

# Montgomery County Commission for Women

21 Maryland Avenue, Suite 330

## Summary of Discussion

September 11, 2014  
7:00pm

### Attending:

Linda Amendt  
Debra Bright Harris, President  
Daphnee Cherubin  
Natalia Farrar  
Lorna Forde  
Beatrice Lauman  
Guilia McPherson  
Barbara Mintz  
Farah Nageer-Kanthor  
Safia Qadri  
Angela Whitehead Quigley  
Heather Reichardt

### Absent:

Nick Martinez  
Karmen Rouland  
Katie Smith

### Staff:

Chickona Royster-Edwards

## **I. CALL TO ORDER..... President Bright Harris**

A. Approval of Agenda and Minutes. The meeting was called to order by President Bright Harris at 7:09pm. Commissioner Qadri moved to approve the agenda; Commissioner Forde seconded the motion and motion passed unanimously. President Bright Harris called for a motion to approve the August meeting minutes. Commissioner Farrar moved to amend the minute to include her name under the Policy and Legislation Committee. Commissioner Reichardt moved to approve the minutes with amendment. Commissioner Qadri seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

## **II. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT..... President Bright Harris**

A. President Bright Harris met with County Executive Ike Leggett and staff on Sept 3, 2014. The gist of the meeting was to discuss Executive Leggett's priorities for the Montgomery County Commission for Women and to propose to President Bright Harris that the position of Executive Director for the Commission for Women be restructured to an appointed position as opposed to a merit-based position within the county government. President Bright Harris summarized her discussion with the Executive and his staff and said that the Executive is committed to replacing the former Executive Director with another professional level person. He explained that most department heads in the county are appointed and he would like to make this position consistent with those other departments. President Debra Bright Harris agreed to take the discussion with Executive Leggett back to the full commission to get their thoughts on how to proceed and if they all agreed that an appointed position would help to maintain the important work of the Commission for Women.

President Bright Harris explained that the County Council will need to pass emergency legislation that would effectively make the change in the position from a merit-based one to an appointed one.

Executive Leggett's priorities include the continuation of the Human Trafficking Task Force as well as pay equity, supporting aging women in the county and immigrant women's issues.

- B. Finally, Executive Leggett offered to attend the October Commission for Women meeting in order to discuss his priorities with the full Commission.

The Commissioners brainstormed some topics to discuss with Executive Leggett when he attends the October meeting:

- Questions about the status of the counseling service and support from the Commission for Women were submitted electronically by Commissioner Smith.
- Would there be contract support for the new executive director?
- In the executive's view how can the Commission for Women better serve the women of our county?
- What are your priority initiatives to support immigrant women in the county?
- Commissioners Farrar, Cherubin and Nageer-Kanthor volunteered to do some research on the immigrant and aging women's issues in preparation for Executive Leggett's visit.

- C. President Bright Harris is planning to meet with the Montgomery County Human Rights Commission on September 24 to discuss collaboration and other issues.

**III. STAFF REPORT.....Interim Staff Royster Edwards**

- A. Interim Staff Royster Edwards is continuing to work with other county resources to get the Eventbrite website ready to accept registrations for the 2015 Women's Legislative Briefing. This is the reason that the initial planning meeting for the Briefing was postponed in September. Bev Thoms, who assisted with the WLB last year, is able to provide assistance to get the site up and running.
- B. Interim Staff Royster Edwards is also waiting on authorization from the County to be able to update the Commission's Facebook page.

**IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- A. Policy and Legislation.....**Rouland**
  - a. Subcommittees should be meeting and setting up agenda for the year
- B. Human Trafficking Task Force.....**Mintz**

The first public hearing scheduled for the HTTF for Sep 10 was cancelled due to the limited number of citizens who signed up in advance to speak at the meeting. In the meantime, Commissioner Mintz has been asked to talk to a number of groups regarding the Taskforce including OASIS. The next meeting is scheduled for Sept. 18, 2014 from 12-2 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conference room at the Rockville Library.
- C. CFW Scholarship.....**Lauman**

Commissioner Lauman contacted the Montgomery College Foundation Office and BL contacted MC Foundation Office and learned about the process involved in setting up a new scholarship at the school. There are additional pieces of information that need to be determined by the committee including 1) how much money to offer and 2) whether it is recurring or a one-time offer. Commissioner Lauman will work on a formal proposal and continue to work through the Montgomery College Foundation Office. She will also set up a conference call with the committee.

**V. LIAISON REPORTS**

**A. MLAW.....Cherubin**

The MLAW Annual Conference is scheduled for November 15. The President of MLAW, Michaele Cohen has asked if the Commission can sponsor the conference. Interim Staff Royster Edwards will research the files to see if the Commission has provided sponsorship in the form of funding in the past and report at the October meeting.

MLAW is looking to its members to help get younger men and women involved in the organization and interested in the legislative process in Annapolis. Commissioners Smith and Cherubin has volunteered to be a part of the MLAW outreach committee for this year.

**VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS.....President Bright Harris**

a. Women’s Equality Day letter to editor: Commissioners McPherson and Rouland had volunteered to write a letter to the editor of the Gazette newspaper under the bi-line of President Bright Harris regarding the significance of Women’s Equality Day. Senator Mikulski’s office had inquired a few days before Women’s Equality Day about what the Commission was doing to recognize the day. There was not much time to write the letter, but the Commissioners did get it finished. Unfortunately the letter was not printed; however a good contact was made in the editor’s office of the Gazette. We hope that this will assist with promotion of future events and other letters being published. Interim Staff Royster Edwards will attempt to get the letter posted to the Commission website and Facebook page. Kudos to Commissioners McPherson and Karmen on taking the ball and running with it!

**VII. NEW BUSINESS.....Reichardt/Smith**

- A. To discuss at the next meeting: MLAW and Other organizations – should we make contributions? What would our criteria be?
- B. Commissioner Forde serves on the Sister Cities board. Montgomery County wants to establish relationships around the world to promote economic and community service activities. The Commission for Women should have a presence in any delegations that are traveling to other countries as part of the Sister Cities program. The next trip is in November and the delegation will go to Hyderabad and Mumbai, India. Deadline is very soon to sign up but Commissioner Forde will keep the Commission informed of future trips.
- C. There will be a pre-meeting for the WLB committee leadership (Commissioners Forde and Smith and President Bright Harris) to discuss roles and responsibilities. Commissioners McPherson and Whitehead Quigley may also meet regarding the Teen Track section of the WLB.

**IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS.....All**

- A. Commissioner Farrar has graduated from Emerge Maryland! She reminds the Commission that we need more women in public office. Emerge is looking for more students for their next class which starts December 2014. Please look at their website of Facebook page if you are interested.
- B. Commissioner Farrar was elected to the Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee and wants the Commission to know that they are looking for precinct officials and volunteers to support the candidates in the general election in November.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business brought before the Commission, President Bright Harris adjourned the meeting at 8:41pm.