

**Commission for Women  
General Meeting Minutes /In-Person  
March 13, 2025 / 7:09 – 8:26 p.m.**



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*“Women are always at the front of revolutions.”*

*Buthayna Kamel*

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Attendees

Arlinda Clark, Chair

Sheena Foster, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair

Michelle Buteau Georgia Coffey Jodi Danis Ijeoma Enendu

LaDonna King Tonja Paylor Elizabeth Richards Shuaa Tajammul Lindsey Turnbull

CFW Team Members

Jodi Finkelstein, Executive Director

Absent

Betty Romero, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair

Kathy Estrada

Mital Gajjar

Janet LaValle

**GENERAL MEETING MINUTES**

**1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS / CHAIR CLARK**

Visitor: Adaolisa Okwu – Commissioner Enendu’s daughter; attended the WLB

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND AGENDA / CHAIR CLARK**

Agenda accepted with amendments

Add Commissioners Michelle Buteau’s birthday to the agenda

Add the discussion of the position statements under old business

February’s minutes accepted as presented

**3. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE / CHAIR**

Add resources for county residents that need it

Jodi Finkelstein has been fantastic in pushing out resources to the community;  
recognized by the commission for her continued outstanding work

Recognized Commissioner Georgia Coffey for her leadership on steering the position statements

Nominating Committee Chair – Commissioner Michelle Buteau

Need 2 other commissioners for the committee; email Chair and Jodi Finkelstein if you want to serve on the committee

Present the slate in JUL

#### **4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT / JODI FINKELSTEIN**

Happy Women's History Month! Thank you to Commissioners Foster and Romero for attending the proclamation on 11 MAR

Women's History Celebration going well online

Take a moment to reflect on accomplishments and celebrate Women's History Month

Interviewing applicants for Spring Inters; limited to 3 including Summer Rise student

Deadline is Friday/14 MAR

Paid internship

Still waiting to hear back from Maryland School of Social Work and Howard School of Social Work on full-time intern

County continues to update resources and held webinars

Mutual Aid support group meeting in the library

Montgomery County library held session on converting

County Executive presenting his budget tomorrow (14 MAR/10-11am)

Expect some changes as the state budget impacts the county budget

Public hearings upcoming

#### **4. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Policy and Legislation / Commissioner Richards

HB 930 – Passed House (Abortion Fund)

Delegate Lopez encourages outreach

Crossover on 17 MAR

Program Planning / Commissioner Enendu

Career series starting 28 APR (4-5 seminars on Monday nights)

Sign up to proctor: Separation & Divorce, Financial Health series

Women Making History Event

Like on social media

3 APR – Brookside Gardens Event (6-9pm)

Will need help with setup  
Asking for \$300 for the event  
Montgomery Women has given \$300 for the event

The Committee moved to use \$300 from the General Contribution Restricted Fund for the Women Making History Event on 3 APR

Motion passes

Flan Cakes donated desserts for the event  
Council President Kate Stewart invited to be the speaker, putting together the panel

Need RSVP by 21 MAR – space is limited

3 APR is virtual career fair

#### Budget / Chair Clark

No report

#### Strategic Planning and Research Evaluation Committee/ Commissioner Foster

Meet on Tuesday/11 MAR

#### Emerging Leaders / Commissioner Turnbull

Girl Power contest is under way; question tweaked slightly  
Event table at RespectFest on 6 APR  
Need Commissioners to sign up

#### Public Relations / Commissioner Paylor & Commissioner Turnbull

Community Bridges GLOW Career Summit on 5 APR  
Move forward with Social Justice Fest at Walt Whitman High School on 29 MAR  
Social media posts look great!

#### Women's Legislative Briefing / Chair Clark

Reviewed WLB survey/after action review  
Food was the most frequent item brought up for improvement  
Next planning meeting 21 APR

#### SOP / Chair Clark

No report

## **7. LIAISON REPORTS**

MLAW / Commissioner Foster

All of MLAW bills have had their hearings  
17 MAR is crossover day, expecting more activity at that time

Human Trafficking Prevention (HTP) / Executive Director, Jodi Finkelstein

Meeting next week, presenter on Asian bodywork establishments

Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (DVCC) / Commissioner King

Quarterly meeting today – RespectFest (virtual component 30 MAR -5 APR)

Maryland Commission for Women/Executive Director, Jodi Finkelstein

No report

Choose Respect / Commissioner Gajjar

No report

Community Health Initiative / Commissioner LaValle

No report

CFW Scholarship /Commissioner Foster

Montgomery College Foundation will have their event on 11 APR at 11:30am-2pm

Commissioner Foster, Executive Director Jodi Finkelstein attending;  
please let them know if you would like to attend as well

**8. AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORT(S)**

By-Laws / Chair Clark

Vote on by-laws in JUN  
Expect email asking for review/updates

**9. OLD BUSINESS**

Discussion on position statements  
Commissioner Danis recused herself and left the room

Commissioner Coffey outlined the need for a statement on the recent executive orders and how they impact women  
Worked by PALS and SPRE  
2 versions of position statements

**Question: Do we want to cover both federal workforce and DEI in one statement or different statements?**

Recommend expand DEI to DEIA  
Needs to be one page  
Fact sheet on DEI on what it is and what it means  
Public relations rollout (myth vs fact)  
County has Office on Racial Equity and Social Justice and the Office on Human Rights  
Recommend partnering with Tiffney and Office of Human Rights on this initiative

Anything we write will need to be reviewed by the county  
In the past the commission has issued statements, will be shared with the Public Information Office  
County Executive has already sent strong messages on these topics

**Question: Do we support issuing a statement as a commission on the impact on the executive orders?**

All in favor in issuing a statement

**Question: W**

Duplicative of what comes out from the county  
Focus on the impact to women  
Include  
Office of Human Rights might be interested in doing a joint statement in the future  
First statement more generic, and focus on the resources; shorter statement

Recommendation to draft template for future statements

Director Jim Stowe, Director of Office of Human Rights came to meeting  
Enforcing county laws on civil rights  
Staffed to the Committee Against Hate Violence, Interagency Coordinating Group, and other groups  
Investigate sex discrimination complaints  
Navigating how to interact within the new environment  
Would love to partner with Commission for Women  
How to give voice to community members  
Listening sessions

Share feedback and edit in the commission's Google Drive

Draft: Who we are, negative affect of women, how we feel, resources  
Montgomery County, female federal workers

Check Department of Labor Women's Bureau

Generic statement for now, then specific

Deadline: Sunday, 16 MAR

**10. NEW BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Happy birthday to Commissioners Buteau and Enendu

**11. Meeting Adjourned – 8:26 pm**

CFW In Person Meetings Scheduled: 12 JUN 25