Welcome at 9:02 a.m.

II. Presentation on Real Estate Tax Relief Working Group – Anita Friedman, DHS Director and Caitlin Hutchinson, Assistant DHS Director, and Paul Holland, Fiscal Affairs Advisory Commission

Mr. Holland presented an overview of the [Real Estate Tax Relief](#) (RETR) program, which included the background, participation statistics and charge of the RETR [Working Group](#). The Working Group researched and determined that Arlington County allows the highest household income for the Northern Virginia region, and is the only jurisdiction that considers the household. RETR drafted a set of draft recommendations for priority, mid-term and long-term items which may include: revise application and timeline, allow for retroactive relief (up to five years), increased outreach and technical assistance, create a Citizen Advisory Group, investigate mortgage lenders' opposition to deferrals, and designate revenue from deferral repayments to support affordable housing for older adults and persons with disabilities. The group recommends an asset limit increase from \$340,000/\$540,000 to \$400,000 for exemptions and deferrals, as well as to include medical and dental fees and emergency home repairs, and to add a 75% exemption level. The group will hold public meetings with key civic organizations and relevant commissions to discuss their Program Recommendations Report.

Ms. Crotty asked about the reported income and asked about a loss of participation due to the changes in assets; there would be a net zero gain/loss because additional homes may qualify. Mr. Opalski asked about additional persons in the household; the goal is to promote intergenerational living. Currently, the income of all individuals in the home are counted towards RETR, but the recommendations will exempt \$10,000 for each additional household member. Mr. Opalski asked about outreach to individuals who are not currently participating in the program; Ms. Hutchinson shared the results of the survey may warrant additional participants in the program. Mr. Opalski asked about the use of revenue and if it should be the charge of the group. Ms. Friedman mentioned the purpose of the group was formed from the Affordable Housing Master Plan. Ms. Wood asked about the current application process; most of the applications are submitted via mail and all of the collections are coordinated by the Treasurer's office. Mr. Hines asked about the income ranges (Area Median income) and price indexed to automatically adjust annually.

III. Presentation on 55 Plus Programs and Tour – Nicholas Englund & Jessica Vasquez, Department of Parks and Recreation

Nick Englund, Center Director of Arlington Mill, shared information and program highlights of the

Arlington Mill Senior Center. Mr. Englund highlighted the diversity of a wide variety of programs at this center. He mentioned the Congregate meal program that is open to all Arlington adults age 60 and older. Ms. Vasquez discussed the importance of human connection and socialization for older adults. The Senior Centers invite adults age 55+ to participate in programs. There are different levels of annual membership: 55+, Gold Pass, Travel Pass for day trips, as well as a fee reduction. There is a need to increase attendees at the Arlington Mill Center. A brief tour of the center followed the presentation.

IV. **Approval of the January Meeting Minutes**

Minutes were approved unanimously.

V. **Chair's Report**

Mitch Opalski

- a. Chair Opalski shared that the County Board will vote on the proposed merger with the Commission on Long-Term Care Residences at their February 28th meeting.

VI. **Staff Reports**

- a. ADSD Staff report

Maimoona Bah-Duckenfield

- i. Ms. Bah-Duckenfield highlighted the Community Engagement Forum on Aging scheduled for Monday, March 20th, 2017 at 9:30am at the Arlington Central Library. The forum is scheduled from 9:30-12:30 PM, followed by lunch, then the COA meeting which will include a vote on the Area Plan budget. County Board member Mr. Christian Dorsey plans to attend and will offer opening remarks, followed by a keynote speaker from Leading Age Virginia, then breakout sessions that will focus on Social Engagement, Intergenerational experiences (DTS, public schools), Housing and Economic Security, and Policy and Legislation. Breakout session topics were selected based on feedback from previous engagement forum and attendees will have the opportunity to attend more than one breakout session. A sign-up sheet was circulated for Commissioners to identify their topics of interest for the breakout sessions. Following the forum, the COA meeting will focus on budget items from 12:30-1:30pm.
- ii. Budget: County Manager proposed his budget on Saturday, 2/25 which includes a tax-rate increase to help fund metro and public schools. County operations will remain at the current funding levels.
- iii. Ms. Blake shared plans for no cuts to current ADSD programs and mentioned DHS continues to serve tens of thousands, and help meet the support through ongoing and new partnerships with County programs as well as community groups. She also mentioned the impact of serving the immigrant population involving a general fear of accessing services and limited engagement. Delegate Patrick Hope championed a recognition of Dr. Lawrence Spont from the Virginia General Assembly. There is a great need for geriatric mental health professionals especially psychiatrists and psychologists. DMAS conducted an unannounced audit of the division's Developmental Disability services with zero findings. ADSD will request an additional 2 FTE's to implement the Medicaid Waiver redesign.
- iv. Save the Date: the 2017 Virginia Governor's [Conference on Aging](#), scheduled for May 22-23, 2017 in Roanoke, VA.

VII. **Committee Reports**

- a. **Budget** (Mitch Opalski) – The County manager released his budget on Saturday, February 25th, and the budget committee presentation is scheduled for March 10th.
- b. **Legislative** (Laurie Young) – February meeting reviewed the legislation that made it through crossover with most of the NVAN legislative items failed.
- c. **Membership** (Sophie Shen) – No report.

- d. **Public Information & Outreach** (Gordon Hasenei) – February meeting discussed the flyer for Aging Matters radio program, and updating the slides for the joint presentation. Discussed promoting Community Engagement forum through various media, including Beacon Bits.
- e. **New Media/Technology** (Laurie Young) – Ms. Young updated the COA Facebook page with pictures from the Arlington Mill tour this morning. There are currently 283 followers.
- f. **Senior Centers** (Lynwood Sinnamon) – Mr. Opalski reported for Mr. Sinnamon stating that all visits to the six senior centers have been scheduled and are open to all commissioners.
- g. **Strategic Planning** (Mitch Opalski) – No report.
- h. **Supportive Services and Housing** (Erica Wood) – the committee continues to work on a video series on home modifications related to universal design concepts.
- i. **Transportation** (Cragg Hines) – met February 21st with a featured presentation from NV Rides about their participation, membership, and trends, as well as possible expansion in Arlington County. There was a recommendation for a partnership with Arlington Neighborhood Village.

VIII. Liaison Reports

- a. **Alexandria Commission on Aging** (Mitch Opalski) – Mr. Opalski attended the February meeting which focused on mental health and older adults.
- b. **Alliance for Arlington Senior Programs** (Doug Frost) – No report.
- c. **Interchurch Community Health Initiative** (Pamela Hawkins) – No report.
- d. **Disability Advisory Commission** (Mary Ann Johnson) – No report.
- e. **Arlington Neighborhood Village** (Patricia Sullivan) – Mr. Opalski reported on behalf of Ms. Sullivan stating ANV continues to grow, adding three new board members, and recruiting new members.
- f. **Community Development Citizens Advisory Council** (Vacant) – No report.
- g. **Emergency Preparedness Advisory Commission** (Valerie Crotty) – No report.
- h. **Long-term Care Residences Commission** (Erica Wood) – No report.
- i. **Pedestrian Advisory Committee** (Jim Feaster) – met with app developers at LiveWork space in Crystal City and learned about Project Sidewalk designed to identify impediments / obstacles to pedestrian safety for persons with disabilities.
- j. **Real Estate Tax Relief Working Group** (Patricia Sullivan) – See presentation.
- k. **Senior Adult Council** (Lynwood Sinnamon) – No report.
- l. **Steering Committee/Older Persons** (Gwendolyn Beck) – Next meeting is scheduled for March 17th and will feature an update from Delegate Patrick Hope.
- m. **Transit Advisory Committee** (Hershel Kanter) – No report.
- n. **Coalition to Improve Advanced Care (CIAC)** (Joan McDermott) – Mr. Opalski presented on behalf of Ms. McDermott; National Health Care Decisions Day is April 16th, a training will be offered to health care professionals, the Interchurch Community Health Initiative (ICHI) offered a workshop to 21 attendees.

IX. Old Business

- a. The Home and Garden Expo is scheduled for April 22nd from 10am – 5pm at the Thomas Jefferson Community Center.

X. New Business

- a. Letter of Support for Coalition to Improve Advanced Care (CIAC): Mr. Opalski presented a draft letter of support for a \$50,000 funding request from the Arlington Community Foundation Nonprofit Center (group that convened the Coalition to Improve Advanced Care also known as CIAC) to the County Board: there was a recommendation to amend

Mr. Opalski's request to approve and send to the Board, the motion was denied. A further conversation will be held at the Budget committee meeting on March 10th.

XI. Announcements and Public Comment

- a. Mr. Morris mentioned the AARP documents "Why Medicare Matters", and public forum on March 22nd at the library.
- b. Ms. Beversdorf highlighted Aging Matters programs on WERA -96.7 FM since its January 12th launch and shared the schedule for upcoming programs. Aging Matters Programs are Tuesday afternoons from 2-3pm.

XII. Adjournment at 11:17 a.m.

Next Meeting: Community Engagement Forum on Monday March 20, 2017 9:30 AM, at Central Library