

**Commonwealth Council on Aging
MINUTES**

**Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services
VIRTUAL**

**September 30, 2024
10:00 am – 1:00 pm**

Quarterly Meeting

Members Present: Via Zoom: Dr. Tracey Gendron, Delegate Patrick Hope, Carla Hesseltine, Dr. Cleopatra Kitt, Jo-Ann Chase, Ellen Nau, Paige Wilson, Roland Winston, Joshua Myers, Dr. Yolanda Stevens, and Ex-Officio Members: Ron Boyd, Kathy Hayfield, Tara Ragland, and Courtney Richter

Members Absent: Dr. Andrea Buck, Amy Duncan, Senator Christopher Head, Tresserlyn Kelly

Guests & Presenters: Via Zoom: Carol Paquette, Erica Wood, Rebecca Brown, SueAnn Myers

Staff Present: Via Zoom: Charlotte Arbogast, Sara Stowe, Kiersten Ware, Devin Bowers, George Worthington, Catherine Harrison

Welcome and Member Introductions

Carla Hesseltine, *Chair*

Chair Carla Hesseltine called the meeting to order at 10:03 am and welcomed members, guests, staff, and presenters. Charlotte Arbogast reviewed the meeting logistics and FOIA compliance requirements for all-virtual meetings. Carla Hesseltine acknowledged the recent natural disasters in Southwest Virginia as a result of Hurricane Helene and the importance of supporting those affected by the storm.

With regard to CCOA membership and staffing updates, Carla Hesseltine:

- Welcomed new members, Delegate Patrick Hope and Dr. Yolanda Stevens.
- Welcomed Sara Stowe hired as Executive Director for the CCOA
- Thanked Charlotte Arbogast who is rotating off from providing staff support. Chair Carla Hesseltine recognized and thanked Charlotte Arbogast for her years of service to the Council.
- Announced that Ellen Nau has been appointed by Governor Youngkin to represent the CCOA on the Virginia Public Guardian and Conservator Advisory Board after Erica Wood rotated off as the CCOA representative.

Carla Hesseltine then asked members to introduce themselves. Charlotte Arbogast confirmed that a quorum was present. DARS staff also introduced themselves.

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Carla Hesseltine concluded the opening of the meeting by reminding members about the Council's purpose in the Code of Virginia and about opportunities for members to get involved in promoting the Council's work and supporting the Council's efforts.

Review Proposed Agenda

Carla Hesseltine, *Chair*

Carla Hesseltine presented the proposed agenda with an amendment to change the speaker for the Legislative Update from Andrea Buck, MD, JD to Carla Hesseltine, Chair. Roland Winston made a motion to approve the agenda as amended, which was seconded by Jo-Ann Chase. Upon a vote, the motion was approved unanimously, and the amended agenda was approved.

Review of Previous Meeting Minutes

Charlotte Arbogast, *Council Staff*

Council Staff Charlotte Arbogast presented the July 17, 2024 draft meeting minutes for consideration and approval. There were no edits or changes. The draft minutes were approved via unanimous consensus.

Public Comment Period

Carla Hesseltine, *Chair*

Carla Hesseltine opened the floor for public comment. No public comments were made.

DARS Agency Updates

Kathy Hayfield, *Commissioner*

Commissioner Kathy Hayfield welcomed members and guests and provided a brief update on DARS. Commissioner Hayfield acknowledged the recent natural disasters in the Southwest Virginia region in the wake of Hurricane Helene. Commissioner Hayfield shared that DARS will be stepping up to offer support to the residents and organizations who have been affected and asked that if any members hear of needs DARS can assist with to let a member of DARS staff know.

The separation of programs from within the Division for Community Living to the Division to Aging Services has been completed. DARS is currently preparing for the upcoming General Assembly session and mentioned that while this is not a budget year, adjustments to the biennial budget are made during this session.

DARS Division for Aging Services (DAS) Update

Kiersten Ware, *Deputy Commissioner*

Deputy Commissioner Kiersten Ware provided an update on the Division for Aging Services (DAS). Her updates focused on the following topics:

- Staffing updates within DAS
- DAS' engagement with the AAAs, including site visits
- Progress on implementing the OAA final regulations through internal efforts and periodic engagement with the AAAs
- The recent Northern Virginia Aging Network (NVAN) Legislative Breakfast, which Kiersten attended, and NVAN's legislative priorities

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- Federal funding updates
- DARS' recent and upcoming engagement activities around aging services and older adults with DHCD, DBHDS, VDH
- Updates on DARS' implementation of SB 291 to develop guardianship training
- Updates on the HB 888/SB 176 Workgroup meetings and forthcoming report
- VICAP updates
- Grant updates, including the Virginia HEAR grant project and a new grant with Virginia Center on Aging focused on safety and housing for older adults
- No Wrong Door updates, including the Safety Connector and Social Health Connector tools
- Updates on the Farm Market Fresh Program and this season's successes
- DARS' plans to support and promote Ageism Awareness Day on October 9
- DAS' engagement with a UVA graduate student studying housing needs of older adults over the 2024-2025 academic year
- Virginia Family Caregivers Month, which is coming up in November

Legislative & Budget Updates

Carla Hesseltine, Chair

Carla Hesseltine referred members to the How to Talk to Legislators Guidance handout and encouraged members who might be interested in helping advance the legislative priorities or tracking them to reach out to her or Council staff. She then reviewed the Council's Legislative Priorities, which were determined at the Council's July meeting. These include:

Home and Community-Based Services

1. Increase funding for Home & Community-based Services through the AAA's
2. State funds for Virginia Lifespan Respite Voucher Program
3. Conduct a Study on the Feasibility of a Multisector Plan on Aging

Long-Term Care Services

4. Replicating the RAFT program in Other Areas of the Commonwealth
5. Support Nursing Home Inspection and Enforcement Process
6. Increase Nursing Home Personal Needs Allowance
7. Strengthen Nursing Home Transparency, Data, and Oversight

Dementia Services

8. Expand Dementia Care Management to Underserved Areas of Virginia
9. Provide State General Funds for the Ongoing Operations of the Virginia Memory Project

She asked members to reach out to her or Legislative Committee Chair Andy Buck if they have an interest in tracking or helping with any of the legislative priorities. Carla Hesseltine shared that she is expecting the Governor's amendments to the biennial budget to come out in mid-December and through Council staff, she will update members about any of these items or other aging-related items. She then reminded members now is the time to engage with legislators and a great time to make appointments with your legislators prior to session starting and about the call to action to track legislation.

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2024 CCOA Annual Report

Charlotte Arbogast

Charlotte Arbogast shared the draft of the CCOA Annual Report with members, this includes the 2025 Legislative Recommendations, a letter from the Chair, report from the Best Practice Awards, a summary of the Council's GTE grant implementation, and summary of the Council's 2024 activities and initiatives, and a listing of the Council's membership. Approval will share out this draft annual report and will be shared on the Legislative Services website.

Charlotte brought attention to Recommendation #9 under the Legislative recommendations, sharing that the priority of NVAN and Alzheimer's Association should be changed to ADRDC and Alzheimer's Association. Josh Myers confirmed Alzheimer's Association has Recommendation #9 as a priority and George Worthington shared that the ADRDC did not make a formal recommendation, but it is something they support.

She noted that the upcoming meeting dates for 2025, which will be set later in the meeting, will be added to the finalized report once dates are chosen.

She asked if there was a motion to approve the Annual Report as presented with changes to Recommendation #9 and the addition of the upcoming meeting dates once decided. Roland Winston indicated he like to suggest adding a statement that acknowledges the work Erica Wood provided while serving as Legislative Chair. Roland Winston made a motion to approve the 2024 CCOA Annual Report with the changes listed above, and it was seconded by Dr. Cleopatra Kitt. Upon a vote, the motion was approved unanimously, and the 2024 CCOA Annual Report was approved.

GTE Final

Devin Bowers, *Grants Specialist*

Devin Bowers shared the Council's GTE Grant Final Report. The final report outlines the five microlearning videos the Council produced focused on increasing awareness of malnutrition, food insecurity and key program and resources available to older Virginians. Once the videos were produced, the microlearning videos were shared in a variety of ways such as the V4A webinar, Virginia Easy Access's nutrition webpage and training platform. The GTE Final Report is due to the Virginia Center on Aging by October 15th.

Charlotte Arbogast also informed members that DARS still has informational postcards available for members who may be attending an event and like to distribute to the community.

Jo-Ann Chase made the motion to approve the 2024 GTE Grant Final Report, and it was seconded by Paige Wilson. Upon a vote, the motion was approved unanimously.

2025 Proposed Meeting Dates

Carla Hesseltine

Carla Hesseltine shared the process for using the Zoom meeting poll to select the 2025 CCOA Meeting Dates. Council members were informally polled about their availability. In looking through the polling results and engaging in further discussion, the Council honed in on the following dates for CCOA meetings in 2025.

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Tuesday, January 7, 2025
Wednesday, March 12, 2025
Wednesday, June 18, 2025
Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Jo-Ann Chase made the motion to finalize the proposed 2025 meeting dates, and it was seconded by Ellen Nau. The motion was approved unanimously following the vote.

Best Practice Award Updates

Charlotte Arbogast

Charlotte Arbogast shared an update for the Best Practice Awards. Two members remain on the committee from last year: Tresserlyn Kelly and Dr. Cleopatra Kitt. New to the committee this year is Paige Wilson. We will also have Dr. Tracey Gendron from the Virginia Center on Aging as well as another VCOA staff members who Dr. Gendron will choose.

Charlotte shared a tentative timeline that generally follows the historical process for the Best Practice Awards. She noted that the new committee may want to convene in late October or early November to revamp and reinvigorate the process for 2025. Charlotte has reached out to current funders, Dominion Energy and AARP Virginia, to let them know about staff transitions. Charlotte is hopeful to continue this support from the organizations. Traditionally, DARS has been able to affirm their support by November to begin request nominations for the Best Practice Awards by January.

Presentation: Overview of the Virginia Center on Aging

Dr. Tracey Gendron, MS, Ph.D., *Executive Director of the Virginia Center on Aging*

Dr. Tracey Gendron shared an overview on the Virginia Center on Aging (VCoA). She highlighted that the VCOA was created in 1978 by the General Assembly. The Center is designed and charged with continuing education for those who work with older adults, education and training, fostering development of educational courses, conducting research in the field of gerontology and making research accessible, collect and maintain data on statewide and regional basis, coordinates with DARS to present duplications of efforts.

In her presentation, she highlighted the following programs and initiatives from VCOA:

- Lifelong Learning Institute in Chesterfield
- Virginia Helping Elders Access Resources (HEAR) grant project
- Greater Richmond Elder Justice Shelter Initiative, a new grant project
- Age and Ability Inclusion Toolkit for Senior Living
- Trauma-Informed Care Toolkit
- Alzheimer's and Related Disease Research Award Fund
- Geriatric Training Education Initiative
- Virginia Geriatric Education Center, which is Virginia's Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program
- Virginia Memory Project
- Richmond Brain Health Initiative

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- VCOA's Issue and Research Briefs
- VCOA's Aging for All Podcast
- VCOA's Annual Update, coming up in January 2025

Announcements, Regulatory Update and Future Meetings Charlotte Arbogast

Council staff Charlotte Arbogast provided an update on recent regulatory activities, including:

- The Board of Long-Term Care Administrators' Proposed Regulation for changes to the regulations for Nursing Facility Administrators and Assisted Living Facility Administrators.
- The Board of Social Services' Emergency Regulatory action to require Minimum Liability Insurance for Assisted Living Facilities following legislation in the General Assembly Session.
- The Board of Social Services' out-of-state health practitioner regulatory package, which was being done after legislation passed from the General Assembly.

She noted that there continue to be federal rulemaking items, which are outside of the Council's authority, but do have impacts to the state's aging network:

- Older Americans Act Final Regulations
- Adult Protective Services Final Regulations
- CMS Nursing Home Staffing Standards Final Regulations Health and
- Human Services Nondiscrimination Final Regulations

Lastly, she highlighted a few other federal final regulations:

- The Department of Justice for public entities for web and mobile content accessibility
- The Affordable Care Act Section 1557 nondiscrimination for health programs and activities
- Uniform Grant Guidance for all federal funds and then specifically for HHS funding
- And two major Medicaid final regulations governing managed care, home and community-based services, client engagement, and more.

Member Updates

Carla Hesseltine

Chair Carla Hesseltine opened the floor for any updates from members.

Ron Boyd shared updates from V4A. He noted that plans are underway for the Virginia Governor's Conference on Aging to be held on May 19-20, 2025 in Williamsburg, VA, and that V4A will be hosting the Southeastern Association of Area Agencies on Aging (SE4A) in Williamsburg, VA in 2026. Lastly, he shared that V4A will continue to advocate for increasing funding to the AAAs core services in the amount of \$4.3 million for the 2025 Legislative Session.

Public Comment Period

Carla Hesseltine

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There were no additional public comments.

Meeting Adjournment

Carla Hesseltine

In wrapping up the meeting, Carla Hesseltine noted that the next meeting will be January 7, 2025 from 10am-2pm. Sara Stowe will send out the holds for the dates/times for upcoming meeting and will be working on the agenda., She'll be in touch with the Best Practice Awards Committee members, and the meeting on January 7 will include an update from that committee, Legislative and Budget Updates, and updates on any recent reports to the General Assembly.

Having completed the meeting agenda, Carla Hesseltine adjourned the meeting at 12:27 p.m.

Meeting Handouts:

1. Proposed Meeting Agenda for September 30, 2024
2. Draft Meeting Minutes for July 17, 2024
3. How to Talk to Legislators Handout
4. Draft 2024 Annual Report
5. Draft GTE Final Report
6. Tentative 2025 Advisory Board Meeting Dates
7. Tentative Best Practice Awards Timeline
8. Virginia Center on Aging Presentation
9. Regulation Update