

# Maryland Commission for Women

## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 20, 2018

3 p.m.

45 Calvert Street ♦ Annapolis, MD

### Commissioners Attending:

Yun Jung Yang, Chair  
Tawanda Bailey, First Vice Chair  
Carole Jaar Sepe, Second Vice Chair  
Lee Bachu T/C  
Deborah Cartee  
Maureen Colburn  
Amanda Costley  
Melissa Curtin  
Eugenia Henry  
Lauren Lambert  
Bonnie Luna  
Ishrat Memon  
April Nyman  
Corinna Shen  
Evelyne Steward T/C

Ummu Bradley Thomas  
Tamara England Wilson T/C  
Marylou Yam

### Commissioners Absent:

Homayara Aziz  
Tammy Bresnahan  
Gloria Chang  
Brenda McChriston  
Roberta Pardo  
Patrisha Robinson

### Staff Attending:

Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director  
Tammy Wise, Management Associate

## I. Call to Order.....Chair Yang

The meeting was called to order at 3:11 p.m. by MCW Chair Yang who welcomed those in attendance. Two new commissioners, Eugenia Henry and Melissa Curtin were appointed by the Governor in July. Chair Yang invited all those in attendance to introduce themselves to one another. She called for approval of the minutes of the June 21 meeting. Commissioner Thomas moved approval of the minutes as submitted. Commissioner Nyman seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Chair Yang then called for approval of the agenda for tonight's meeting. The Executive Director added one item to the Business Meeting section. Commissioner Cartee moved approval of the agenda as amended. The motion, seconded by Commissioner Yam, passed unanimously.

## II. Business Meeting

### A. Proposed Bylaws Amendments.....Commissioner Cartee

The Bylaws Committee (the MCW's three new officers and Commissioner Cartee) was convened in July and was asked to finish the review begun more than a year ago and submit recommended proposed changes for a vote at the September meeting. MCW Bylaws require that the commissioners receive notice of any proposed changes 30 days before voting on those changes. The proposed changes were submitted to the Commissioners on August 17 in advance of today's Commission's meeting.

The Bylaws Review Committee originally proposed changes in April 2017, but a vote was never taken on those proposals. The Committee is now recommending those changes plus additional changes and re-organization of the basic content to place related topics in sequence.

Many changes were proposed, most having to do with organization, eliminating repetition, conflicting provisions, etc. The five major proposed changes are:

Topic	Current Bylaws	Proposed Change
Officers' Titles	<u>3 Officers:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair</li> <li>• Vice Chair</li> <li>• Secretary</li> </ul>	<u>3 Officers:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair</li> <li>• First Vice Chair</li> <li>• Second Vice Chair</li> </ul>
Election of Vacancies in Officers	Vacancy for any officer requires a new election within 31 days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If Chair becomes vacant, First Vice Chair takes over for the remainder of the term.</li> <li>• If First Vice Chair is vacant, Second Vice Chair takes over for the remainder of the term.</li> <li>• If Second Vice Chair is vacant, an election is held if more than 90 days from next regular election.</li> <li>• If all 3 officer positions become vacant at the same time, an election is held within 31 days.</li> </ul>
Standing Committees	<u>6 Standing Committees</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislation &amp; Public Policy</li> <li>• Education &amp; Outreach</li> <li>• Health &amp; Wellness</li> <li>• Public Relations &amp; Communication</li> <li>• Women's Hall of Fame</li> <li>• Women of Tomorrow</li> </ul>	<u>2 Standing Committees:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy and Legislation (PAL): former Legislation &amp; Public Policy</li> <li>• Achievement and Recognition Committee (ARC): combined Women's Hall of Fame and Women of Tomorrow</li> </ul>
Ad Hoc Committees	Create as needed. Currently, we have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bylaws</li> <li>• Listening Tour</li> </ul>	Create as needed to address specific issues or new initiatives, limit to a maximum of two (2) at any given time.
Women of Tomorrow Awards	Solicit nominations for awards for middle and high school students	Solicit nominations for high school students only

After some discussion, Commissioner Luna moved approval of all the proposed changes to the Bylaws and adoption of the Bylaws as amended, effective immediately. The motion, seconded by Commissioner Yam, passed unanimously.

**B. Delegation to Taiwan.....Commissioner Shen**  
Commissioners Shen and Henry have both been invited to participate in a delegation of 25 Americans, including Maryland Senator Susan Lee, traveling to The Republic of China (Taiwan) this year. They will meet with high level officials there. Commissioner Shen proposed that she and Commissioner Henry be delegated by the Maryland Commission for Women as its representatives so that they may discuss the work of the Commission, including the recently concluded Voices of Maryland Women Listening Tour project. Commissioner Thomas moved, seconded by Commissioner Luna, endorsement of their participation in this delegation as representatives of the Maryland Commission for Women. The motion passed unanimously.

**C. Open Meetings Act Training.....Chair Yang**  
All state boards and commissions are required to have at least one board member who has taken the official training for the Open Meetings Act. First Vice Chair Bailey and Second Vice Chair Sepe have both taken the training and have filed their certificates with the Commission's office. Commissioner Thomas has also taken the training and will file her certificate with the offices as well. Commission Chair Yang intends to take the training soon. Any other commissioners interested in taking the online training may contact the MCW office and the link will be sent to them.

**D. Women's Addiction Recovery Services.....Executive Director Vaughan-Prather**  
The Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) is hoping to receive funds from the U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau to provide job-readiness services to women recovering from substance addictions, from the Opioid Workforce Development Fund. DLLR would use these funds to award two contracts to seed new ideas and innovations serving women impacted by the opioid epidemic. It would also develop a new occupational training program at the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women. DLLR has requested a letter of support for its proposal. Commissioner Curtin moved that the MCW send a letter of support for DLLR's grant proposal. The motion, seconded by Commissioner Cartee, passed unanimously.

### **III. Annual Planning Meeting**

#### **A. Orientation to the Planning Process**

Chair Yang reviewed the purpose of today's meeting, the mission and enabling legislation of the MCW, and the roles and responsibilities of commissioners and staff throughout the year, including the attendance requirements delineated in the MCW's legislation. She encouraged all commissioners to participate in planning the coming year's activities, noting that with the just approved Bylaw changes and the completion of the Listening Tour, the Commission now has the opportunity to initiate a new project.

#### **B. 2017 – 2018 Committee Activities & Consideration Current Commitments**

Chair Yang asked Committee Chairs and Liaisons to other organizations to briefly review their work over the past year and to list any recommendations for the coming year.

- 1. Hall of Fame and Women of Tomorrow:** Commissioner Sepe reported on the two awards committees which have just been combined into one for the coming program year. Last year, five women were inducted into the Hall of Fame and five girls received Women of Tomorrow Awards. The two former committees each solicited nominations during the fall and created independent selection committees to determine the honorees. The two

committees then worked together to plan the awards/induction ceremony in March. This year, a single committee will coordinate the process for both awards.

- 2. Legislation and Public Policy:** Commissioner Bresnahan chaired this committee for the past few years. During the General Assembly session, the committee reviews a number of bills of specific concern to women and those supported by the Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW). It develops the MCW's own legislative platform. MLAW plans to hold its Fall Conference on November 17 this year, during which it develops its list of bills to support. For two years, the MCW invited the county CFWs in Maryland to attend the briefing and then meet with each other and the MCW in a roundtable event immediately afterwards. Because of the Listening Tour activities, the MCW did not do that in 2017. The MCW sponsored the MLAW conference, and the annual Women's Legislative Briefing coordinated by the Montgomery County Commission for Women and provided several speakers and an exhibit table at that large conference. The MCW sent written testimony on 13 bills in the Maryland General Assembly.
- 3. Voices of Maryland Women Listening Tour:** Chair Yang thanked her entire committee for its hard work. All the members have been involved in traveling around the state to conduct these public forums. The Listening Tour conducted 19 sessions and published surveys in four languages. In all, more than 1400 women participated. The project wrapped up with the publication of its report listing the "top five" issues identified by the women of Maryland who participated in the Listening Tour, and concluded with a conference to release the report and a panel discussion on those top five issues held August 18 on the campus of Notre Dame of Maryland University in Baltimore. First Vice Chair Bailey reported that more than 100 people attended the conference which was organized by the MCW's Education and Outreach Committee. Very positive feedback has been received. Since then, Chair Yang has been invited to participate in a CTV News interview in Prince George's County on September 11, and was the featured speaker at an AAUW Montgomery County meeting in Rockville on September 15. She will be speaking at a program about women and diversity at the Maryland Museum of African Art in Howard County on September 22.
- 4. MCW Liaisons in FY 18**

  - **Maryland Women's Heritage Center:** Commissioner Bachu served as the MCW's liaison to the MWHC Board of Directors for the past year. The MWHC is a non-profit resource and information provider. It was formerly housed in Baltimore but has no physical location right now and is seeking a new home.
  - **Maryland WAG Foundation:** Established as a non-profit organization in June 2017, the foundation's goal is to raise funds to support programs of the MCW. It supported the Hall of Fame/Women of Tomorrow program in 2017 and the Voices of Maryland Women conference this year. Commissioner Shen is the President, Commissioners Nyman, Steward, Thomas and Yang all serve on the Board. Each Board member must contribute or raise \$1000 per year for the foundation. Commissioner Henry, who donated a \$5000 sponsorship for this year's Hall of Fame/Women of Tomorrow ceremony, just donated another \$5000 to the foundation this week! Commissioner Curtin noted that all commissioners should support the foundation with any amount with which they are comfortable.

- **MLAW:** The Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women is a coalition of women’s organizations across the state formed to advocate for women’s issues in the Maryland legislature. A non-profit organization, it convenes a fall conference each year to solicit recommendations for bills to include on its legislative platform. Each member organization and individual may then vote on the issues proposed to determine which bills will be selected. The MCW was a co-sponsor of the MLAW conference and a member of the organization, but did not sign onto the agenda this year. Commissioner Luna raised concerns about whether MLAW, its conference and its agenda are non-partisan and noted that she has heard complaints that speakers at MLAW events are definitely partisan in their presentations. Commissioner Bachu was the MCW liaison to MLAW last year.
- **Incarcerated Women Moving Forward Conference:** Commissioner Bailey provided the MCW’s liaison to the planning committee for a conference inside the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women. It offers preparation for women who are within six to nine months of release.
- **19<sup>th</sup> Amendment Commemoration Commission:** Commissioners Bachu and Yam have served as the MCW’s liaison to this board whose mission is to plan and coordinate the state’s activities in recognition of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women’s gaining the right to vote in the U.S.
- **WLB Planning Committee:** Each year, the Montgomery County CFW coordinates a large briefing on legislation of concern to women. As many as 600 – 700 people attend and at least 50 women’s and community organizations support the event. The MCW has typically contributed a sponsorship, a delegate to the planning committee, commissioners have served as seminar speakers and we have helped with publicity and program planning. Management Associate Tammy Wise attended the first planning meeting this month, and it is hoped that a commissioner will serve as a liaison too.
- **NACW:** Executive Director Vaughan-Prather is a member of the board of directors for the National Association of Commissions for Women. It is also a non-profit organization that works to support CFWs across the country by offering training, networking and sharing of strategies. At its annual conference in California, this year, Vaughan-Prather helped present a seminar on the Listening Tour and NACW hopes to launch a Voices of American Women project this year. Commissioner Curtin suggested that every commissioner consider joining NACW as an associate member to support its work.
- **Maternal Mortality Review Stakeholders Group:** A new board being established, the MCW is invited to send a liaison. It is likely to meet a couple times per year during “normal business hours” in Baltimore.

## C. Identification of Key Priorities and Initiatives for 2018 – 2019

### 1. Identify Priority Initiatives and Activities for FY 19

Two proposals for new initiatives were presented. Chair Yang proposed planning and sponsoring a state-wide conference in August of 2020, in commemoration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women’s winning the right to vote. The focus of the conference would be on women’s leadership as a legacy of suffrage.

Commissioner Steward presented a written proposal for creating a program that would certify or recognize businesses that are “great places to work” for women. Businesses could apply for recognition, or something like a “seal of approval” based on key criteria such as:

- Family-friendly policies
- Women and leadership programs
- Health and wellness benefits and programs
- Diversity and inclusion policies, and much more

Commissioners found the proposal intriguing and commended Commissioner Steward for the time and thought she put into developing it. After considerable discussion, the Commissioners concluded that it seems imperative that the Commission do something significant to recognize the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the enactment of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment (August 26, 2020), and that arranging a conference for that purpose would take most of the Commission’s resources, since it will still organize the Hall of Fame and Women of Tomorrow Awards each year, and will still have an active legislative advocacy program as well.

Commissioner Thomas moved that the Commission establish one ad-hoc committee this year, and that the new committee’s purpose will be to plan and implement a 2020 Conference. Commissioner Costley seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

The consensus was that the conference will:

- Be statewide in focus – inviting the county and city commissions for women as partners
- Highlight women’s leadership, offering seminars on women’s leadership development
- Include focus on developing a pipeline for girls to become the leaders of the future, possibly inviting high schools or other youth organizations to collaborate
- Be held in Annapolis
- Require no fee to attend (Maryland WAG will be asked to raise funds for the conference)
- Include a focus on the history of women’s rights in the U.S.
- Be organized in partnership with the Commission to Commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution of the U.S., if that commission is willing, but the MCW will sponsor the conference, with or without that partnership

## **2. Appointment of Committee Chairs and Formation of Committees**

Chair Yang appointed the following commissioners to chair and to serve on the Commission’s major committees for FY 19:

### **a. PAL (Policy and Legislation) – Commissioner Bresnahan**

- Costley
- Colburn
- Curtin
- Robinson (to be invited)

### **b. ARC (Awards and Recognition Committee) – Commissioner Cartee**

- Costley
- Luna
- Memon
- Nyman
- Shen
- Thomas

**c. 2020 Conference Planning Committee – Commissioner Henry**

- Colburn
- Curtin
- Lambert
- Memon
- Shen
- Steward
- Wilson
- Yam

*Editors Note: It was decided later in the meeting that every commissioner should serve actively on this committee.*

**3. Sponsorship of Key Events:**

The Commission considered the events it has sponsored over the past year and discussed commitments for this year. Commissioner Luna raised concerns about political bias she observed at some of the events. It was recommended that the coordinator of any event to which the Commission lends its name be advised of the Commission’s need to be completely non-political in its activities, focusing on issues not on political parties. Commissioner Colburn moved, seconded by Commissioner Costley, that the Commission support the following events for FY 19. The motion passed with one opposed.

• MLAW Membership	\$125
• MLAW Fall Conference	100
• CFW Roundtable Conference at MLAW (30 tickets)	1500
• NAACP Maryland WIN Event (5 tickets)	164
• MCASA Membership	200
• MCASA Legislative Reception (2 tickets)	120
• Women’s Legislative Briefing	155
• MCIW WMF Conference	200
• MD NADV Membership	200
• MD NADV Conference	250
• NACW Membership	275

**4. Liaison Assignments:**

Rather than assign the liaisons from the MCW to other organizations this evening, Chair Yang asked the Commissioners to review the list of “official” liaisons and to let her know, via email, by Friday, September 28, if they would like to take on the responsibility of representing the Commission on one of these organizations. She said that she would assign only one liaison responsibility per commissioner so that more commissioners have the opportunity to serve. She emphasized the expectation that a commissioner who volunteers to serve as a liaison to another organization will attend the meetings of that organization and responsibly represent the Commission in that organization’s activities.

**IV. Wrap Up and Adjournment.....Chair Yung**

The committee chairs were encouraged to convene a meeting/conference call and come to the October MCW meeting prepared to propose a work plan for approval. Staff can help with this.

It was agreed that the entire Commission will need to work on the 2020 Conference, and that some time should be devoted at each Commission meeting to planning the conference.

The Chair asked that each commissioner block off the third Thursday of every month, except December, July and August, and hold those dates on her calendar for the Commission meetings:

- October 18
- November 15
- January 17
- February 21
- March 21 – Hall of Fame/Women of Tomorrow Ceremony
- April 18
- May 16
- June 20

The Chair thanked all the Commissioners in attendance for their time and very thoughtful deliberations in this meeting. She thanked the Commissioners who volunteered to chair the Commission's committees and said that she is looking forward to working with everyone on this challenging and important agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

***Respectfully submitted***

Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director  
Maryland Commission for Women

**APPROVED: October 18, 2018**