

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

Summary of Discussion

October 26, 2011

7:00 p.m.

Attending:

Vanessa Atterbeary, President
Maria Montserrat Alvarado
Jennifer Cryor Baldwin
Debra Bright Harris
Chandra Walker Holloway
Maliha Ilias
Colleen Kelly
Larniece McKoy Moore
Leticia Mederos
Manar Morales
Jaclyn Lichter Vincent

Absent:

Leila Aridi Afas
Wilma Holmes
Nick Martinez

Staff:

Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director
Consuwella Carrington, Americorps Intern

I. CALL TO ORDER

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES.....President Atterbeary

President Atterbeary called to meeting to order at 7:26 p.m. Commissioner Morales moved and Commissioner Bright Harris seconded approval of the minutes of the September 7, 2011 meeting as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Morales moved and Commissioner Holloway seconded approval of the agenda for tonight's Commission meeting as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

II. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT.....President Atterbeary

A. Structure of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee consists of the three officers of the Commission, the co-chairs of the Women's Legislative Briefing, and the chair of the Program Planning Leadership Committee. For this year, that will mean that the committee includes:

- Vanessa Atterbeary, President
- Manar Morales, First Vice President
- Chandra Walker Holloway, Second Vice President
- Jennifer Baldwin, WLB Co-chair
- Wilma Holmes, WLB Co-chair
- Colleen Kelly, PPLC Chair

B. Child Support Enforcement

An article published recently in the Washington Post described state-wide problems with child support enforcement in Maryland. This issue had been brought to the CFW’s attention earlier this year, and staff met with the Child Support Enforcement office, the County Attorney and the State’s Attorney. In light of this new article, the Executive Committee discussed the issue again, but decided that with such greatly reduced resources, the CFW will have to maintain its focus on the initiatives it has already selected for this year.

C. Council Sunset Legislation

County Councilman George Leventhal introduced Council Bill 29-11, Boards, Committees and Commissions – sunset, Consolidation, and Resolution. This bill would “sunset” a list of close to 40 county advisory boards, committees and commissions, including the CFW, effective December 1, 2012. This would mean that each of these boards would have to convince the Council of the need for their work, or they would be eliminated next year. A public hearing was held on October 18. The CFW submitted written testimony in opposition to the bill. Sharon Johnson, a community member of the CFW’s Program Planning Committee testified at the hearing, also in opposition to the bill, representing the Women’s Bar Association. No other Councilmember has signed on to sponsor the bill, and Councilwoman Floreen stated during the hearing that she hoped it would not pass.

D. Council Meetings

Schedule conflicts have prevented setting up the meetings.

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

A. Annual Report

The FY 2011 Annual Report is almost complete. As soon as it is possible to spend some time reviewing it and making any final revisions, it will be published on the CFW’s website. It is likely that hard copies will not be printed this year.

B. Commissioner Resignation and Replacement

Unfortunately, Commissioner Noha Bakr has resigned her position on the CFW. She and her family have moved to another state to be closer to her mother whose health is failing. The County Executive’s office will review the list of recommendations for appointment to the CFW made in June 2011 and will make a decision soon as to an appointment to fill the remainder of Commissioner Bakr’s term.

C. Committee Evaluation and Review Board (CERB)

County law requires that every ten years, a CERB be appointed to review all of the county’s Boards, Committees and Commissions to determine whether they are serving the purpose for which they were created and is their work still necessary.

The County Executive's Office is now seeking applicants for this very important board.

D. Parking at 21 Maryland Avenue

Free parking for two hours is now available for visitors to the Rockville Memorial Library Building, where the CFW office and meetings are now located, in the garage across the street. Commissioners visiting the building may bring their parking tickets to have them validated at the Information Desk in the Library on the first floor.

IV. COMMITTEE WORK

A. Women's Legislative Briefing 2012..... Vaughan-Prather for Baldwin/Holmes

Despite the very much reduced staff resources, a lot of progress has been made on the WLB. The first meeting of the Planning Committee was September 14. The Committee accepted the CFW's recommendation regarding changes to the traditional format of the WLB. This year, the two Maryland Senators and our two Congressional Representatives (for Montgomery County) will be invited to provide a panel discussion on Women's Issues in Congress, instead of having a keynote speaker. The seminars will be offered only once each, but they will be divided in two sessions so that attendees will have the opportunity to attend two different seminars. Kaiser Permanente has confirmed its Premier Sponsorship of the 2012 WLB with a check for \$10,000. AARP has promised to be a Major Sponsor with a donation of \$7500, and the Prince George's County Government is hoping to be able to offer some significant financial support to the event as well. Staff has finally received approval to use the Eventbrite website to handle registration for the WLB, which should greatly ease the burden of collecting information and fees from 500 – 700 attendees. A graphic artist on the WLB Planning Committee, Jeannette Feldner, has designed a very nice "save the date" flier so the event may be announced. It is hoped that registration will open by November 15. There are more than 30 community organizations who have already submitted their co-sponsorship fees and forms, and many more who have indicated that they plan to co-sponsor again this year. Representatives of these organizations make up the planning committee. The next meeting of the WLB Planning Committee is Wednesday, November 2 at the White Oak Library.

B. Program Planning Leadership Committee.....Kelly

The Program Planning Leadership Committee (PPLC) consists of those commissioners who are working on the initiative to develop family law-related services. They serve as the leaders of a larger committee that includes representatives of the Women's Bar Association, the Family Law Division of the Montgomery County Bar Association, the Divorce Roundtable and others committed to restoring some of the services lost when the CFW Counseling Center was abolished. This group is the Program Planning Committee (PPC) which last met October 11 at the CFW office. The PPC has decided to plan, as a pilot project, a series of three Divorce Support Seminars to be offered in the late winter or early spring, focusing on the legal and financial aspects of separation and divorce, and mediation as one option. It is

planned that the fee for each workshop will be \$10, or \$25 to attend all three. There are plenty of professional attorneys, mediators and financial advisors who have already indicated their willingness to volunteer as speakers at these seminars. The financial advisor on the planning committee, who is also a former volunteer and workshop leader for the counseling center, has offered to “sponsor” refreshments for the attendees for all three workshops the first time they are offered. The PPC is also discussing ways to maintain the Attorney Call-Back program, as the attorneys who have volunteered in this service are also willing to continue. The committee may also work on establishing an information and referral service staffed by volunteers who could work in the CFW office.

C. 40th Anniversary Commemoration Committee.....Vincent
No report this month.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. F. Scott Fitzgerald Literary Conference

The conference, which the CFW co-sponsored by helping with publicity, was held Saturday, October 22. No reports have been received yet from the conference organizers.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

No new business was brought before the CFW.

VII. LIAISON REPORTS

A. MLAW.....Mederos

Commissioner Mederos will attend the MLAW Conference this Saturday, October 29, and will distribute the newly designed fliers for the Women’s Legislative Briefing.

E. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Judith Vaughan-Prather
Executive Director

APPROVED 11/30/2011