



COMMISSION ON AGING

c/o Agency on Aging, DHS

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Commission on Aging Meeting Summary Monday, November 17, 2025

9:00 am - 11:00 am

LOCATION: PathForward, 2020a 14th Street N, Arlington, VA, 22201 and Hybrid meeting via Microsoft Teams

PRESENT (In- Person): Chair William Way, Vice-Chair Kathleen Cameron, County Board Member J.D. Spain, Commissioner Michael Bouchard, Commissioner Kate Chutuape, Commissioner Mollie Gelburd, Commissioner Karen Gorman, Commissioner Kristen Johnson, Commissioner Peggy Jones, Commissioner Audrey Kremer, Commissioner Charlie Sabatino, Commissioner Kasia Shaw, Commissioner Roland Watkins

ABSENT: None

EXCUSED: Delegate Adele McClure, Commissioner Catalina Calachan; Commissioner Carole Lieber

STAFF: Dustin Manhart, Rachel Coates, Maimoona Bah, Michelle Thomas, Claudia DeLoatch, Tené Young, Haja Sesay, Lajoya Banks, Jennifer Collins,

GUESTS: Claire Jacobsen, Kathleen Kramer, Victoria Dale, Jim Morris, Joan McDermott, Barbara Phillip, Erica Wood, Michael Schuster, Matthew Margulies, Cheryl Beversdorf, Linc Cummings, Wendy Zenker, Marta Hill-Gray, Danielle Arigoni, Jessica Vasquez, Bonnie O' Leary

THE RECORDING CAN BE ACCESSED VIA: [Arlington County Government: YouTube](#)

I. Call to Order/ Welcome

Chair Way called the meeting to order at 9:07 am.

II. Public Comment

- Arlington County Board Member and Commission on Aging Liaison J.D. Spain:
 - County Board Member Spain highlighted his role as liaison to 17 of the County's Commissions and Advisory groups and expressed appreciation to the Commission on Aging, and PathForward for their outstanding work and for hosting the meeting. Mr. Spain thanked all the Commissioners and working committees for their updates and specifically acknowledged Commissioner Watkins for efforts in educating the community on fraud prevention. He also reported receiving positive feedback from the Arlington older adult community at large regarding these initiatives.

- Mr. Spain further shared that Commissioner Gorman joined the COA in January 2025 and was his first appointment as a County Board Member. He noted his appreciation for continued collaboration and engagement.
- Alice Hogan, Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance:
 - Ms. Hogan expressed gratitude for the impactful work being done in Arlington to support vulnerable populations and commended the dedication of professionals addressing critical needs in the community.
 - Mrs. Hogan further suggested exploring affordable assisted living and alternative housing models.
 - She proposed forming a smaller working group to assess current and future housing needs for older adults; identify available resources and funding gaps; research best practices and models from other communities; and emphasized urgency due to growing population needs and limited infrastructure and funding.
- **Presentation:** PathForward Overview and Highlights of Subsidized Housing Programs - Ayana Bellamy-Bowles, VP of Housing Programs
 - Rising Shelter Demand Among Older Adults: Nearly 50% of shelter residents are age 55+, with shelters operating beyond capacity during hypothermia season (100+ individuals nightly, many with high medical needs).
 - Shelter & Seasonal Capacity:
 - Year-round: 55 beds at PathForward (incl. 5 medical respite) + 42 beds at RPC Shelter.
 - Seasonal hypothermia expansion: 25 extra spaces at PathForward + 16 at RPC.
 - Specialized Housing Programs:
 - SNOFO Program (HUD): Transitional housing and rapid rehousing via master lease/sublease model for vulnerable populations, including seniors.
 - Rapid Rehousing (RRH): Up to 24 months rental assistance, case management 1–2 times/month, supports transition to other subsidies.
 - Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH): Housing + wraparound services for chronically homeless individuals with disabilities; no time limit, serving 100+ participants.
 - Senior-Focused Solutions: Partnership with Aging & Disability Services to provide in-home supports (Meals on Wheels, nurse aides, transportation) and safe interim housing while arranging long-term care (nursing homes, assisted living).
 - Program Challenges & Trends:
 - HUD considering 30% cap on PSH, shifting focus to transitional/rapid rehousing, potential risk for long-term stability.
 - Growing number of clients aging within programs, requiring increased monitoring for cognitive decline.
 - On-Site Support & Engagement: Dedicated office space and Life Skills Coaches (evenings/weekends) to combat isolation through social activities and communal spaces; services available at Cyber House, Fisher House, and Arlington Mill (new wing with 8 studios).
 - Accessibility & Collaboration: Funding for ADA modifications (grab bars, ramps); strong partnerships with landlords for rapid accommodations; goal to

visit shelters and housing sites by year-end to assess needs and strengthen support.

III. Approval of the October 2025 Meeting Minutes

Motion by Chair Way, seconded by Commissioner Watkins. Minutes approved unanimously.

IV. Staff Reports

a. Community Supports & Coordination Bureau, Rachel Coates, Community Supports & Coordination Bureau Director

- Ms. Coates expressed appreciation to Commissioner Shaw and PathForward for hosting and ongoing collaborations to support the growing numbers of older adults who are unhoused and those facing evictions. She also noted the increase in utility cutoff notices and requests for financial assistance to prevent evictions. Because the need is so great, Arlington's Emergency Financial Assistance funds through DHS are often depleted within the first few days of each month. There is a need for continued collaboration with community partners to address urgent needs, highlighting the growing demand for support.
- Staffing Updates: two current vacancies in the Community Supports and Coordination Bureau: Adult Protective Services (APS) and Adult Services (AS). APS continues to see an increase in financial exploitation cases, reinforcing the importance of fraud prevention outreach. APS dashboard available on the state website; team may present at a future meeting to review investigation trends and outcomes.
- Impact of federal shutdown: Arlington's Agency on Aging, housed within local government, was able to maintain services during the recent federal shutdown, unlike some counterparts across the state who faced layoffs and service interruptions. Monitoring impacts closely as the continuing resolution extends only until January. Evaluating programs and budgets to maximize resources for vulnerable populations. AAA Director will provide additional details on proactive measures taken.
- Technology and Meeting Updates: County Attorney's Office approved the use of AI transcription tools (e.g., Otter) during public meetings; these tools must be disabled during closed sessions. Appreciation extended to Claudia for consistently providing accurate meeting minutes.
- State-level updates: Auxiliary Grant Rate Increase: Effective January 1, 2026. The statewide rate: \$2,130/month and the rate for Northern Virginia will be: \$2,418/month. Personal needs allowance remains at \$87/month.

b. Arlington Agency on Aging (AAA), Dustin Manhart, Director

- Acknowledgement & Partnerships: Expressed appreciation to Path Forward for hosting and supporting ongoing collaboration. Highlighted the county's continued commitment to assisting residents through emergency food programs.
- Food assistance initiatives: Purchased additional bulk shelf-stable meals for distribution at adult day care centers and 60+ cafés. The County allocated an additional \$350,000 to support food assistance through AFAC, reinforcing a strong partnership alongside Meals on Wheels of Arlington.

- Community Engagement Forum: Planning the 2026 Community Engagement Forum scheduled for March, with a focus on transportation. Previous forums addressed: Safe at Home (2025); Livable Communities & Age-Friendly Arlington Five-Year Plan (2024). Call for volunteers to assist with planning; details will be shared via follow-up email. Expressed appreciation to Commissioners Calachan and Jones of the Transportation Committee for assisting with the planning process.
- VICAP Program Highlights: Recognized VICAP team and volunteers for their efforts during Medicare/Medicaid open enrollment (ongoing through December). Supported 7 events to date, with an 8th event scheduled at Culpepper Garden, including a fraud prevention presentation. Served over 100 residents this year. Special acknowledgment to Michelle Thomas, VICAP Program Coordinator, and all volunteers involved.
- Staffing Updates: New Hire: A Human Services Specialist recently onboarded with the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) team earlier this month. Internship Program: Welcomed a second social work intern today, introduced during the meeting with staff members Ms. Bah and Ms. Sesay. Many interns transition into permanent roles; one former intern recently replaced a temporary staff member who retired last month.
- Meals on Wheels Partnership: Later this week, meeting with Meals on Wheels of America (headquartered in Arlington) in collaboration with Meals on Wheels of Arlington. Goal: Strengthen relationships and support local Meals on Wheels initiatives.

c. Aging & Disability Service Division (ADSD), Maimoona Bah, Aging and Disability Services Division Director

- Monitoring federal policy impact: Closely tracking changes in the federal landscape and their impact on vulnerable populations. SNAP benefits have been restored, which is a positive development; however, concerns and uncertainty remain among at-risk communities. Community-based services, including the Community Supports and Coordination and Developmental Disability Services Bureaus, are working diligently to support those most affected.
- Recruitment and workforce development: Actively recruiting social work interns through partnerships with George Mason University, VCU, and Liberty University. Internship program provides students with hands-on experience in aging services and competency-building through learning contracts. Historically, approximately 30% of interns transition into permanent roles, strengthening the pipeline for future social workers.
- Care coordination with VHC: Committed to enhancing collaborative efforts with Virginia Hospital Center (VHC) to address growing complexities in care coordination. Internal committee of expert staff formed to develop a strategic plan for stronger partnerships with VHC. Follow-up meeting scheduled with VHC leadership to advance these initiatives.

V. Chair's Report & Executive Committee: Chair Way

- The COA is actively collaborating with other commissions, such as the Disability Advisory Commission. We shared our Age-Friendly Plan and engaged in a productive discussion about its key elements and areas that we can collaborate.
- Gratitude was expressed to Kasia and PathForward for hosting today's meeting.
- Legislative Outreach and Advocacy: COA collaborates with the Northern Virginia Aging Network (NVAN) to advance aging-related priorities.
 - NVAN has been actively meeting with legislators over the past 2–3 weeks, primarily via Zoom, in preparation for:
 - The upcoming legislative session in January.
 - The Governor's budget release in December.
 - Arlington COA is responsible for engaging with Arlington legislators:
 - Meetings held with Delegate Patrick Hope and Senator Barbara Favola. Scheduled meeting today with Delegate Adele McClure. Outreach to Delegate Alfonso Lopez is in progress.
 - Legislative Platform: NVAN's platform includes seven priority items, three legislative initiatives, four budget proposals. Each item is critical to supporting older adults and strengthening aging services across the region.

VI. Committee & Work Group Updates

a.) Aging Equity & Engagement: Commissioner Watkins

- Fraud and Scam prevention initiatives: Conducted three webinars in collaboration with Joe Thomas at VICAP on fraud and scam awareness.
 - Planning a 4th webinar in December in partnership with Kasia and Path Forward, featuring a presentation by the Arlington Police Department.
 - Goal: Complete four fraud/scam prevention presentations by year-end.
- Community Collaboration: Working with Arlington Community Foundation's LGBTQ+ group on a proposed panel:
 - Topic: *Aging with Pride – Building Connection, Combating Loneliness, and Confronting Ageism in Arlington's LGBTQ+ Community.*
 - Previous panels by the Foundation have addressed mental health and Arlington's history.
 - Proposal will be reviewed by their committee in January; initial feedback is positive.
- Archiving Fraud Prevention Resources: Collaborating with 55+ and VICAP to create an accessible archive of fraud and scam prevention materials.
 - Existing resources include VICAP archives and 55+ YouTube recordings of past events.
 - Goal: Develop a centralized hub on the Arlington County website linking all fraud/scam prevention content.
 - Working with Jessica (55+ representative) and Michelle to implement this initiative in the coming year.
- Committee Engagement: Recent review shows approximately 32 active participants in the fraud/scam prevention group: including 6 Commission members and numerous community volunteers.

b.) Health & Wellness: Commissioner Shaw & Commissioner Chutuape

- Briefly reviewed two goals:
 - Goal: Streamline the hospital discharge process to ensure a smoother transition for patients.
 - Goal: Address the issue of unaffordable dental care and improve access to affordable options.

c.) Housing & Supportive Services: Commissioner Kremer

- A local church is undergoing renovations to include affordable housing units for older adults.
 - The commission has been asked to conduct research to support this project. Mr. Manhart and Mrs. Coates have provided most of the requested information.
 - Additional details are needed regarding parking availability, which I am currently working to obtain.
 - The church wants to know how many parking spaces similar affordable housing projects, such as Culpepper, allocate due to neighborhood concerns about street parking.
 - Culpepper reportedly has sufficient parking, as there are typically available spaces.
- Began engaging with civic associations to discuss home safety as part of outreach efforts.
 - Received feedback that civic associations may not be the most suitable venues for this initiative.
 - Exploring alternative locations, such as libraries or other spaces that cater to adults aged 55 and older.

d.) LTC Residences: Commissioner Sabatino

- Commissioner Sabatino met with state representatives last week and had a productive discussion on strategies to increase transparency in nursing home ownership and operations.
- LTC Residences have several follow-up actions planned. Some initiatives may require long-term legislative changes.
- Engaged with leadership from a locally owned assisted living organization operating three homes: Locations include Fairfax, West Falls Church, and a new facility in Arlington on Yorktown Blvd.
- Commissioner Sabatino visited an Arlington home and met with leadership.
 - This facility is the first in Northern Virginia to adopt the small household model for older and disabled persons.
 - Wish to collaborate to increase visibility for this innovative model.
 - Explore hosting an open house to showcase the facility.
 - Support their efforts to gain approval for a second Arlington location.
 - Increase transparency in commission activities and decision-making.
- Commissioner Sabatino and Chair Way met with an advisory board from other counties to explore partnerships for future collaborations.

e.) Transportation: Commissioner Jones

- The Transportation Committee visited 4 of the 5 independent living residences in Arlington County: Hunters Park, Woodland Hill, Culpepper Garden, and the Carlin.
- The remaining location is Carriage House; we are working to establish a contact to schedule a visit.
- Exceeded the goal of 100 residents and engaged with 120 residents to date.
- Collected 46 surveys in multiple languages.

VII. Liaison Updates

- **Age-Friendly Arlington** (Commissioner Cameron):
 - Submitted the AARP-required annual report at the end of last month. Report was shared with commission chairs; chairs are encouraged to distribute it to their committee members. The report included a comprehensive survey with questions ranging from broad topics to specific areas such as: Disaster Preparedness- Incorporated insights from the recently completed state plan. Age-Friendly Initiatives: Highlighted several spin-offs from age-friendly work, including: Walking School Bus program; Installation of flashing lights at intersections; Ongoing Age-Friendly Ecosystem Summit. Appreciation extended to Rachel and all contributors for their assistance in completing the report.
- **Updates from Parks and Recreation 55+ programs:** (Jennifer Collins, Unit Manager 55+ Programs in Arlington County)
 - Staffing Update: Fully staffed as of last week.
 - We welcomed Molly Baluta as the new Program Coordinator for the 60+ Cafe Program at Walter Reed. She is a graduate of Texas A&M with a degree in Public Administration and brings experience working with senior centers in the College Station area.
 - A temp staff member retired; replacement hired last month, a former intern, reinforcing our successful intern-to-staff pipeline.
 - Digital Equity Initiatives: Continuing collaboration with the Digital Equity Alliance; meeting scheduled today to advance efforts.
 - Partnered with the Digital Equity Coalition and Connected Nation to offer three days of free basic computer skills classes at Arlington Mill earlier this month. Attendance was strong but slightly lower compared to February sessions.
 - Program Updates: Winter 55+ Guide is now available online. Registration for winter programs begins tomorrow.
- **Updates from Arlington Neighborhood Village** (Wendy Zenker)
 - Membership and Financial Update: Currently supporting a higher percentage of lower-income seniors, approximately 46% of membership, significantly above projections.

- Financial aid needs for this year estimated at \$110,000, compared to the original budget of \$80,000.
 - Actively engaged in the fall fundraising campaign to meet increased demand and continue supporting members.
 - Hosting a Thanksgiving Dinner this Friday at 5:00 PM, free of charge.
 - 150 members, volunteers, and supporters are registered to attend.
- Donations are welcome to help meet financial aid goals

Old Business, New Business, Announcements (No reports)

A motion to adjourn was made by Chair Way. The upcoming virtual COA meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 15, 2025 via Microsoft Teams. The meeting adjourned at 10:41 am.

Prepared By: Claudia DeLoatch; November 17, 2025; DHS, ADSD, QA Administrative Assistant