

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

Summary of Discussion

February 27, 2014

7:00 p.m.

Attending:

Maliha Ilias
Katie Smith
Farah Nageer-Kanthor
Karmen Rouland
Natalia Farrar
Nick Martinez
Linda Amendt
Heather Reichardt
Safia Qadri

Absent:

Chandra Walker Holloway, President
Debra Bright Harris
Manar Morales
Lorna Forde
Barbara Mintz

Staff:

Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director

I. Call to Order.....Second Vice-President Ilias

A. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

CFW President Walker Holloway is ill and unable to attend tonight's meeting. CFW First Vice President Bright Harris is out of town caring for an ill family member. CFW Second Vice President Ilias called the meeting to order at 7:17 p.m. Commissioner Rouland moved to approve the agenda for the meeting and the January meeting minutes. Commissioner Martinez seconded the motion which passed unanimously. The Commissioners thanked Commissioner Qadri for her generosity in providing the lovely dinner at tonight's meeting.

II. Executive Committee report..... Second Vice-President Ilias

A. Maryland Women's Hall of Fame

Henrietta Lacks had been nominated by the Commission and she will now be inducted into the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame. President Walker Holloway will present our nomination of Ms. Lacks at the March 20th event in Annapolis.

B. Montgomery County Council

Cherri Branson has been appointed by the County Council to replace Councilwoman Valerie Erwin who resigned in January to take another position.

C. CFW Book Discussion

The Commission book discussion for Sheryl Sandberg's 'Lean In' will be re-scheduled for March 6th and the discussion of Rebecca Skloot's book on Henrietta Lacks will be rescheduled to a as yet to be determined date in April. The new book club discussion dates will be determined at the next Commission meeting. (*Editors note: The March 6 date was cancelled due to inclement weather.*)

D. Commissioner Resignation

Commissioner Alvarado has resigned from the Commission. The Commission will find a replacement for Commissioner Alvarado at the time when other Commissioner seats will need to be filled for coming year. A candidate interview committee will be appointed at the next CFW meeting.

E. Maryland Human Rights Day in Annapolis

President Walker Holloway was invited to speak at an event on February 6th in Annapolis organized by the Maryland Association of Human Relations/Human Rights Organizations, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the enactment of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Commissioner Forde attended the event, as did Executive Director Vaughan-Prather who praised President Walker Holloway's speech as an eloquent summary of the history and impact of women's rights legislation in the U.S. It was clear that President Holloway had researched the topic well and put a great deal of thought into her presentation, which was very well received by the audience. The Commission requested that President Walker Holloway share her speech with the Commission when she has recovered.

F. CFW Social Media

As a result of discussion related to Joanne Bamberger's book on women, social media and American politics, Commissioner Reichardt is researching ways in which the Commission could use current social media technologies. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather mentioned that the use of any public forums take into account the truly 'public' and open nature of these forums. The Commission must be cognizant of this fact as it develops its plan for embracing social media to carry out its mission. A volunteer who helped the Commission with technologies related to the WLB has offered to help develop a Facebook page for the CFW. She can come in next week to work with Executive Director Vaughan-Prather and hopefully have a draft Facebook page to share with the CFW at its next meeting. The CFW enthusiastically approved this step and also asked Ms. Vaughan-Prather to get the Commission more information on the County's social policy. As a small part of a developing social media strategy for the CFW, Ms. Vaughan-Prather recommended the CFW consider having a committee of Commissioners who can tweet about the next WLB, before and during the event, to spread the word and garner interest.

III. Staff report.....Executive Director Judith Vaughan-Prather

A. Updating CFW Brochures

Executive Director Vaughan-Prather gave an update on the CFW brochures. The English and Spanish versions of the ‘Violence in Relationships’ brochure was recently requested by the organizers of the ‘Choose Respect’ conference, who included it in the packets for the conference participants. She is working with the MCPS Graphics office to urge the staff there to complete the updates to the remaining publications before the end of this fiscal year.

B. County Government Diversity Seminars

At the request of the Diversity Officer in the County’s Office of Human Resources, the Counseling Service has planned two seminars which are meant for County employees but are open to the public:

- **Special Issues Confronting Senior Women – March 19, 2014**
Commissioner Mintz has agreed to serve as moderator for this seminar.
- **Special Issues Confronting Muslim Women – April 8th, 2014**
Commissioner Qadri will be a panelist and Commissioner Ilias will moderate this seminar.

C. MC Women’s History Archives Publicity and Website Update

The CFW’s website includes the online archive of the biographies of 43 county women of historical significance to Montgomery County. The Archives were originally created in 2002 to commemorate the CFW’s 30th anniversary. Ten additional women were added in 2012 to commemorate the CFW’s 40th anniversary, and three more have been added since then, including newly inducted former Councilwoman Valerie Ervin and retiring Senator Jennie Forehand. The format of the Archives needs updating, as does the introductory page. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather has asked her high school student intern to review each biography to see where links associated with various organizations or other resources mentioned could be added. Any Commissioner interested in helping with this effort should contact Executive Director Vaughan-Prather.

D. CountyStat Survey Results

Ten Commissioners responded to the survey. Nine Commissioners completed to the survey and gave glowing feedback about their service on the Commission.

E. Counseling Statistics

The part time social worker positions must be eliminated by July 1 – as they were created as temporary positions. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather is exploring contracting out the counseling to a service provider in the county. The very valuable and skilled Counseling Coordinator Jamila Allouane has submitted her resignation to accept another position, so the timing may be fortuitous to make this transition.

IV. Committee Reports

A. 2014 Women’s Legislative Briefing (WLB).....Vaughan-Prather for Bright Harris

For this year’s annual event, over \$30,000 was raised through sponsorships and the sale of tickets, and a similar amount was spent on the Briefing. Seven hundred people attended this year’s WLB. The Briefing had 74 community sponsors, 40 exhibitors, and 63 speakers in all. This year’s Briefing was very well-received, with many special commendations for the addition of the Teen Track seminars.

B. Policy and Legislation Committee (PAL).....Smith

At this meeting, the Commission set its state legislative agenda for 2014. The CFW has already signed on in support of the Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW) agenda. At tonight’s meeting, the CFW added other bills, so that the entire MCCFW state legislative agenda includes the bills below, and the commissioners who agreed to serve as the CFW’s point person on each bill (monitoring the progress of the bill, drafting correspondence or testimony as necessary, advising the CFW if any further action is needed):

- HB 968/SB753: Earned Sick and Safe Time Act – enabling all employees in the state to earn a minimal amount of paid sick leave annually
 - Smith
- HB1026/SB737: Parental Leave bill – providing up to six weeks of unpaid leave to employees of smaller companies not covered by the FMLA
 - Walker Holloway
- HB696/LSBL78: Human Trafficking – making it a felony offense to traffic 18 – 20 year olds, even in the absence of force, fraud or coercion
 - Rouland
- HLB27/SB656: Healthy Births for Incarcerated Women Act - restricting the use of physical restraints on pregnant inmates during and after delivery
 - Amendt, Nageer-Kanthor
- HB309/SB334: Domestic Violence – Permanent Final Protective Orders - providing permanent final protective orders in cases of extreme or extended domestic violence
 - Rouland
- HB333/SB28: Family Law Peace and Protective Orders – Burden of Proof - changing the burden of proof required of petitioners seeking peace and protective orders from “clear and convincing evidence” to “a preponderance of the evidence”
 - Reichardt
- HB958/SB411: Rape Survivor Family Protection Act – denying paternity to the father of a child born as a result of rape
 - Ilias
- HB775/SB41: Domestic Violence – Persons Eligible for Relief - allowing victims of dating and sexual violence to seek protective orders, rather than peace orders, which will provide heightened protection
 - Reichardt

- HB295/SB331: Minimum Wage Act – raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 by 2016, linking future wage increases to inflation, raising the tipped wage from 50% to 75% of state minimum wage
 - Walker Holloway and Smith
- HB701/SB454: Child Kidnapping and Prostitution – raising the offense of abduction of a child under 16 to a felony, similar to that for human trafficking
 - Rouland and Ilias

C. Women’s History Month DisplayIlias, Reichardt and Amendt

The Commission requested the opportunity to design a display on the first floor of the Rockville Library in celebration of National Women’s History month. This year’s national theme is ‘Women of Character, Courage and Commitment’. The display should be set up by March 1st. Commissioner Ilias volunteered to coordinate this effort with the help of Commissioners Amendt and Reichardt. Commissioner Reichardt gave an update on the Committee’s progress and distributed the list of women the Committee will be showcasing in the display.

V. Unfinished Business

A. Financial Literacy Camps for Girls

MCPL staff asked the CFW for funding to help pay for a summer financial literacy for teen girls. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather explained to the MCPL staff that the CFW has no budget of its own and no ability to provide funds to other organizations, but that it would like very much to support this initiative. She shared the CFW’s offer to assist with publicity, registration, providing speaker. The MCPL staff declined the offer, thanking the CFW, but noting that it has plenty of resources for those purposes and only needs assistance with funding tuition for the students.

VI. New Business

A. Day of the Girl October 11th. 2014

The Commission agreed to table this till next meeting.

B. MD CFW Women of Tomorrow Awards

Each year, the Maryland CFW solicits nominations and awards teen girls who are actively contributing to the community or are in other ways achievers. Commissioner Bright-Harris helped select the awardees last year, and has been invited to help judge the nominations again this year.

C. Annual Meeting with County Executive

The County Executive will hold a two-part town hall meeting with representatives of the officially appointed Boards, Committees and Commissions next month. The CFW has been invited to send a delegation of two or three members to the event on March 11th from 6:30-8:30 pm. President Walker Holloway, Commissioners Bright-Harris, Ilias and Smith will plan to attend.

D. Briefing Requests

Two requests have been received to present briefings to the Commission. One request is from the Kaur Foundation to brief the Commission on special issues confronting the Sikh community. The second request is from the Community Action Board to brief the Commission on issues related to poverty and the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The Commissioners expressed interest in both topics and asked Ms. Vaughan-Prather to invite the organizations to CFW meetings. The first presentation will be scheduled for the March meeting the second for the April meeting.

E. MC Women’s Studies Breakfast

The Commissioners have been individually invited to Montgomery College Women’s and Genders Studies Scholarship Breakfast on the morning of the 13th of March. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather will attend. Several commissioners indicated their interest in the event as well.

VII. Liaison Reports

A. MLAW.....Smith

The Maryland General Assembly will finish this year’s session on April 17th. Legislative hearings and votes take place quickly and often with short notice during this time. Commissioners were urged to prepare the CFW correspondence on the bills for which they took responsibility and to get the drafts into the CFW office as quickly as possible so that appropriate action, as decided earlier in tonight’s meeting, may be taken.

B. Teen Dating Violence Task Force/Choose respect Conference.....Vaughan-Prather

The County’s teen dating violence conference, Choose Respect, was held on February 23. Several hundred attended the conference which met with great acclaim. Commissioner Lorna Forde represented the CFW on the conference planning committee and CFW President Walker Holloway not only attended but brought her Girl Scout Troop. At the request of the conference organizers, the CFW donated 150 copies each of its newly updated and printed Violence in Relationships brochure (in Spanish and in English) for inclusion in the packets.

VIII. Announcements

Commissioner Farrar has announced her official candidacy for the Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee. Commissioner Rouland has recently received a promotion at work. Commissioners commended both Commissioners Farrar and Rouland.

IX. Adjournment

The Meeting was adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

Minutes Submitted by
Maliha Ilias
Commissioner