

**Montgomery County Commission for Women
21 Maryland Avenue, Suite 330, Rockville, MD 20850**

Summary of Discussion

March 20, 2013

7:00 p.m.

Attending:

Chandra Walker Holloway, President
Maria Montserrat Alvarado
Jennifer Cryor Baldwin
Lorna Forde
Catherine Hill
Wilma Holmes
Nick Martinez
Barbara Mintz
Manar Morales
Katie Smith

Absent:

Elizabeth Callihan
Debra Bright Harris
Colleen Kelly
Maliha Ilias
Larniece McKoy Moore

Staff:

Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director

-
- I. Call to Order/Approval of Agenda and Minutes.....President Holloway Walker**
The meeting was called to order at 7:11 p.m. The commissioners thanked Commissioner Smith for providing dinner. The agenda for this evening's meeting was approved with one item added to the staff report. The minutes of the February 27 CFW meeting were approved as submitted.
- II. Executive Committee Report..... President Holloway Walker**
- A. Meeting with the County Executive**
The CFW meeting with the County Executive has been changed from April 18 to April 4 at 9 p.m. Commissioners Mintz, Morales, McCoy Moore, Holmes and Smith will join President Holloway Walker. A time to meet and prepare the presentation will be set in advance of that meeting.
- B. Meetings with the County Council**
At the last meeting, it was decided that the CFW would schedule meetings individually with each member of the County Council. Commissioner Forde offered to assist Commissioner McCoy Moore in setting up those meetings, and will begin work on this task immediately.
- C. New Commissioner Recruitment**
At the last meeting, it was announced that the terms of five commissioners (Alvarado, Callihan, Kelly, Martinez and Moore) will be complete June 30, 2013. Commissioner McCoy Moore, having served two full terms is not eligible for reappointment, and Commissioner Kelly has decided that she will not seek reappointment. Therefore, it is anticipated that the CFW will need to fill at least two vacant terms this year.

Commissioners Bright Harris and Mintz agreed at last month's meeting to serve on the nominations committee. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather will work with the County Executive's Office in developing the announcement of the vacancies.

D. Women's History Month

1. CFW Women's History Display

Executive Director Vaughan-Prather, with assistance from the Community Engagement Cluster Business Management Team, arranged an exhibit in the display cases in the lobby of the Rockville Memorial Library. The exhibit is in keeping with the theme for National Women's History Month: *Women Inspiring Innovation Through Imagination: Celebrating Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics*. Included in the MC CFW's display are: Sally Ride, Astronaut; Rachel Carson, Biologist and Mother of the Modern Environmental Movement; Patricia Era Bath, Medical Doctor, inventor; Marie Curry, Physicist; Susan Love, Surgeon, Grace Hopper, Developer of the Computer Language COBAL; Olga Gonzalez Sanabria, Scientist and Inventor; and Melanie Hennigan, Chief Architect of the Rockville Memorial Library where the CFW offices now reside. Quince Orchard High School, the Rockville Library and the County's Department of General Services Engineering Division all contributed artifacts for the display. In addition, the Montgomery County Historical Society created a complementary exhibit on Montgomery County Women's History in the adjoining display case. It was suggested that next year, work on this project begin earlier (the case has already been reserved for March 2014), and that a commissioner or two might take on the design and set up of the display.

2. Maryland Women's Hall of Fame

MC CFW's nominee, Senator Jean Cryor, will be inducted into the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame at a ceremony at the State House tomorrow evening. Her daughter, Commissioner Jennifer Cryor Baldwin, will make the presentation. Commission President Chandra Walker Holloway and Executive Director Judith Vaughan-Prather will attend.

3. Montgomery College's Women's and Gender Studies Scholarship Program

Each commissioner received a personal invitation to the annual Women's and Gender Studies Scholarship Program at Montgomery College. Commissioners Holmes and Hill will attend, along with Executive Director Vaughan-Prather.

III. STAFF REPORT.....Vaughan-Prather

A. Counseling Services Development

Two of the new, temporary part time social worker positions have been filled, and the new employees will start work the week of April 8. There will be much work to do to develop the "infrastructure" of the program, developing necessary forms for processing cases, fees, etc., but it is very gratifying to know that counseling services will be available again, soon. The search is still underway for a bilingual social worker to fill the third position. CFW Volunteer Bev Thoms has been contracted to develop a volunteer program to staff the front desk, handle calls for assistance and referral, schedule appointments, etc.

B. White House Press Conference on Domestic Violence

On March 13, U.S. Vice President Joe Biden, U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder, and Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley, among others, came to Rockville to announce the Justice Department's award of 12 grants around the country to establish Domestic Violence Lethality Assessment Programs. The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence will serve as a consultant to the national project. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather had been contacted by the White House staff for assistance in locating an appropriate facility for the press conference. All the speakers were wonderful, but the Vice President was especially compelling. It was a very impressive event and the Commission for Women was very pleased to have been able to assist.

C. County Executive's FY 14 Budget Proposal

The County Executive announced his proposed budget for Fiscal Year 14 (July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014) at a press conference on March 15. His proposal continues the funding at the same level as this year for the CFW's counseling services. The budget now goes to the County Council for consideration. The Community Engagement Cluster's budget, where funding for the CFW lies, will be considered by the Government Operations Committee on Tuesday, April 23.

D. Executive Director's Schedule

Executive Director Vaughan-Prather advised the CFW of the dates she would be out of the office during the coming week.

IV. Committee Reports

A. Program Planning Committee

The CFW offered the two Legal Process of Separation and Divorce seminars on March 7. CFW President, Chandra Walker Holloway conducted the seminar in English, and former Commissioner Nelson Garcia conducted it in Spanish. The total audience for the two seminars was 30, not including the commissioners who volunteered to help. The participant evaluations were uniformly positive. The power point presentation slides used as handout materials are too small when reproduced as handouts, and too detailed. Work on updating the CFW's guidebook for surviving separation and divorce is underway. The committee believes that the guidebook should be used as the handouts, and that an agenda for the program – just an outline of the contents for the attorneys conducting the seminars, is necessary. The next seminars are scheduled for Thursday morning, April 11. Commissioners suggested that the number of seminars and the number of attendees be recorded.

Some of the participants in the seminars asked for a seminar on handling personal finances during and after divorce. Commissioner Martinez plans to meet Executive Director Vaughan Prather to develop a workshop on this issue. It was also suggested by commissioners that a workshop on financial issues for senior women might be appropriate, but that can become part of planning for the next fiscal year. Commissioner Forde noted that other community organizations like the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority might be interested in partnering with the CFW on some of these initiatives. Commissioner Morales suggested that the CFW approach AARP about partnering on seminars for senior women.

B. Policy and Legislation Committee.....Smith

At last month’s meeting, the CFW identified, as its legislative platform for this year, seven initiatives under consideration in the Maryland General Assembly. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather worked with Committee Chair Smith and President Walker Holloway to develop a chart outlining the commission’s position on each bill and the level of action/priority it would assign to each:

Legislation	Position/Ranking	Commissioner Liaison
SB 698 & HB 735 Earned Sick & Safe Days	S-1 Top Priority	Walker Holloway
SB 620 & HB 715 Denial of Paternity Rights for Rapists	S-1	Forde
SB 784 & HB 804 Employment Accommodations for Pregnant Workers	S-2	Morales & Hill
SB 861 & HB 478 Crime in the Presence of a Minor	S-2	Smith
HB 829 Restraint Restrictions for Pregnant Detainees	S-2	Mintz
HB 1331 Parental Leave at Birth	S-2	Morales & Hill
SB 281 Firearms Safety Act of 2013	S-2	Walker-Holloway
<p>Key: S – Support O – Oppose NP – No Position</p> <p>1- Present testimony, urge others to act, etc. 2 – Send letter 3 – Tack action only if asked 4 – No action</p>		

Since then, the Policy and Legislation Committee has been very busy. President Holloway Walker and Commissioner Forde both presented testimony on their bills, and attended press conferences and strategy meetings, often on very short notice. Commissioner Mintz, Smith and Hill drafted letters from the CFW supporting their bills.

The CFW’s top priority bill, the Earned Sick and Safe Days bill has already died in committee, but much groundwork has been laid for continue advocacy for this legislation next year.

Letters to the Maryland General Assembly Senate and House committees considering each of the bills have been sent on almost all of the others, and the commission's support of the remaining bills will be sent before the end of the month. Commissioner Smith thanked Commissioners Walker Holloway, Forde, Mintz, Morales and Hill, for their leadership on this legislative agenda.

The CFW also signed onto support letter for the Comprehensive Immigration Reform federal legislation and Commissioner Smith wrote an action alert about VAWA for distribution to the NACW membership.

V. Unfinished Business

A. Women's History Quilt Brochure

Commissioner Callihan could not attend tonight's meeting, but she completed the graphic design of a beautiful brochure describing the Women's History Archives Quilt created for the CFW's 40th Anniversary with the brief biographies of the 10 women of historical significance who were included in the Montgomery County Women's History Archives. The brochure has been printed and copies were distributed to the commissioners who commended Commissioner Callihan for her work.

B. Bylaws Review

Commissioner Morales has completed her recommended revisions of the CFW Bylaws and has sent the draft to the County Attorney to request approval before submitting to CFW for adoption.

C. Update of CFW Publications

Discussion tabled until the April meeting.

D. Montgomery Women's Honoring Commissioner Holmes

Commissioners Walker Holloway and Bright Harris along with Executive Director Vaughan-Prather attended the ceremony on March 10 where Commissioner Holmes was honored by Montgomery Women with its Shining Star Award for a lifetime of advocacy and leadership on behalf of the women of Montgomery County.

VI. New Business

Commissioners Alvarado is representing the CFW at an event convened by County Council President Nancy Navarro this Friday night, focusing on the needs of the county's Hispanic women and children.

VII. Liaison Reports

A. MLAW

Commissioners Smith has been working with MLAW on its legislative agenda. MLAW has actively sent out action alerts or its bills, several of which are the same as the CFW's priorities. MLAW meets next week.

B. Teen Dating Violence Task Force/Choose Respect Conference

Commissioner Alvarado is the CFW liaison to these two committees but they meet during the day and she works in Georgetown. Commissioner Forde offered to represent the CFW at the meetings of these organizations.

C. NACW

Commissioner Holmes is developing a basket on women's leadership gift items to donate to the National Association of Commissions for Women for auction at its national conference in July. She has already acquired a number of relevant and very interesting items.

VIII. Announcements

A. Montgomery College Women's Scholarship Program

Commissioners Holmes and Hill and Executive Director Vaughan-Prather will attend the Montgomery College Women's and Gender Studies Scholarship and Awards event on March 27.

IX. Adjournment

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Minutes Submitted by
Judith Vaughan-Prather
Executive Director

APPROVED: April 24, 2013