



ARLINGTON COMMISSION ON AGING

c/o Agency on Aging, DHS
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**Meeting Summary
January 23, 2017**

PRESENT: Mitch Opalski, Erica Wood, Carl Brooks, Valerie Crotty, Jim Feaster, Pamela Hawkins, Cragg Hines, Lynwood Sinnamon, Patricia Sullivan, Sophie Shen, Martha Villanigro-Santiago

EXCUSED: Senator Barbara Favola, Gordon Hasenei, Mary Ann Johnson, Laurie Young

STAFF: Maimoona Bah-Duckenfield, Jim Baker, Rachel Sparico

GUESTS: Gwendolyn Beck, Jim Morris, Joan McDermott, Tom Bash, Aurora Hills Senior Center Representative, Marcia Todd from Office of Senior Adult Programs

I. Call to Order and Welcome at 9:06 a.m.

II. Commission discussion and vote on the Merge of the Long term Care Residences Commission

Chair Opalski shared an introduction of the Commission on Long-Term Care Residences (CLTCR) and Ms. Wood provided a brief history. Chair Opalski shared some of the challenges the CLTCR face, particularly with recruitment and retention of members. Chair Opalski referenced the handouts that outline the proposal. Ms. Bah-Duckenfield shared remarks to support this merger, committed to dedicating staff support, and maintain the staff liaison role to long-term care communities. Mr. Brooks asked about funding, both CLTCR and Commission on Aging (COA) consist of volunteers appointed by the County Board and do not receive funding. Ms. Wood mentioned the challenge of a lack of authority in long-term care facilities, as well as the significant amount of time and responsibility required in serving in this role. There was discussion about a holistic approach to home and community based services, and long-term care residences and supporting both equally. Chair Opalski mentioned areas for deeper discussion:

- Mission and Activities (Roles and Responsibilities) – there was a review of proposed activities, and a recommendation to encourage a scale down of their mission goals and objectives. Ms. Sullivan asked about the role of Ombudsman versus liaisons; liaisons would have the intimate knowledge of County resources and focus on one community, whereas Ombudsman visit various communities and has a legal and investigative role. Mr. Sinnamon asked about the role of the [Ombudsman](#) and Ms. Bah-Duckenfield mentioned continued support through presentations and reporting to the newly formed committee chair.
- Charter – the CLTCR would like to dissolve the current charter, while encouraging the newly formed committee to adopt portions.
- Consideration to expand the current size of this Commission – ask the COA to amend bylaws to add two new members. Mr. Sinnamon mentioned the difference between Standing and Special committees, and this newly formed group would be a Special committee. Mr. Feaster mentioned a designated slot would require an application for this position; Chair Opalski mentioned the committee could recommend an applicant for the position. Ms. Crotty requested commitment from the current Commission in applying for COA membership. Chair Opalski mentioned similarities to the Elected

Official position, the person who serves in this capacity also serves on the Commission. Ms. Wood mentioned the important role of the Membership committee.

1. **Motion #1: Agree to merge the LTCR with the COA in the form of a new committee to be called LTC residences committee. Seconded and passed unanimously. (Mr. Sinnamon mentioned recommending an alternative name).**
2. **Motion #2: As part of the merger proposal, that the new committee does not require an independent charter. Seconded and passed unanimously.**
3. **Motion #3: Recommend to the County Board that COA will expand its allotted membership from up to 15 to up to 17 members effective immediately to accommodate this merger proposal. Seconded and passed unanimously.**

Mr. Hines asked about amending all documents that mention CLTCR to amend to “Long-Term Care Residences committee”. Seconded and passed unanimously.

Chair Opalski thanked the Commission for the lively discussion and commitment to all older adults in Arlington. Ms. Bah-Duckenfield thanked the Commission for the continued support of the group and their efforts.

III. Approval of the December Meeting Minutes

Minutes were approved unanimously.

IV. Chair’s Report

Mitch Opalski

- a. Chair Opalski shared Mr. Hines’ term was renewed for a second three-year term.
- b. Ms. Shen agreed to chair the Membership committee.
- c. Chair Opalski congratulated Ms. Bah-Duckenfield on her role on the inaugural program of [Aging Matters](#), 96.7. Cheryl Beversdorf, who facilitates the radio program, will attend the February COA meeting.
- d. Committee and Liaison reports will be condensed because of the length of time dedicated to discuss the merger and real estate tax relief working group.

V. 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 will last from 9:30-12:00 PM, followed by lunch, then the COA meeting which will include a vote on the Area Plan budget. The format will include a keynote speaker and breakout sessions.
 - ii. Save the Date: the 2017 Virginia Governor’s [Conference on Aging](#), scheduled for May 22-23, 2017 in Roanoke, VA.
 - iii. Ms. Bah-Duckenfield shared a detailed AAA demographics report from the previous quarter. Similar updates will be provided twice a year.

VI. Committee Reports

- a. **Budget** (Mitch Opalski) – The Budget committee presentation will be scheduled in the next few weeks.
- b. **Legislative** (Laurie Young) – No report
- c. **Membership** (Vacant) – No report.
- d. **Public Information & Outreach** (Gordon Hasenei) – No report.

- e. **New Media/Technology** (Laurie Young) – No report.
- f. **Senior Centers** (Lynwood Sinnamon) – the updated Senior Center mission statement includes a focus on Senior Center, especially those with Congregate Nutrition program, and more frail older persons. Mr. Sinnamon and Jennifer Collins are updating questions for Senior Center site visits. The 2nd Thursday of each month, beginning Feb. 9th will begin visits. Representatives from the Senior Adult Council are visiting the COA today for membership.
- g. **Strategic Planning** (Mitch Opalski) – No report.
- h. **Supportive Services and Housing** (Erica Wood) – the committee is scheduled to meet next week and has a draft letter to AIM for an upcoming video series on home modifications related to universal design concepts.
- i. **Transportation** (Cragg Hines) – next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 21st to learn about NV Rides about their participation, membership, and trends.

EXERCISE BREAK

VII. Liaison Reports

- a. **Alexandria Commission on Aging** (Mitch Opalski) – Linc Cummings attended the meeting and reports Emergency Preparedness was the main topic. They have a volunteer program to assist in emergencies.
- 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) – No report.
- f. **Community Development Citizens Advisory Council** (Vacant) – No report.
- g. **Emergency Preparedness Advisory Commission** (Valerie Crotty) – Ms. Crotty provided Ready Virginia handouts and Disaster Preparedness for Seniors. JBG's new building (Rosslyn) offered tours of 11 new accessible units.
- h. **Long-term Care Residences Commission** (Erica Wood) – See above.
- i. **Pedestrian Advisory Committee** (Jim Feaster) – No report.
- j. **Real Estate Tax Relief Working Group** (Patricia Sullivan) – Ms. Sullivan shared the history of this group appointed by the County Board to review the Real Estate Tax Relief (RETR) program following recommendations by the Affordable Housing Master Plan. The [RETR Working Group](#) continues to learn about the program and discuss topics such as: deferments; reverse mortgages; outreach; impact on revenue; and case studies. Commissioners Opalski, Villanigro-Santiago, Brooks, and community member Hershel Kanter met to discuss and make recommendations to the Working group. One of the major discussion in the working group has been "Who should we support in this program"? Some members of the group feel homeowners should not receive this service if they live in million dollar homes. The working group is reviewing the asset limits for the program, and comparing to surrounding jurisdictions, and considering the role of liabilities. Ms. Sullivan mentioned the consensus of the working group is to permit liabilities. The working group is also exploring the role of different household members, as well as allowing a \$10,000 exemption for additional member of the household. Concerning deferments vs. exemptions, Arlington does not charge interest on deferments, and the group did not discuss the interest issue, but some interest should be applied to the deferment. There is consideration for large, unexpected fees, such as condo fees. Finally, there is on-going discussion about where the program should be located, DHS or the Treasurer's office. The group feels access should occur from either department, with the final processing and determination by the tax office (which will be allotted \$25,000 per year from the state).

She reports no staff would be added to the Commissioner of Revenue. Reverse mortgage does not allow participation in RETR deferral program. Mr. Feaster asked about the special assessments from Condominiums, which may be separate from RETR, and could result in a lien on the property and an inability to sell.

- k. **Senior Adult Council** (Lynwood Sinnamon) – No report.
- l. **Steering Committee/Older Persons** (Gwendolyn Beck) – No report.
- m. **Transit Advisory Committee** (Hershel Kanter) – No report.
- n. **Coalition to Improve Advanced Care (CIAC)** (Joan McDermott) – No report.

VIII. Old Business

- a. Culpepper Garden Senior Center closed in December 2016.
- b. Lubber Run will have a public comment session on February 8th.
- c. AARP updated Medicare brochures. Handout to “Fight to keep Medicare strong”.
- d. April 22nd Home and Garden Expo.

IX. New Business

X. Announcements and Public Comment

XI. Adjournment

Next Meeting: Monday, February 27, 2017 at DHS