

FAIRFAX AREA COMMISSION ON AGING (COA)

DRAFT MINUTES VIRTUAL – VIDEO/AUDIO MEETING

Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85785452209>

Password: COA-m1234!

Or

Telephone: 888-270-9936 (US Toll Free) or 602-333-0032

Conference code: 231525

Wednesday, October 20, 2021, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

COA Commissioners Present: Cathy Cole (Chair/At Large), Cathy Muha (Vice Chair/Sully), Carolyn Sutterfield (Secretary, City of Fairfax), Tom Bash (Springfield), Martha Cooper (City of Falls Church), Sharron Dreyer (Lee), Joe Heastie (Providence), Kathy Hoyt (Mason), Phyllis Miller Palombi (Hunter Mill), Mike Perel (Braddock), Diane Watson (Mount Vernon)

Absent: Kay Larmer (Dranesville)

Fairfax County Staff Present: Tara Turner, Jacquie Woodruff, Linda Hernandez-Giblin, Kristin Helfer Koester, and Hilda Naranjo, Area Agency on Aging: Patricia Rohrer, Health Department; Ramona Carroll, Neighborhood and Community Services; Michelle Thompson, Consumer Affairs; Alex Kramer, Mount Vernon Supervisor's office

Call to Order: Chair Cathy Cole called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

Roll Call and Motions to Proceed with Electronic Meeting: The Chair called the roll and passed the virtual gavel to Vice Chair Cathy Muha so the following motions could be made to establish VFOIA compliance:

- Cathy Cole motioned that the Fairfax Area Commission on Aging had a quorum present via remote connection and that each member's voice could be adequately heard by all participating members. The motion was seconded by Diane and unanimously approved.
- Cathy Cole motioned that the State of Emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic made it unsafe for the Fairfax Area Commission on Aging and the public to physically assemble and that the Fairfax Area Commission on Aging was conducting the meeting electronically through the dedicated telephone line listed above. The motion was seconded by Sharron and unanimously approved.
- Cathy Cole motioned that all agenda matters would address the Emergency itself, were necessary for continuity in Fairfax County government, and/or were statutorily required or necessary to continue operations and the discharge of the Fairfax Area Commission on Aging's lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities. The motion was seconded by Martha and unanimously approved.

Approval of the Minutes: Cathy Cole motioned that the minutes from the September 2021 COA meeting be approved. With a minor correction, the motion was seconded by Sharron and unanimously approved.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

AAA Director's Report: Tara Turner

Volunteer Vaccination

- The Department of Family Services (DFS) is requiring all volunteers to be vaccinated, whether they are conducting business on behalf of the county in person on county property or on personal property in the community. Unvaccinated or partially vaccinated volunteers will be allowed to participate virtually only.
- Members of Boards, Authorities and Commissions (BACs) are exempt at this time because they are appointed. However, if they volunteer in person in another capacity within DFS, they would be required to be vaccinated.

Medicare Open Enrollment

- Medicare Open Enrollment period for 2021 is October 15 through December 7. Our Virginia Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program (VICAP) is in full swing.

Congregate Nutrition

- A new vendor was awarded the contract to serve congregate meals at the Herndon Senior Center and Adult Day Health Care. The vendor will be on site to begin the service on November 1.

Home Delivered Meals

- It has been three months since the delivery model for Meals on Wheels was adjusted to once a week. We will conduct a "pulse check" survey to gather data on how that is going and will share information with the COA in the future.

Caregivers

- The Dementia Care Consortium's 35th Annual Caregiver Conference ("Caregiving as Memories Fade") will be held virtually Nov. 9 through Nov 11. Register [here](#).

LTC Ombudsman

- Ombudsman staff recently held a volunteer training for new Ombudsman volunteers.
- Some CARES Act funding was used to hire a former Ombudsman as a temporary employee to assist with increased workload resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic

SHAPE

- Jacquie Woodruff is working with the survey vendor. Arabic will be added as a translation option.
- Jacquie is preparing the one-page version of SHAPE talking points requested by the COA to support conversations in the community.
- Tara is looking into contracting with a consultant to organize and manage the strategic planning process for the SHAPE the Future of Aging plan. If that proves feasible, the COA would be involved in the process.

ARPA Funding Update

- Firm details on the contract for American Rescue Plan Act funding have not yet come from Virginia authorities. Approved categories for funding include
 - Supportive Services (staff training; CHORE services aimed at addressing hoarding situations; help for people at risk of eviction, in trouble with code, or at risk; SHAPE vendor)
 - Congregate Meals
 - Home Delivered Meals
 - Preventative Health
 - Family Caregiver
 - Ombudsman

During the Q & A, commissioners asked about accommodations for people with disabilities (hearing, vision) to take the CASOA and requested an updated org chart for the Adult and Aging division. Tara said she could provide that at the end of October. Commissioners are invited to share additional input or ideas by contacting Jacquie.

Old Business

Commissioner Updates

- Phyllis met with Walter Alcorn, the Hunter Mill supervisor. The supervisor asked about SHAPE and was interested in the film club. He will promote COA activities in his bulletin.
- Mike said Jacquie Woodruff had suggested he contact Jackie Rich, technology instructor with the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, to discuss how to move forward with the film club. They have not yet been able to set up a phone conference.
- Carolyn reported on August, September, and October Human Services Council meetings:
 - Michele Menapace (Lee District) is the new HSC chair. She intends to reach out to related BACs to learn how the HSC can support their work.
 - Deputy County Executive Chris Leonard, who reports regularly to HSC on county projects and expenditures, described continuing efforts related to COVID-19, as well as the county's commitment to spend \$15 million on affordable housing in projects that would ideally include "human services hubs" with public facilities.
 - Chris Scales of Neighborhood and Community Services is coordinating relief efforts for Afghan refugees currently housed in Fairfax County.
- Diane is working with Supervisor Storck's office and Bonnie O'Leary of the Northern Virginia Resource Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NRVC) to ensure that the new community center in Lorton meets accessibility needs. She announced that Dementia Friends training is now offered on weekends and that an LTCCC Covid response team won the Think Tank challenge for Social Isolation with its "Friend Mobile" proposal.
- Cathy Cole reminded us that the Think Tank challenge was to find ways to address social isolation without recourse to technology. The Friend Mobile is an old-fashioned idea, like an ice cream truck, bringing entertainment to the community. Proponents are now trying to obtain and outfit a van to realize the vision.

New Business

Panel Discussion: Community Outreach and Strategies

Four panelists offered their advice on ways that commissioners could reach out to particular communities in the Fairfax area.

Linda Hernández-Giblin, Planning Coordinator, Volunteer Solutions and Multicultural Outreach & 50+ Community Ambassadors, offered these recommendations:

- Get out in the community. Make yourselves available. Rely on existing relationships with people who have access to publications and social media. Ask who their partners are.
- Think about the time of day and the week that works for your community members.
- Use multilingual and accessible materials. Technology is still difficult for the older population. Some have difficulty with vision or hearing.
- Follow the county's six principles for community engagement: prioritize equity, establish and maintain trust, develop a data-driven process, set clear expectations, encourage sharing, and promote accessible government.
- Be advocates for older adults, and inform the community about this population.

Ramona Carroll, Program Manager, Community Impact Unit, Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, works with FCIA, Faith Communities in Action, a network of faith organizations, nonprofits, and county staff. Recently most of their work has centered on Covid communications, but they hope to be back out in the community in January. Here are her comments:

- The FCIA newsletter can publicize opportunities like the SHAPE survey. Organizations print that out and share it.
- We're looking into how to use technology to reach those who can't get out to meetings or need to access them at different times of day. Can we offer access in different languages?
- Look at racial and social inequities and establish trust by acknowledging the harm that has been done to some community members in the past.
- Be aware of "survey fatigue." What need could you fulfill for them in return for this input? How can you circle back to them, let them know how their information was used, and open a dialogue?

Patricia Rohrer, Long Term Care Program Development Manager, Fairfax County Health Department. Patricia, who oversees the Village Coordination/Development Program, described strategies that have worked for developing villages:

- Create grip cards and flyers and a website with consistent messages.
- Use census data to find concentrations of older residents and use volunteer outreach groups to promote your project.
- Put brief messages in supervisors' newsletters and flyers in libraries to create interest.
- Do joint presentations with supervisor staff to community groups like FCIA, libraries, and homeowners' and community associations.

- Do a podcast and a Channel 16 session.
- Partner with outreach staff to identify natural local leaders who could make a village happen. Needs of different communities may vary. Fairfax County plans to pilot an “equity village” in a neighborhood of color.

Michelle Thompson, Consumer Specialist, Fairfax County Consumer Affairs. Michelle works with homeowners’ and condominium associations. Here are her recommendations:

- Start with a point of contact, a manager or a member of an association board. They’re required to have meetings. Look for the people who step up; not everyone shares the load.
- In condos, there are bulletin boards; put up flyers.
- Associations sponsor social media accounts. Provide articles for newsletters or email distribution.
- Do a program with Channel 16.
- Let county employees know what you’re doing. They may communicate with neighbors.
- Some districts have District Councils that bring together a variety of local groups; reach them through the supervisor’s office.

In conclusion, the panel was asked to suggest most concise and effective way to promote the survey? Answers included

- Reach out to Channel 16.
- Set up a meeting with faith leaders.
- Get materials into libraries or on the FCPL website’s Older Adults link.
- Get into Board of Supervisors’ newsletters.
- Get your message professionally translated into community languages.

Cathy Cole suggested that the COA have a presentation on social isolation in November.

Announcements None

Adjournment

Diane motioned that the meeting be adjourned. Martha seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm.