

CITY OF ROCKVILLE
COMMISSION ON AGING
ROCKVILLE SENIOR CENTER
1150 CARNATION DRIVE

October 16, 2025, 9:30 a.m. (Hybrid meeting)

Members Present: Elaine Koubeck, Co-Chair; Stephen Smith, Co-Chair; Alan Kaplan, Commissioner; Ellen Wicker, Commissioner; Dory Wink, Commissioner; Dick Rosano, Commissioner; Krishna Kumar, Commissioner; Anne Herbster, Commissioner; Barry Jackson; Mayor and Council Liaison

Absent: Vicki Gottlich, Commissioner

Staff: Alexis D'Angelo Swope; Trish Evans; Fran Jablonski

Elaine Koubeck, Co-Chair, started the meeting at 9:30 a.m. with welcome and check-in.

Elaine Koubeck, Co-Chair asked the commission if anyone had any comments or changes to the September 18, 2025, minutes. **Stephen Smith, Co-Chair** said on the second line in the second paragraph to insert "made a motion" right after the word to and before the word accept. **Dick Rosano, Commissioner** made a motion to accept the minutes per the change. **Stephen Smith, Co-Chair**, seconded it. All were in favor.

Elaine Koubeck, Co-Chair reported that Brightview West hosted a dinner dance with the Senior Center, and it was a big success.

Alexis D'Angelo Swope reported next. The Hispanic Festival was very successful. Over 50 people attended. The staff is currently working on the Winter Guide. It will be available in November. The center's hybrid presentations have been positively received, allowing for in-person and online participation. There was a well-attended open house at the Rockville Science Center, which generated interest in science classes. We do have a program through the Rockville Science Center, Science Tuesdays, which is held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. It is a hybrid program. There has been discussion regarding the Gude Drive entrance and how the gate will work. It was discussed that it may operate with membership cards during center hours. The design plan is 60% complete, and there will be another Advisory Board meeting on Tuesday night. **Barry Jackson, Mayor and Council Liaison** attended the Advisory Board meeting on Tuesday. People from Woodley Gardens and Rockshire attended. He confirmed that there will be another Advisory Board meeting and a Public Hearing. The Council is in full support of this project and the budget for it is approved. The goal is to be completed by Spring of 2026.

Alexis D'Angelo Swope reported on the Villages for **Trish Evans**. There will be a Doggie Halloween Parade event on October 25, 2025, at Welsh Park. West Rockville Connects will be coordinating it in collaboration with all the other villages. **Anne Herbster, Commissioner**, announced the incorporation of West Rockville Connects, which will enhance their service offerings. She recounted a successful inaugural brunch aimed at building community connections. It was well attended by the community. **Council Members, Valeri and Jackson**, and **Tara Stewart, Director of Recreation and Parks** attended. The Villages received a \$10,000 grant from the city. The Villages also discussed promoting collaborative events to encourage integration across different Villages, reflecting a commitment to community development.

Updates on areas of focus, Communication, Housing, Inclusion, Programming, Safety (CHIPS) were discussed next. Communication, there was nothing to report. Housing, there was nothing to report. Inclusion, **Krishna Kumar, Commissioner** reported that he is writing a book on loneliness, and he hopes to have it completed by February 2026. There was nothing to report on Programming and Safety.

Barry Jackson, Mayor and Council Liaison reported that it is now budget season. There is an on-line survey anyone can complete. He is monitoring the budget situation and doesn't see any budget cuts now but acknowledged the possibility of future funding challenges. He is aware that the State will be making changes, and it can shift down to the county and

the city. As people get laid off the city may need to help them with their needs. There may be some tough decisions to make during this budget season. He said there was a discussion on the neglected King Farm farmstead, which requires a comprehensive plan for community use. The buildings were deeded to the city in 1996. The city has done engagement with the community for the last 8 months in the way of listening, filtering sessions, a survey, a website, and composed a report. **Alan Kaplan, Commissioner**, said the report was done well and requested that a copy be sent to each of the commissioners. **Barry Jackson, Mayor and Council Liaison** said there are 8 acres, 5 buildings, a community garden, and a picnic shelter. There will be some decisions soon as to what to do with the property.

Elaine Koubeck, Co-Chair, raised concerns about the vacant retail spaces in Town Center and the reluctance of investment companies to lower rents. She highlighted the disconnect between the interests of these companies and the needs of the community. **Barry Jackson, Mayor and Council Liaison** said Gibbs Street is a walking street scape. The city is working with REDI to promote businesses and enhance community engagement.

Stephen Smith, Co-Chair, will submit a written proposal for a stand-up comedy class to **Alexis D'Angelo Swope** for consideration at the Senior Center. **Alexis D'Angelo Swope** will follow up with **Kelley Day-Terry** and **Michelle Chite** regarding the possibility of having this class.

Alexis D'Angelo Swope mentioned the Rise and Renew program for Federal Employees. It will be in effect this week at different centers. She announced that **Tara Stewart, Director of Recreation and Parks**, resigned. **Steve Mader** will be the acting director.

Sheryl Roff is looking for more members for RSI. RSI's fund-raising programs support the center. She said you can be in both groups because RSI is not appointed by the Mayor and Council.

Liz Woodward, Assistant Secretary for Planning, Maryland Department of Aging gave the presentation. The discussion was primarily focused on planning and funding for aging initiatives, with an emphasis on the importance of addressing issues such as isolation and loneliness among seniors. She outlined the Maryland Department of Aging's multi-sector plan aimed at improving services for older adults, highlighting the need for equitable aging services and addressing disparities in life expectancy. The expansion of the senior call check program in Montgomery County was discussed, emphasizing the importance of social connections for older adults. Additionally, she raised concerns about the navigation of various services available at different government levels and the need for better coordination among agencies to support seniors effectively. Updates on legislative matters included House Bill 502, which affects disability employment, and discussions on funding allocations. She detailed the existing formula and acknowledged the need for an evaluation to ensure it meets community needs. The complexities of regulatory oversight in long-term care facilities were also addressed, along with the challenges seniors face in accessing services through automated systems. The Maryland Access Point's collaboration with the Maryland Information Network was highlighted as a resource for seniors, with suggestions for improving public communication about available services.

Alexis D'Angelo Swope asked if there were any comments or changes to the July 17, 2025 minutes. **Stephen Smith, Co-Chair** mentioned two typos in the last large paragraph. **Stephen Smith, Co-Chair** made a motion to accept the minutes per the corrections, **Dick Rosano, Commissioner** seconded it. All were in favor

Trish Evans reported on the Villages next. She shared that the West Rockville Connects Village recently celebrated its launch as an independent 501c3 nonprofit. She noted the importance of the villages support network and the resources

available to Montgomery County villages. She said there are a lot of great events coming up, which can be found in the Villages newsletter.

Alexis D'Angelo Swope reported that the library renovation is going well, and it should be completed by November. She said there is new tile in the Azalea, Board and Card Rooms. They are very bold, bright colors.

Barry Jackson, Mayor and Council Liaison acknowledged and congratulated Commission on the successful name change. He said there wasn't much to report. He discussed upcoming discussions regarding the use of the Farmstead space for seniors. He highlighted a successful trip to Germany, where he learned about the different electoral process for senior representatives in Pinneberg, which differs significantly from the U.S. system. Only 65 and older can vote for their senior representatives for their senior commission. They are very interested in the Village concept.

Updates on Communication, Housing, Inclusion, Programming, Safety, CHIPS were given next. There was nothing to report on Communication, Housing or Programming. **Krishna Kumar, Commissioner** talked about an upcoming workshop about loneliness. It consists of three sessions (given on his own time and offsite). The Commission recognized the importance of developing initiatives based on input from seniors and ensuring that any commission-supported programs are well structured and thoughtfully planned.

Alexis D'Angelo Swope shared information on upcoming programs. Science Tuesday is held on the second Tuesday of the month. She is trying to get more in person programming under subjects like support and engagement. A group of our seniors meet on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays in the sunroom for coffee and discussions. The Gude Drive Entrance Plan is near 60% complete. The next step is the Advisory Board meeting.

Alan Kaplan, Commissioner made a motion to adjourn. **Dick Rosano, Commissioner** seconded it.

Meeting adjourned at 11:05 AM

The next meeting is November 20, 2025