

Commission for Women
Meeting Minutes/Virtual
October 9, 2025 / 7:00 p.m.



Present

Sheena Foster, Chair
Betty Romero, 1st Vice Chair
Janet LaValle, 2nd Vice Chair
Mital Gajjar, Member at Large
Shuaa Tajammul, Secretary

Tiffany Boiman
Michelle Buteau
Georgia Coffey
Jodi Danis
Shannon Owens Harden
Elizabeth Richards
Lindsey Turnbull

CFW Team Members

Jodi Finkelstein

Guests

Donna Rojas Thompson

Absent

None

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

1. Welcome/Introductions/Chair Foster

- a. Donna Rojas Thompson – former Commissioner and chair
- b. New Commissioners
 - i. Shannon Owens Harden
 - ii. Tiffany Boiman
- c. Existing Commissioner introductions

2. Re-Entry Presentation/Donna Rojas Thompson

- a. Rojas Consulting, works in re-entry space helping businesses and people do re-entry the right way
- b. Spoke about re-entry program for incarcerated women. Slides from presentation available or attached to Minutes.

Commission for Women
Meeting Minutes/Virtual
October 9, 2025 / 7:00 p.m.



- c. REAP Program- Resilient Empowered Authentic Progressing
 - i. Focused program for women to give a holistic approach to re-entry, i.e. emotional wellness/self-care, relationship/coping skills, career/financial readiness, entrepreneurs/personal growth, small group format for authentic connection.
- 3. Approval of Minutes and Agenda/Chair Foster and Commissioner Tajammul**
 - a. Agenda and Minutes: APPROVED
- 4. Executive Committee Report/Chair Foster and Executive Director Jodi Finkelstein**
 - a. Clarksburg Jail Visit doodle poll re: scheduling
 - b. 60th Anniversary Brunch for MD CFW that supported scholarships.
 - i. Event was well-attended by a large cross-section of attendees from County Commissions for Women, politicians, Judges, at beautiful venue
- 5. Executive Director's Report/ Executive Director Jodi Finkelstein**
 - a. In-person meeting on December 11, 2025
 - i. Sign-up to bring a dish
 - b. October is:
 - i. Breast Cancer Awareness Month proclamation by Council next Tuesday
 - ii. DV Awareness Month proclamation by Council on 10/21
 - c. Interns are doing well. Great site visit from U of MD Faculty Liaison – CFW is doing great job
 - d. The county Exec is having community meetings and conversations about the budget with the public
 - e. Need to reinvigorate committees and get new leadership on some of them, i.e. Programming
- 6. Committee Reports/Votes**
 - a. PALS/Commissioner Richards:
 - i. meeting moved to next week to accommodate WLB Planning last night
 - ii. 12/11/25 beginning at 9am is virtual Lobby Day
 - b. Programming and Planning/ Executive Director Jodi Finkelstein
 - i. All programs are in full swing

Commission for Women
Meeting Minutes/Virtual
October 9, 2025 / 7:00 p.m.



- ii. People are signing up for financial health and wellness
- iii. Had our first self-defense class (reimagined) and it went very well
- iv. Self-defense class for high schoolers as part of EmpowerHer
- v. Just did a tabling event at MC that went very well
- vi. Committee encourages ideas and thoughts on new programs or enhancing current programs
- vii. Women Making History event with Montgomery Women: Chair Foster mentioned chairing this event if necessary, contact from former Commissioner Enendu
 - 1. If not Programming Chair, someone can serve as liaison with Montgomery Women
 - 2. Meeting at end of October so announcement can go out at end of November
- viii. Sign-ups to present seminars will be resent
- c. Budget/Chair Foster
 - i. None
- d. SPRE/Commissioner Coffey
 - i. SPRE Committee meeting with County Council President Stewart on 11/5 in-person for 1 hour to brief on new Strategic Plan and implementation
 - ii. Slide deck editing in progress
 - iii. Invite ideas for research and evaluation
 - iv. Seeking members
- e. WLB/Commissioners Romero and LaValle
 - i. WLB is our largest event.
 - ii. January 31, 2026 at Univ. at Shadygrove
 - iii. Confirmed 2 keynote speakers and one moderator
 - iv. Sponsorship package will be distributed
 - v. Breakout session topics agreed, need speakers
 - 1. Reproductive health and menopause, changes in insurance and access to healthcare

Commission for Women
Meeting Minutes/Virtual
October 9, 2025 / 7:00 p.m.



- 2. Safety: AI and Physical
- 3. Immigration
- 4. Finances/Economic Empowerment
- f. Emerging Leaders/Commissioner Gajjar
 - i. Revamping committee and looking for new members
 - ii. Brainstorming ideas and will start with survey re: youth needs/young adults/girls
 - iii. October Nat'l Disability Employment Awareness Month
 - 1. Pair with Programming Committee for career workshop
 - iv. How to make County more inclusive for girls with disabilities
- g. Public Relations/Commissioner Turnbull
 - i. Google survey to get to know Commissioners for our social media, will resend
 - ii. Social media ideas and to streamline social media process

7. Liaison Reports

- a. MLAW/Chair Foster
 - i. Stepping down as liaison, CFW needs a new liaison: Commissioner Harden interested to learn more
 - ii. MLAW needs new board members
 - iii. MLAW Conference on 11/1 in Columbia, tickets are \$50
- b. HTPC/Executive Director Finkelstein
 - i. CFW supports this committee, which is separate from CFW
 - ii. Need new liaison to committee
 - 1. Meetings 6x a year on Wednesdays from 12pm to 1:30pm
 - 2. Must attend meetings, sit on committees if possible, and reporting back to CFW about work
 - 3. CFW has official liaison according to legislation
 - iii. Currently working on outreach programs
- c. DVCC/Executive Director Finkelstein
 - i. Need a liaison for that: Commissioner Tajammul interested in serving

Commission for Women
Meeting Minutes/Virtual
October 9, 2025 / 7:00 p.m.



- d. MD CFW/Executive Director Finkelstein an Chair Foster
 - i. Brunch discussed previously – MD CFW interested in menopause-related work, connected with Commissioner Boiman
 - e. Choose Respect/Executive Director Finkelstein
 - i. Will gear up, no meetings yet
 - ii. Project of DVCC where they put together a day of events for youth and their families that talk about healthy relationships in-person and virtual
 - f. CFW Scholarship/Chair Foster
 - i. Our endowed stem scholarship at MC with Foundation, each semester
 - ii. Every year annual scholarship luncheon that we attend and meet student who has scholarship
 - g. Community Health Needs Adv. Committee/ Commissioner LaValle
 - i. Health Mont. Co. had retreat on 9/8/25 and covered resources, court, CHIP (Community Health Improvement Plan), DHHS update
 - ii. Next meeting on 11/17 (meet quarterly)
- 8. Ad Hoc Committees**
- a. By-Laws/ Janet LaValle
 - i. Seeking more members
- 9. Old Business**
- a. None
- 10. New business/Announcements**
- a. Some committees need chairpersons; Must email Commission, but Committees choose own chairs
 - b. G Drive access for Commissioners
 - c. Exec. Director Finkelstein does not bamboozle anyone to lead!!
- 11. Adjourned**