

# Maryland Commission for Women

## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 22, 2025

5:00 p.m.

Virtual

### Commissioners Attending:

LaShaune Stitt, Chair  
Patricia Lambert, First Vice Chair  
Christine Lee, Second Vice Chair  
Tazeen Ahmad  
Pier Blake  
Judy Carbone  
Jonathon Carrington  
Gloria Dent  
Judith Emmel  
Maggi Gaines  
Jodi Kelber  
Sarah Ackerstein Klein  
Lauren Lambert  
Brenda McChriston  
Shanna Pearson-Merkowitz  
Stacey Rebbert  
Evelyn Steward  
Monica Watkins

### Commissioners Absent:

Tekisha Everette  
Linda Han  
Nykidra Robinson  
Lenita Walker

### Staff Attending:

Ariana Kelly, Executive Director  
Brett Jordan, Program Manager  
Alex Osterhues, Research Intern  
Genesis Franco, Management Associate

### Guests:

Senator Mary Washington  
Roseanna Vogt, Director Circle of Angels  
Initiative, Inc  
Caryn Hines, Office of the Secretary of State  
Sharon Blugis, Founder/Deputy Director of RJM

- I. **Call to Order.....Commissioner LaShaune Stitt, Chair**  
The meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m. Chair Stitt welcomed all Commissioners and guests.

- A. Land Acknowledgement
- B. Attendance for May Meeting
- C. Approval of Agenda and April Minutes - Chair LaShaune Stitt called for approval of the agenda and April Minutes. Commissioner Brenda McChriston moved approval of the agenda. Commissioner Lauren Lambert seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
- D. Introduce Brett Jordan, Project manager

## **II. History of MCW Work with Justice Impacted women.....Ariana and Brett**

- A. Review Key Points From Reports from 2000 & 2004 Women in Prison Reports -
- B. Review SWIM Report Section on Justice Impacted Women
- C. Current Stats: *According to the Department of Corrections, 527 women were incarcerated in Maryland in 2023. This is an approximate rate of 16 incarcerated women per 100k population. For comparison, our rate of male incarceration is approximately 480/100k.*
- D. Review History of Women's Pre-Release Center

## **III. Maryland Women Moving Forward Presentation from Roseanna Vogt**

- A. Presentation - Since 2008, this organization has supported incarcerated women in their transition back into the community. Volunteers connect with the women and offer guidance and support.
- B. Q&A from commissioners.

## **IV. Women's Pre-Release Presentation from Senator Mary Washington**

- A. Presentation - Maryland does not have a standalone pre-release facility for women. Meaning that Women in pre-release programs are housed within the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women (MCIW). They are alongside other incarcerated women at various security levels.
- B. Q&A from commissioners

## **V. Secy of State DV Address Confidentiality Program**

- 1. Presentation from Caryn Hines - Office of the Secretary of State - ACP provides mail services that are available for victims of intimate partner violence and human trafficking. It offers a substitute address to help protect their location from abusers.
- 2. Q&A from commissioners.

## **VII. Research, Policy & Legislation Subcommittee Report .....Christine Lee**

- A. New Chair..... Chair Stitt and Monica Watkins
- B. Brett Jordan, OTC Project Lead.....Brett Jordan

- C. 90 Day Report on Women’s Issues - Coming June 2025.....Ariana Kelly
- D. MLAW Update.....Lenita Walker
- E. Meeting June 9– 5 PM to discuss Strategic Plan

**VIII. Outreach & Awards Committee Report.....Pier Blake**

- A. Update from 250 Commission.....Judi Emmel
- B. Local Commission Chairs Meeting.....Pat Lambert  
Each local Commission Chair explained their goals and shared expectations for what lies ahead.
- C. Maryland Women’s Heritage Center.....Judy Carbone
- D. Outreach Activities  
RJM High Tea.....LaShaune  
Women’s Law Center Awards Event.....Maggi, Monica, LaShaune  
Executive Alliance Mentoring Event.....Ariana  
JACADA Lunch Event.....Ariana  
Other Events and Activities.....All Commissioners  
Upcoming Events.....All Commissioners
- E. Meeting June 11 5 PM to discuss strategic plan

**Staff Report**

- A. Foundation Elections Meeting May 28th  
Thank you to Yun Yang and Pat Cornish
- B. Calendar Review.....Ariana Kelly
- C. June Meeting Logistics.....Genesis Franco
- D. Communications.....Alex Osterhues

**X. Announcements.....**  
No announcements were made.

**XI. Adjournment.....Chair Stitt**

Chair Stitt thanked everyone for attending the meeting today. There being no further business, she adjourned the meeting at 7:06 p.m

***Respectfully submitted:***  
Ariana Kelly, Executive Director  
Maryland Commission for Women  
6/26/2025

