

Maryland Commission for Women

Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 18, 2017
5 p.m.

Attman-Glazer Building – Room 158 ♦ 45 Calvert Street, Annapolis, Maryland

Commissioners Attending:

Lee Bachu, Chair
Homayara Aziz
Tawanda Bailey
Marianne Brackney T/C
Tammy Bresnahan
Deborah Cartee
Gloria Chang
Lorna Forde
Nicole Ingram T/C
April Nyman
Anita Riley
Carole Jaar Sepe
Corinna Shen
Ummu Bradley Thomas
A. Diane Williams, Vice Chair
Tamara England Wilson

Marylou Yam T/C
Yun Jung Yang

Commissioners Absent:

Wandra Ashley-Williams, Secretary
Velvet Johnson
Doris Ligon
Bonnie Nelson Luna
Marion Manski

Staff Attending:

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

Guest Attending:

Carrie Meyers

I. Call to Order.....Chair Lee Bachu

A. Call to Order:

Chair Bachu called to order at 5:20 p.m. She welcomed everyone and asked them to introduce themselves to one another.

B. Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Wilson moved approval of the agenda for the evening's meeting. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather added one item. The agenda, as amended, was approved unanimously.

C. Approval of Minutes:

Commissioner Yang moved approval of the minutes of the April 20 MCW meeting. Commissioner Bresnahan seconded the motion which passed.

II. Chair’s Report.....Chair Bachu

A. Commissioner Resignation

Chair Bachu announced regretfully that Commissioner Ramirez has submitted her resignation from the Commission effective May 15 due to the difficulty in balancing the needs of her young family with the demands of the MCW activities. Commissioner Ramirez contributed significantly to the MCW’s work over the almost five years she has served and she will be missed. She was chair of the Communications and Public Relations Committee and has done much to improve and enhance the MCW’s social media presence. Until the June meeting when new committee chairs will be appointed, Chair Bachu has asked Commissioner Nyman, who is a member of that committee, to coordinate its work. Commissioner Ingram has been consulting with the staff recently to help with the MCW Facebook page.

B. MCW Annual Planning Meeting – June 15

The MCW meeting next month is scheduled for June 15. This will be the MCW’s annual planning meeting where the work of the past year will be evaluated and plans for the coming program year will be set in place. The MCW committees will be formed and committee chairs appointed. To provide sufficient time for planning, the meeting will begin at 3 p.m. Staff was asked to see if a meeting room could be found at the public library building in Ellicott City since traffic around Annapolis that time of year can be a problem.

C. June Executive Committee Meeting

The June Executive Committee meeting will be held via conference call on June 6 at 5 p.m. Staff will send the conference call numbers to the members of the Executive Committee. This will be an important meeting as its purpose is to plan the planning meeting.

III. Unfinished Business

NAACP WIN Forum: The MCW Executive Committee decided to purchase tickets for four commissioners to attend the Women in the NAACP Forum and Brunch at the national NAACP conference in Baltimore on Sunday, July 23. Secretary Ashley-Williams will attend as a representative of the NAACP. Commissioners Thomas and Bailey volunteered to represent the MCW at this event, along with Chair Bachu and Vice Chair A. Diane Williams.

IV. Committee Reports

A. Hall of Fame/Women of Tomorrow.....Commissioners Brackney and Sepe

The HOF and WOT planning committees met jointly via conference call earlier this week. It was widely agreed that both programs were very successful and the ceremony was a very nice event, made especially important by the participation of Maryland’s First Lady Yumi Hogan.

A few recommendations for next year’s planning committees are:

- Limit the number of honorees for the HOF to no more than six.
- Insert much shorter “bios” for the HOF honorees in the script for the ceremony.
- Shorten the period of time open to receive nominations for the WOT. (It was more than six weeks this year, and should probably be only four weeks.)

- Develop a strategy for handling the large volume of nominations for the WOT awards. The large number is good. It is a huge job to ask each member of the selection committee to evaluate all those nominees.
- Consider having WOT nominations open only for high school students.
- With regard to fundraising, the donations on Eventbrite worked well for small donors but new sponsors will be needed for next year, as the total funds raised were about \$500 less than the cost of the ceremony. In previous years, the committee has raised somewhat more money than was needed, and the “excess” funds remained in the account of the Friends of the Commission for Women.

B. Listening Tour.....Commissioners Yang and Ingram

The Listening Tour traveled to Hood College in Frederick County last week. Commissioner Ingram had a conflict so Commissioner Bailey co-facilitated the forum with Commissioner Yang. The event went very well with much good information provided. Local television station WHAG covered the event and posted a report online. So far, there have been 10 sessions with a combined participation of over 480 people! The Voices of Maryland Women will travel next to Charles County on Tuesday May 23, Anne Arundel County on June 8, and then to Harford County on July 11. There are at least three more to schedule after that, and it is hoped that all the forums will have been conducted by the end of this calendar year. The top five issues surfacing among the many sessions so far are:

- Affordable, quality child care
- Domestic violence and sexual assault, including special concerns for the immigrant community
- Pay Equity
- Affordable housing for low income women
- Too few women in public office

C. Education and Outreach Committee.....Commissioner Bailey

The Women Moving Forward Conference Steering Committee had a Capstone Research Project conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the WMF conference over the years in helping formerly incarcerated women re-enter their families and communities. Through a series of focus groups and interviews, the researchers concluded that it is very beneficial to the women who attend. The women asked for additional services once they are released from the MCIW, and also provided suggestions for future workshop topics for the WMF conference. Earlier this week, the steering committee held a wrap-up meeting and discussed the possibility of offering programs throughout the year instead of only at the annual conference. Members of the steering committee were invited to attend quarterly meetings of the Department of Corrections Incarcerated Women’s Work Group. Both Commissioners Bailey and Wilson volunteered to attend. Commissioner Bailey will write to the Warden to make the necessary arrangements.

D. Legislation and Public Policy..... Commissioner Bresnahan

Letters have been sent to Senator Zirkin, Chair of the Senate Judicial Proceeding Committee and Delegate Vallario, Chair of the House Judiciary Committee, expressing the MCW’s disappointment that the Rape Survivor Family Protection Act (SB 574/HB 428) failed in committee and urging their leadership in passing this legislation in the

next session of the Maryland General Assembly. Vice Chair A. Diane Williams asked that copies of those letters be sent to all the commissioners.

E. Communications and Public Relations.....Commissioner Nyman
Staff is still working on setting up a new Facebook page for the MCW. There are some problems relating to the existing page. Commissioner Aziz offered to help address those issues and to help coordinate the transition. Commissioner Nyman thanked both Commissioners Ingram and Aziz for their work on the MCW’s social media presence.

F. Health and Wellness.....Commissioner Yam
The committee continues to develop and send out Health Alerts on a monthly basis. A total of 11 health alerts have been sent out since July 2016, and at least three more will be sent out this month, as there are several “national health month” designations for May. Commissioner Yam thanked former MCW Professional Fellow Nighina Azizov for her work in drafting a section on Human Trafficking resources to be added to the MCW’s women’s online health resource directory. Ms. Azizov, of course, has returned to Moldova after her month-long fellowship in the MCW office. The Committee will also be watching the data that comes from the Listening Tour to guide its work for next year.

At this point, Chair Bachu paused the meeting to say that it has been a very successful year for the MCW. The Hall of Fame and the Women of Tomorrow awards program were a huge success and the Listening Tour is not only gathering valuable information but is also building the MCW’s visibility and connections with other commissions for women throughout the state. She commended all the commissioners for their very hard work and dedication over the past year.

V. New Business

Breast Cancer Legislation: Commissioner Aziz said that it was very disappointing that SB 918/HB 876, the Health Insurance - Coverage of Fertility Preservation Procedures for Iatrogenic Infertility, failed to pass. This bill would have required insurance companies to cover fertility preservation procedures for women with breast cancer. The problem is that once a woman begins chemotherapy, she may stop producing eggs, and there is usually very little time between the diagnosis and the onset of treatment. Commissioner Bresnahan, chair of the MCW’s Legislation and Public Policy Committee offered to examine the bill and to report back to the next MCW meeting whether the MCW might want to take a position on this issue now, as it did on two other pieces of legislation, so that it may begin advocating for the legislation before the session even starts.

VI. Liaison Reports

A. Maryland Women’s Heritage Center.....Chair Bachu
The MWHC is still looking for a new location, most likely in Baltimore City.

B. 19th Amendment Commemoration Commission.....Vice Chair A. Diane Williams
A chair has still not been appointed and this commission has not met recently.

VII. Staff Report.....Executive Director Vaughan-Prather

A. Maryland State Archives (MSA) Women’s Hall of Fame Intern

The MSA has for several years hosted a summer intern to research the biographies of the women in the Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame posted on the MSA website. This year, however, it will be unable to do that as the person who supervises the intern in the MSA office will not be available. It hopes to resume the internship next year.

B. Briefing for the New DHR Secretary

The staff has been asked to present a briefing to the new Secretary of the Department of Human Resources about the work of the MCW office on June 2. (Note: that date has been changed to July 24.)

C. National Association of Commissions for Women (NACW)

1. Annual Conference:

The annual NACW conference will be held in Buffalo, NY July 12 – 16 2017.

Approval is being requested to send Chair Bachu and Executive Director Vaughan-Prather to the conference. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather is a member of the NACW Board of Directors. The commissioners encouraged the nomination of the MCW’s Listening Tour project for the NACW Achievement Award.

2. Associate Membership:

NACW receives no public funding, its only sources of revenue are the very small amounts generated from memberships and the annual conference. The MCW is an official NACW member. Individual commissioners are encouraged to join as Associate Members. Forms for that purpose were distributed with the packets for tonight’s meeting.

D. Mileage Reimbursement

Commissioners submitting requests for travel expense reimbursement must complete, sign and send the original forms to the MCW office by June 5 in order for them to be processed. The reimbursement rate changed effective January 1, 2017, so mileage from 2016 must be submitted on the 2016 form and a new 2017 form must be used for any mileage accruing since the beginning of this calendar year. All receipts for tolls and parking must be the original receipt (no copies) and must be submitted with the form.

VIII. Announcements:

Chair Bachu said that she told Senator Susan Lee that she would like for the entire MCW to come speak to the Maryland Senate, and so she will work on that for the next session of the Maryland General Assembly.

IX. Adjournment.....Chair Bachu

Chair Bachu thanked everyone for attending this evening’s meeting and for all their hard work. There being no further business, she adjourned the meeting at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director
Maryland Commission for Women

DATE: June 9, 2017

APPROVED: June 15, 2017