

Maryland Commission for Women

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 19, 2015

5:00p.m.

Attman-Glazer Building 45 Calvert Street, Annapolis, MD

Commissioners Attending:

Dr. Kathleen White, Chair
Wandra Ashley Williams, Secretary
Dr. Homayara Aziz
Lee Bachu, Vice Chair
Sylvia Butler
Lillian Cruz (TC)
Nicole Drew
Lorna Forde
Velvet Johnson (TC)
Cynthia Lifson
Necole Parker
Betsy Ramirez (TC)
Anita Riley
Debbie Risper

Toni Sandridge (TC)
Roseanna Vogt
Diane Williams

Commissioners Absent:

Helen Holton
Pat Cornish
Michele Hughes
Amanda Rodriguez
Diane Fink

Staff:

Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director

(TC) Indicates attendance via teleconference

- I. Call to Order/Approval of Minutes.....Lee Bachu, Vice Chair**
Commissioner Bachu called the meeting to order at 5:07 p.m. She explained that the Chair would be arriving late. Approval of the minutes of the January 15 MCW meeting was postponed until a quorum was reached this evening. Commissioner Ashley-Williams noted two corrections to the first page of the minutes.
- II. Chair's ReportLee Bachu for Dr. Kathleen White**
- A. 2015 Women's Legislative Briefing**
Commissioner Ford reported that the 2015 Women's Legislative Briefing was a huge success with an attendance of over 700 – the largest audience ever in the history of that event. She thanked the MCW for its participation in the planning and at the event itself, noting that the MCW exhibit was excellent. Commission Vice Chair Bachu noted that MCW Executive Director Vaughan-Prather was inducted into the Montgomery County Women's History Archives, along with Senator Susan Lee, in a ceremony at the close of the Briefing. Commissioner Bachu recommended that next year the MCW sponsor the WLB at a higher level – at least at the \$250 level.

B. Commissioner Resignations

Since the last meeting, Commissioners Tenenbaum and Mathur have submitted their resignation from the MCW, citing scheduling conflicts. Commissioner Mathur was co-chairing the Hall of Fame planning committee with Amanda Rodriguez. Fortunately, Commissioner Cruz, who co-chaired the committee last year agreed to step in and co-chair the committee this year again.

There are currently three vacant positions on the MCW, and two commissioners filling positions that expired in June 2014.

C. New DHR Secretary

The Governor has appointed Sam Malhotra to serve as Secretary of the Department of Human Resources. Commissioners attending last week’s MLAW event had the opportunity to meet him and were very impressed. Commissioner Bachu recommends inviting the Secretary to the MCW annual meeting so that he may discuss his vision for the department.

D. Change of Executive Committee Meeting Schedule

Currently the Executive Committee meets on the Thursday morning of the week preceding the MCW meeting. That time of day is problematic for some members of the committee, so it is proposed that the conference call be held on a weeknight instead. This will be discussed further with Dr. White arrives.

III. Unfinished Business: Strategic Plan

Most of the committee chairs have submitted their committees’ work plans and those will be incorporated into the MCW Strategic Plan. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather offered to help the one committee whose work plan is still outstanding to complete the form before the next MCW meeting.

IV. New Business

A. Proposed “Buddy System”

Commissioner Risper proposed developing an informal “buddy system” so that commissioners could support each other’s participation by follow-up calls, texts or emails to each other to ensure everyone gets messages regarding changes in meeting times or places such as those caused by inclement weather.

V. Committee Reports

A. Education and Outreach.....Lorna Forde

The committee is hoping to broaden the MCW reach as an advocate for Maryland’s women and girls and asked the commissioners to let the committee know of opportunities for MCW participation in, sponsorship of, or representation at events related to the MCW’s work. She also asked that the commissioners help identify potential sponsors of the MCW’s work. Commissioner Risper noted that there is a standard letter the Friends of the MCW uses to solicit financial support, but the MCW had begun consideration of the development of “levels” of sponsorship. All solicitation would be handled by the Friends of the MCW. Executive Director was asked to resend the draft document with suggested levels to the entire MCW for

review and comments. Commissioner Risper will coordinate the responses and final decision. Commissioner Parker offered to donate graphics design for the solicitation package.

Editor's Note: At this point, MCW Chair Kathleen White arrived and conducted the remainder of the meeting.

Dr. White thanked all the commissioners for attending despite the very cold and windy weather. She thanked Vice Chair Bachu for conducting the meeting up to this point. She then explained that the MCW has had sponsors for its events in the past and this year MCW is considering developing levels of sponsorship. She asked the Executive Director to send the draft sponsorship level document to all the commissioners, so that those who want to may participate in this discussion. She then returned the Commission's attention to some of the items earlier on the agenda.

Chair's Report.....Dr. Kathleen White

A. 2015 Women's Legislative Briefing

Dr. White noted that the event had a wonderful turnout, she commended MCW Commissioner Lorna Forde who co-chaired the WLB planning committee, and Commissioners Nicole Drew and Diane Williams who represented the MCW on that committee. She expressed her appreciation for the MCW's high school student intern, Lesley Calderon, who helped staff the MCW exhibit table, and Commissioner Drew's daughter as well. She noted that the student intern arrived at 10:15 a.m. to assist in set-up of the exhibit and stayed for the entire event, even helping to take down the exhibit after 6 p.m. The Chair suggested sending the students a card of thanks. Dr. White noted that the audience was the largest in the history of the event and that the momentum and energy level there was "awesome." She urged the commissioners to continue their legislative advocacy on behalf of Maryland's women by joining MLAW as individuals. She commended all the many commissioners who participated for all their very hard work.

B. Maryland Women's Heritage Center

On March 22, at 12:30 p.m., the MWHC is holding a program in commemoration of Women's History Month, and Dr. White will participate as a speaker in a panel discussion on "Women Working for Social Justice." Seating is limited and reservations are required. More information and reservations are available at:

<http://marylandnow.org/womenshistory>.

C. New DHR Secretary

Dr. White reported that she met Secretary Sam Malhotra at the MLAW event last week and she encouraged all commissioners to visit the DHR website to read his bio and his mission statement for the department.

D. Proposed Symposium

In 2009, the MCW held a symposium at the Prince George's Community college. It engaged women with many types of activities including health and wellness, financial literacy and much more. Dr. White proposed that the MCW sponsor a symposium in June 2015, noting that the MCW has already engaged the local CFWs at its meeting in

November. She proposed establishing a committee to plan the event which will be held at the University of Maryland Baltimore Campus (UMBC). She said the MCW will invite each of the local CFWs to present information on its work and will invite other women's organizations to make presentations. This event will be important in raising visibility and will become one of the MCW's annual signature events. She reported that Commissioners Bachu and Williams have already agreed to co-chair the planning committee for the event. Commissioners Risper, Lifson, Parker, Johnson, Forde, Drew, Butler and Vogt all joined the planning committee. Dr. White said that the committee will find sponsors to fund the program. Commissioner Parker offered to donate the graphic design of invitations, posters and social media advisories.

Commissioner Williams moved approval of the Symposium for 2015. Commissioner Forde seconded the motion, which passed unanimously via a roll-call vote.

E. Change of Executive Committee Meeting Schedule

Executive Committee conference call meetings will be scheduled at 7 p.m. on the Wednesday evening of the week preceding MCW meetings.

V. Committee Reports, Continued

A. 1. Women of Tomorrow Awards Program.....Debbie Risper

The 2015 Women of Tomorrow awards program will be held on Thursday, June 25 at the Sheraton Hotel in Annapolis. Commissioner Risper asked that the hotel send the contract to the MCW office but it has not yet arrived. She has the list of sponsors of this event from previous years and will contact them to see if they will support the event again this year. The committee is also considering the possibility of vendor opportunities.

B. Legislation and Public Policy.....Velvet Johnson

The Legislation and Public Policy Committee has finalized the legislative agenda for the MCW for this year. It will support three legislative proposals that are all cross filed in both houses of the Maryland General Assembly, so the committee has written letters on a total of six bills. All are being heard in either the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee or the House Judiciary Committee:

SB 78/HB503	The Rape Survivors Family Protection Act
SB 269/HB225	Domestic Violence - Additional Relief
SB 477/HB 606	Domestic Violence – Persons Eligible for Relief

All three bills are part of the MLAW Agenda and it is believed that the Governor supports these six bills as well. (Commissioner Michele Hughes is absent from tonight's meeting because she is testifying on behalf of one of her organizations in support of the Rape Survivor's Family Protection Act at its hearing today.)

Commissioner Lifson noted that she is a registered lobbyist, and as a result must recuse herself from any decision making on these bills. The MCW Executive Director noted that the MCW signed onto the MLAW Agenda, and thus decided its position on these bills, before Commissioner Lifson was appointed to the MCW.

Commissioner Johnson announced that she will meet with Delegate Tawanna Gaines, Chair of the Women Legislators of the Maryland General Assembly on Friday, February 27 at 3:30 in Annapolis. She invited the members of the committee to join her. Commissioner Ashley-Williams reported that the Paid Safe and Sick Days bill was heard last week and there is strong opposition from the business community. The Working Matters Campaign is holding a meeting to discuss strategy tomorrow.

Dr. White thanked Commissioner Johnson for her report, and then returned the meeting to the Education and Outreach Committee report:

V. A. 2. 2015 Women’s Hall of Fame.....Lillian Cruz

Commissioner Cruz stepped in to co-chair the Committee after the resignation of Commissioner Mathur. She reported that Governor Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr. and First Lady Yumi Hogan have very graciously agreed to host the reception for the event, and that their daughter, Jaymi Sterling, who is an Assistant State’s Attorney in St. Mary’s County, has agreed to serve as MC for the event. The online registrations site needs to be established and the registration fee set. Discussion followed, and it was decided to set the fee at \$45, and to seek sponsorships. Commissioners Drew, Parker and Williams offered to help. Commissioners will not be expected to pay, but do need to let the committee know of their plans to attend.

B. Communications Committee.....Lillian Cruz

The Communications Committee has also been hard at work. It has posted a news report on the MCW website about the Legislative Briefing, highlighting MCW’s participation. Commissioner Drew drafted a “fact sheet” describing the MCW for use at the Briefing, and it will be developed more fully for future use. Commissioner Drew has posted photos from the Briefing on the MCW’s Facebook page and will send a message so commissioners can “friend” the MCW page. The Committee has developed guidance for posting content to the MCW website and Facebook page:

Guidance for MCW Website Posting: If a commissioner or committee would like to post content on the MCW website, please send your request to the communications committee, the MCW Chairwoman, and the Executive Director. Once the content is finalized, the Executive Director will work with DHR’s Office of Technology to post the information. We will confirm with the requestor that the content has been posted within a 72-hour period.

Guidance for Social Media Posting: If a commissioner or committee would like to post content on our Facebook page, please send your request to the communications committee, the MCW Chairwoman, and the Executive Director. We will confirm with the requestor that the content has been posted within a 72-hour period.

C. Health and Wellness.....Dr. Homayara Aziz

The committee continues to work on the development of health resources to post on the MCW website.

D. Ad Hoc Committee on Governance.....Diane Williams
The MCW approved the proposed teleconference policy at last month's meeting. The Committee continues its work on a full review of the remaining areas of the bylaws.

VI. Liaison Reports
MLAW.....Dr. White
Dr. White will attend the upcoming MLAW Board meeting.

VII. Staff Report.....Judith Vaughan-Prather
After nearly five years in the MCW office, Program Administrator Crystal Young has accepted a promotion and moved to another job in the Department of Human Resources. Her last day working in the MCW office was February 3. She will be very much missed. A request to fill her position has been submitted but a response has not yet been received.

VIII. Announcements
A. The Montgomery County Commission for Women is recruiting to fill its Executive Director position.
B. The Human Trafficking Conference held in Baltimore County at Towson University was, by all accounts, a success. The MCW contributed items to be given to attendees.
C. Dr. White said that she wants to encourage greater geographic diversity among the jurisdictions represented on the MCW.

IX. Approval of Minutes
Dr. White called for approval of the minutes of the January 15, 2015 MCW meeting, with the corrections to page 1 noted by Commissioner Ashley-Williams. Commissioner Vogt moved approval of the minutes as amended. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

X. Adjournment.....Dr. White
Dr. White thanked the commissioners for attending and for all their very hard work. She adjourned the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:
Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director
Maryland Commission for Women
02/20/2015

APPROVED April 9, 2015

MCW Committee Monthly Report Template

Committee Name: __Ad Hoc: Women's Legislative Briefing (Final Report)

Date: 2/18/2015

Committee Chair: Project Lead – Nicole Y. Drew, Esq.

Commissioner Submitting Report: Nicole Y. Drew, Esq.

Date of Last Committee Meeting: Commissioner Drew attended all monthly planning meetings for Women's Legislative Briefing since October 2014

Who Attended: Nicole Y. Drew

Steps the committee has taken towards achieving its goals for 2014 – 2015:

There were 10 Commissioners, staff and volunteers who participated in a number of ways:

- 1. Event Summary:** Commissioner Lorna Forde was the event co-chair. Six other MCW Commissioners were among the expert panelists in the seminars: Dr. Homayara Aziz, The Honorable Helen Holton, Velvet Johnson, Esq., Cynthia Lifson, Amanda Rodriguez, Esq., and Cara Tenenbaum, Esq. Commission President Dr. Kathleen White and Vice Chair Mythili (Lee) Bachu also attended, including the President's Networking Session that preceded the opening of the conference. MCW Commissioners, Nicole Y. Drew, Esq., Diane Williams, and Diane Fink were part of the planning committee. Commissioner Drew attended every monthly planning meeting since October 2014. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather, Crystal Williams, MCW intern and Commissioner Drew assisted with preparing the exhibit table. The Briefing concluded with the induction of the Maryland Commission for Women's Executive Director, Judith Vaughan-Prather, into the Montgomery County Women's History Archives for her years of dedication and service to the Montgomery County Commission for Women. In addition to some of the commissioners and staff who spent time at the table, MCW also had two volunteers to assist at the exhibit table – MCW intern and Imani Drew. There were 700 people in attendance and 65 community sponsors. This is the first time the Governor's office ever attended to give remarks at this event. The Communications Committee posted a statement about MCW's attendance at the event and photos to the Facebook page.
- 2. Event Preparation:** Judith has given countless hours of consultation for the event. She also sent announcements sent to our state-wide distribution lists multiple times. Commissioner Drew attended every monthly planning meeting since October 2014, including the final wrap-up meeting on 2/18/15. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather, Crystal Williams, MCW intern and Commissioner Drew assisted with preparing the exhibit table.
- 3. Event Publicity:** Links and the flier were posted on our website. Lillian Cruz and the communications committee created a press release which is posted on our website and to our Facebook page along with photos.