

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

Summary of Discussion

February 27, 2013

7:00 p.m.

Attending:

Chandra Walker Holloway, President
Maria Montserrat Alvarado
Elizabeth Callihan
Debra Bright Harris
Lorna Forde
Wilma Holmes
Larniece McKoy Moore
Barbara Mintz
Manar Morales
Katie Smith

Absent:

Colleen Kelly
Jennifer Cryor Baldwin
Nick Martinez
Maliha Ilias
Catherine Hill

Staff:

Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director

I. CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA, MINUTESPresident Walker Holloway

President Walker Holloway called the meeting to order at 7:21 p.m., and called for the approval of the January 14, 2013 meeting minutes. President Walker Holloway reminded everyone there is no motion necessary to approve the minutes. The minutes were accepted as distributed with no changes. The proposed agenda was also approved as submitted. Commissioners thanked Commissioner Alvarado for hosting the dinner this evening.

II. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT.....President Walker Holloway

A. April 18 Meeting with County Executive

The County Executive has decided to resume meeting individually with each of the officially appointed county boards, committees and commissions (BCCs). (This practice had been replaced with a single public forum-styled meeting with all the BCCs for the past two years.) The CFW's meeting with County Executive is scheduled for 8 pm. on April 18. Commissioners Mintz, Bright Harris, and Morales will attend along with President Holloway. Executive Committee members will meet in the CFW offices to review their presentation at 6 pm that evening. Commissioners were asked to hold the date, but the CFW Executive Director was asked to see if the CFW's appointment could be moved to an earlier date.

B. Meetings with County Council Members

The CFW decided that to send a delegation to meet with each of the County Councilmembers, as well, to discuss the CFW's work. Commissioner McKoy Moore agreed to contact the council members to schedule the meetings and Commissioner Alvarado volunteered to attend a meeting. Meeting dates will be forth coming.

C. New Commissioner Recruitment

The terms of Commissioners Alvarado, Callihan, Kelly, Martinez, and Moore will be complete this June 30. Commissioner McKoy Moore is completing her second term on the CFW, and therefore is not eligible for reappointment. All the others are. Commissioners Bright Harris and Mintz agreed to sit on this year’s recruitment committee.

D. Attendance at Meetings

At the last Executive Committee meeting, the committee decided that the CFW will not recommend commissioners for reappointment who have not met the country requirements for attendance during the previous year. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather created a spreadsheet with this information as per President Walker’s request, and will keep track of attendance. As of this moment, no commissioners currently fall into this category.

E. Women’s History Month

An exhibit will be created for Women’s History Month to display in the Rockville library. In keeping with the national theme of “Women Inspiring Innovation through Imagination,” it will focus on women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) careers. Commissioners were encouraged by President Walker Holloway to attend a march in Washington, D.C. when the women of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority will retrace the footsteps of their founders who participated in the Women's Suffrage March of 1913 on Sunday Morning, March 3rd, at 9am. It is open to the public and various women’s organizations will be in attendance.

III. STAFF REPORT.....Executive Director Vaughan-Prather

A. FY 12 Annual Report

The CFW’s annual report for FY 12 has been posted on the CFW website.

B. Front Desk Interns- JCA SCSEP

Both of the interns from the JCA SCSEP program who were scheduled to start work at the CFW last month, were unable to do so. One had a family emergency and the other accepted a placement at a location closer to her home. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather will continue to work with JCA in the hopes of finding another intern.

C. Counseling Services Development

The three part-time, temporary positions were advertised. Interviews have been held over the course of three days. A job offer has been made and accepted for the coordinator of the program. Interviews will continue for the additional two openings, and Executive Director Vaughan Prather is requesting help in finding a Spanish-speaking social worker.

D. Gun Violence Prevention Briefing

Representing both the MC CFW and the National Association of Commissions for Women (NACW), Executive Director Vaughan Prather attended a briefing sponsored by Women United for Gun Violence Prevention on Capitol Hill. Parents from Newtown and Virginia Tech spoke, many Congresswomen, and pollsters for the Democratic and Republican parties spoke as well. They stated that the media is creating the impression that this is a controversial issue in the United States, but it isn’t. Most Americans from both parties support increasing restrictions on gun sales.

Women, by far more than men, are in support of background checks and restrictions on gun sales, particularly assault weapons. They are hoping women’s organizations will take up this cause—because women perceive this issue differently than men. Research has found that for men it is a political issue, for women it is a personal issue. Men tend to believe we only need to change the rules about guns. Women see it as a broader cultural issue, and are concerned about violence throughout our society. Executive Director Vaughan Prather mentioned four planks of the platform advocated at this briefing::

- Mental health background checks for all gun purchases, including over the internet sales and sales between private individuals
- Ban on assault weapons
- Ban on high capacity magazines
- Making gun trafficking a federal offense

There is both federal and state legislation on this issue. The Commissioners decided to make this issues part of its legislative agenda for this year.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Program Planning Leadership Committee.....Mintz/Morales

A pair of seminars on the legal process of separation and divorce, in English and in Spanish, is scheduled for March 7, 2013 at 7:00p.m. Commissioner Alvarado volunteered herself and her husband to help with registration. Commissioners Callihan and Morales volunteered to help as well. Commissioners were asked to arrive at 6:00 p.m. to help with set-up. April and May seminars are on track. The last seminar had over 40 people, so we need volunteers.

B. Policy and Legislation Committee.....Bright Harris

1. 2013 WLB

The Commissioners all thanked Commissioners Bright Harris and Ilias for their extraordinary leadership of the WLB planning committee and the exception outcome. Next year’s WLB date is Sunday January 26th, 2014. Various suggestions were discussed to improve the briefing such as: microphones for the breakout rooms. The registration process received many compliments. Commissioners discussed the idea of creating a jump drive to hold all of the materials that are usually handed out. Commissioners discussed the proposal to develop a track for young people next year, a parallel set of seminars to engage young people in leadership training and an orientation to the legislative process. Commissioner Morales suggested that Running Start would be a good partner, and Commissioner Holmes mentioned that Rock the Vote would be a good partner as well.

2. Proposed Establishment of New CFW Committee.....Walker Holloway

The executive committee proposed establishing a policy and legislation (PAL) committee separate from the Women’s Legislative Briefing Planning Committee. The tasks for the Policy and Legislation Committee would be separate from the WLB and focus developing a legislative advocacy platform for the CFW and on preparation of written and oral testimony in Congress and the Maryland General Assembly. Commissioner Bright Harris moved that a policy and legislation committee be established, and Commissioner Moore seconded the motion. The motion was properly moved and seconded. The motion was approved unanimously. Commissioner Smith was nominated as the chair of the PAL Committee and she accepted the appointment.

3. Proposed MC CFW Legislative Agenda for 2013 MD General Assembly.....Smith
Commissioners Smith presented a list of federal and state that she recommended as the CFW's legislative agenda for 2013. After review and discussion the CFW accepted the proposal. Commissioner Smith will work with President Walker Holloway and Executive Director Vaughan-Prather to prioritize the bills and determine the level of action (testimony, correspondence, etc.) the CFW will assign to each bill.

President Walker Holloway testified today on the Earned Sick and Safe Days Legislation and Commissioner Forde is going tomorrow to testify on the Denial of Paternity, Custody and Visitation Bill (HB 715, and SB 620).

4. Working Matters Maryland Campaign for Paid Sick Days...Walker Holloway/ Forde
President Holloway attended the hearing in the House and delivered testimony. There were 27 speakers on the Bill. The first panel was the delegate who sponsored the bill, and the second panel was all research. Speakers included business owners, Bus Boys and Poets for example, small business owners that are having financial trouble and asked that it should not be legislated to enforce paid sick leave. Andy Shalal, the owner of Bus Boys and Poets delivered a wonderful testimony that received applause. The fourth panel consisted of employees, all men, and the fifth panel included public interest groups, including the CFW. Hearings in the Senate side started at 3pm, and the same panelists walked over (only one panel allowed there) for the second hearing on the House side.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Women's History Quilt Brochure..... Callihan
Commissioner Callihan sent an updated draft of the brochure to Executive Director Vaughan Prather the morning of this meeting.

2. Bylaws ReviewMorales
Commissioner Morales has reviewed the CFW Bylaws and proposed some modifications. They are being sent to the County Attorney for review and will be put forth for a vote by the June CFW meeting.

3. Publications on the WebsiteAlvarado
Commissioner Calihan offered to audit the CFW website and identify the sections that needed to be updated.

4. Malala Commendation
This topic was tabled until the next meeting.

VI. NEW BUSINESS.....President Walker Holloway
No new business was brought before the CFW.

VII. LIAISON REPORTS

A. MLAW.....Smith
Commissioner Smith attended the most recent meeting.

B. NACW (Staffing, Conference, Silent Auction).....Vaughan-Prather
The NACW executive director resigned unexpectedly. The national conference is planned for San Jose, CA this July. The planning committee is behind on fundraising but they requested member Commissioners to submit items for a silent auction. President Holloway suggested that Commissioner Holmes put together a basket to donate for silent auction in July. She suggested a basket on advocacy for women (a book, posters, etc.).

C. Teen Dating Violence Task Force/ Choose Respect Conference.....Alvarado
The annual teen dating violence conference is scheduled for this weekend.

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Montgomery Women’s Power Tea: Honoring Commissioner Holmes
Montgomery Women is honoring Commissioner Holmes with its Shining Star Award recognizing her lifetime of advocacy and leadership. President Walker Holloway, Commissioner Bright Harris, and Executive Director Vaughan-Prather are attending. The event will take place from 3-5 p.m., at the mansion at Strathmore. Executive Director Vaughan Prather suggested all Commissioners might want to be involved with Montgomery Women. Commissioner Holmes suggested the other Commissioners attend the panel at the seminar on April 10th, “How to lead like a woman”, at the town hall in Garrett Park, from 7-9pm.

IX. ADJOURNMENT..... President Walker Holloway
President Walker Holloway thanked all the commissioners for their hard work and mentioned she was trying to encourage all commissioners to use their skill set. The meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Montserrat Alvarado
Commissioner

APPROVED: March 20, 2013