



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
Location: Woodland Hill
May 15, 2017

PRESENT: Mitch Opalski, Erica Wood, Valerie Crotty, Jim Feaster, Pamela Hawkins, Gordon Hasenei, Cynthia Schneider, Sophie Shen, Lynwood Sinnamon, Martha Villanigro-Santiago, Martha Wilson, Laurie Young, Carl Brooks

STAFF: Maimoona Bah-Duckenfield, Rachel Sparico, Gelareh Bassirey

EXCUSED: Senator Barbara Favola, Cragg Hines, Mary Ann Johnson, Patty Sullivan

GUESTS: Bonnie O'Leary, Angela Chadbourne, Jennifer Collins, Cindy Miller, Jim Morris, Barnes Lawson, Gwendolyn Beck

I. Call to Order and Welcome at 9:07 a.m.

II. Approval of the April Meeting Minutes

Minutes were approved unanimously with amendment to add Laurie Young.

III. Chair's Report

Mitch Opalski

- a. COA Transition of Leadership – Chair Opalski would like to schedule meetings to support a smooth succession plan for new officers as both he and Vice Chair, and a few Commissioners are completing their first term. Chair Opalski plans to follow up about renewal of terms.
- b. Legislative calendar – Chair Opalski thanked Commissioner Young for her leadership and efforts to be more proactive surrounding legislative advocacy and the County budget.

IV. Staff Reports

a. ADSD Staff report

Maimoona Bah-Duckenfield

- i. Ms. Bah-Duckenfield welcomed the Commission to Woodland Hill, an affordable housing community for older adults.
- ii. Budget: Federal: Ms. Bah-Duckenfield provided the n4a handout detailing the 2017/2018 Health and Human Services Federal Allocations. There is national concern for federal funding for the VICAP (Virginia Insurance Counseling Assistance Program) known nationally as SHIP (State Health Insurance Program) that provides Medicare Counseling. Arlington VICAP Counselors will present at a future COA meeting. Ms. Young inquired about a sample advocacy letter and asked individuals' share with their elected officials as a concerned citizen. Local: The County FY18 budget was approved with a 1.5% tax increase. ART / STAR is expected to increase. ADSD was allocated the requested 2 FTE's. Ms. Bah-Duckenfield thanked the Commission for their letter of support and reported there were no reductions in staffing for DHS.
- iii. Outreach – Ms. Bah-Duckenfield thanked Commissioners for their promotion of Digital Destiny, an interactive, live stream event that focused on How Technology Can Help Older Arlingtonians Age Independently. May is Older Americans month, and the AAA Outreach team has reached more than 600 individuals, including special events, senior residences, non-profit partners, and faith communities. Law/Advocacy Day occurred on May 11th at Arlington Mill with 45 attendees and featured keynote speakers Mr. Jay Fisette and Delegate Rip Sullivan. Upcoming Events: Multigenerational event at Gunston Mill on May 23rd from 5-8pm; Aging

Champions Volunteer Recognition, and a Summer Series for Older Adults in partnership with Libraries at Aurora Hills Library on Wednesday afternoons at 3pm, starting on June 28th.

- iv. **Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP)** – AAA Staff Gelareh Bassirey was trained in CDSMP in partnership with a resident of the Carlin and the training will be implemented in the community in the coming weeks.

V. Committee Reports

- a. **Budget** (Mitch Opalski) – see ADSD staff report.
- b. **Legislative** (Laurie Young) – Commissioner Young recognized the membership of her committee and invited the full Commission to attend and participate in the Northern Virginia Aging Network (NVAN). Commissioner Young highlighted the legislative and budgetary items for the 2018 General Assembly session: Direct DARS to conduct a study on Caregivers; Adopt Falls Prevention week; Expand the medical conditions for which Medicinal Marijuana is approved; and budgetary items: staffing ratios for long-term care nursing homes; create access to Peer Place for No Wrong Door; and expand Ombudsman program by 10%.
- c. **Long Term Care Residences** (Cyndy Schneider) – Commissioner Schneider mentioned the committee met at Culpepper Garden and heard a presentation from staff as well as the chair of the Family Council. Arlington County subsidizes 30 Assisted living beds in the community. Culpepper Garden is expected to undergo major renovations later this year. A committee member is updating the registrar with the most updated information for voting.
- d. **Membership** (Sophie Shen) – No report.
- e. **Public Information & Outreach** (Gordon Hasenei) – met last week to update the PowerPoint presentation, the Aging Matters flyer to include rebroadcasts, and the Speaker's Bureau flyer.
- f. **New Media/Technology** (Laurie Young) – Commissioner Young posted the recent Outreach events to highlight the Commission's work and mentioned more people are following the COA Facebook page.
- g. **Senior Centers** (Lynwood Sinnamon) – Commissioner Sinnamon mentioned the committee met with the Lee Senior Center and highlighted some of their arts programs. Meetings at Aurora Hills and renovations at Lubber Run will be the focus in the future. There is discussion about rebranding "55+" and "Senior Centers".
- h. **Strategic Planning** (Mitch Opalski) – Chair Opalski shared the Commission is waiting to hear the outcome of Christian Dorsey's discussion with County Manager Mark Schwartz regarding joining the AARP/WHO Age Friendly Community Network.
- i. **Supportive Services and Housing** (Erica Wood) – Vice-Chair Wood shared highlights from the previous meeting around Accessory Dwellings, universal design, and the video for home modifications. Commissioner Sinnamon mentioned the importance of no step entries to businesses.
- j. **Transportation** (Cragg Hines) – Senior Centric tour is being scheduled for June. More details TBA.

VI. Liaison Reports

- a. **Alexandria Commission on Aging** (Mitch Opalski) – Alexandria is open and interested in partnering with this Commission especially around diversity.
- b. **Accessory Dwelling** (Martha Villanigro-Santiago) – Commissioner Villanigro-Santiago provided updates from this weekend's engagement forum to discuss the recommendations of the working group. The County Board will review the final adopted recommendations in October.
- c. **Alliance for Arlington Senior Programs** (Doug Frost) – No report.

- d. **Arlington Neighborhood Village** (Patricia Sullivan) – Ms. Bah-Duckenfield reports on behalf of Ms. Sullivan regarding drivers' insurance policies facing all Villages. In the process of modifying policies to cover Uber and Lyft drivers, insurance companies have changed their policies so that drivers who are using a private vehicle to provide transportation are no longer covered. A Village in the Village to Village network had its first driver accident where the volunteer driver was not covered. Carol Paquette, through the Village the Village Network, is working on the issue. AARP and the National Conference of State Legislatures is also starting to pay attention to this critical issue.
- e. **Commonwealth Council on Aging** (Erica Wood) – met in April and discussed reverse mortgages, Best Practice Awards including Alexandria Groceries to Go, the Legislative Platform for 2018, hunger and nutrition for older adults including oral health, and the Governor's Conference on Aging later this month.
- f. **Interchurch Community Health Initiative** (Pamela Hawkins) – No report.
- g. **Disability Advisory Commission** (Mary Ann Johnson) – No report.
- h. **Community Development Citizens Advisory Council** (Vacant) – No report.
- i. **Emergency Preparedness Advisory Commission** (Valerie Crotty) – OEM has been very active in outreach; Commissioner Crotty suggested featuring emergency preparedness for older adults on the OEM website, in addition to Aging and Disability services webpage.
- j. **Pedestrian Advisory Committee** (Jim Feaster) – Commissioner Feaster shared this committee reports to the County Manager, not directly to the county board, like many other advisory groups. The most recent meeting featured a speaker from Arlington County Police Department.
- k. **Real Estate Tax Relief Working Group** (Patricia Sullivan) – No report.
- l. **Senior Adult Council** (Lynwood Sinnamon) – 55+ Fitness Day had more than 100 people, and the Annual Leadership Council on June 9th includes the creation of a Fran DeSilva Award. The Lubber Run work session information is posted on the County Parks website; until the final design is adopted, comments about the Senior Center are limited. Commissioner Sinnamon mentioned the MOU around finances and fundraising will go to the County Board for review in the next few weeks.
- m. **Steering Committee/Older Persons** (Gwendolyn Beck) – next meeting is Friday, May 19th at 10am focusing on Falls Prevention.
- n. **Transit Advisory Committee** (Hershel Kanter) – No report.
- o. **Coalition to Improve Advanced Care (CIAC)** (Joan McDermott) – No report.

VII. Old Business

VIII. New Business

- a. Mr. Barnes Lawson, an attorney, reports he does land use and said a few years ago, the County reduced coverage (the amount of the lot a homeowner can build and have a driveway). As people try to add on to their home, they must file for variance. According to Mr. Lawson, the County has great hostility towards variances. He reports the requests have been denied and recently he has not been able to get them approved. New Board of Zoning Appeals' members have gone along with the staff. Mr. Lawson desires this Commission to help reduce the County's restrictions on variance. Chair Opalski mentioned the large scale homes that are being built; coverage allowed McMansions but not flexibility on the variance. Mr. Lawson commented that raise and rebuilds are 2.5 – 3 stories and reports the Board did not give any flexibility to existing homes. He referenced a Supreme Court case on reasonable land use, which was legislatively overturned. Mr. Lawson's next steps are visiting with local Commissions, then retrieve letters from elected officials. He already has one from Delegate Patrick Hope. Commissioner Feaster reports the original County restriction was much stricter but the Board adopted a less restrictive

option, and suggested a change that would only impact those of a certain age or height limit. Chair Opalski deferred the issue to the Supportive Services and Housing Committee.

- b. Commission Crotty shared her recent experience and concern she addressed with handicap accessible parking in Courthouse. While this issue was resolved quickly, Ms. Crotty suggested Commissioners conduct monthly visits to County Board meetings to raise awareness about such issues and other relevant topics. Ms. Bah-Duckenfield made the recommendation to invite appropriate staff to CoA meetings to discuss accessibility issues to raise awareness and build partnerships.

IX. Announcements and Public Comment

- a. Mr. Morris mentioned the AARP Academy on June 17th at the Alexandria Lee Center on Jefferson St.
- b. May is accelerate Brain Cancer cure treatment month.

X. Adjournment at 11:08 a.m.

Next Meeting: Department of Human Services (DHS)
Monday, June 19th 2017 at 9:00 AM