

Maryland Commission for Women

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 15, 2017

3 p.m.

George Howard Building, Columbia/Ellicott City Room
3430 Courthouse Drive, Columbia, Maryland

Commissioners Attending:

Lee Bachu, Chair
Tawanda Bailey
Marianne Brackney
Tammy Bresnahan
Gloria Chang
Lorna Forde
Velvet Johnson
Bonnie Nelson Luna
April Nyman
Anita Riley
Carole Jaar Sepe
Corinna Shen
Ummu Bradley Thomas
A. Diane Williams, Vice Chair
Tamara England Wilson

T/C

Marylou Yam
Yun Jung Yang

Commissioners Absent:

Wandra Ashley-Williams, Secretary
Homayara Aziz
Deborah Cartee
Nicole Ingram
Doris Ligon
Marion Manski

Staff Attending:

Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director
Tammy Wise, Management Associate
Sydney Yi, Student Intern

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

A. Call to Order:

Chair Bachu called to order at 3:12 p.m. She welcomed everyone and thanked Commissioner Brackney for arranging for the MCW to meet in this lovely location this evening.

B. Approval of Agenda

Chair Bachu called for approval of the agenda for the evening's meeting and the approval was unanimous. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather introduced Sydney Yi who is a rising junior at Sidwell Friends High School and is working for two weeks as an intern in the MCW office. Chair Bachu welcomed Sydney and thanked her for her work.

C. Approval of Minutes:

Commissioner Yang moved approval of the minutes of the May 18 MCW meeting. Commissioner Brackney seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

II. Planning Meeting.....Chair Bachu

A. Orientation to the Planning Process

Chair Bachu reviewed the purpose of today’s meeting, the mission and enabling legislation of the MCW, and the roles and responsibilities of commissioners throughout the year, including the attendance requirements delineated in the MCW’s legislation. As the Commissioners reviewed the MCW’s mission statement on its brochure, it was suggested that the MCW Facebook page be included the next time the brochure is printed.

B. 2016 – 2017 Committee Activities & Consideration Current Commitments

Chair Bachu announced that all the current committee chairs have offered to continue in their positions and she is appointing them all again for the coming year. The only exception is the Communications and Public Relations Committee that was chaired by Commissioner Ramirez this past year. Commissioner Ramirez resigned from the MCW and for the past month, Commissioner Nyman served as interim committee chair. Commissioners Ingram and Aziz have been very helpful in re-working the MCW’s Facebook page. Chair Bachu is appointing Commissioner Aziz chair of that committee.

Some discussion followed about the effectiveness of having committee co-chairs. MCW Chair Bachu said that it is her decision that MCW officers not chair committees and that no Commissioner may chair more than one committee at a time. The Commissioners present commended her for those actions, noting how much more active, effective and inclusive the MCW has been this past year. Commissioner Thomas noted that committee members have all had the opportunity to participate in the work. After considerable discussion, Commissioner Sepe moved that the issue of Committee Co-Chairs be forwarded to the Bylaws Committee for further review. Commissioner Bresnahan seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Chair Bachu then asked each Committee Chair to briefly review the work of her committee over the past year and to list any recommendations for the coming year.

1. **Hall of Fame:** Commissioner Brackney reported that she had a wonderful committee, they had all been very active and with the experience they gained will have an even more successful program in the coming year.
2. **Women of Tomorrow:** Commissioners Sepe and Forde said that their committee held a de-briefing meeting in conjunction with the Hall of Fame Committee and committee members have been asked to send them a list of their recommendations for any improvements or changes for next year.
3. **Legislation and Public Policy:** Commissioner Bresnahan described the process of reviewing several daily legislative synopses during the General Assembly session, and the committees collaboration with the Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW) – thanks to Commissioner Ashley-Williams – and the development of the MCW’s own legislative platform. She commended the MCW for taking positions already on three bills. The committee will continue this level of work in the coming year. We have learned that MLAW plans to hold its Fall Conference, during which it develops its list of bills to support, on November 18 this year. For the past two years, the MCW has 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. Commissioner Bailey moved that the MCW commit up to \$1300 for this purpose for this year. The motion was seconded by April Nyman and passed unanimously.

4. **Health and Wellness:** Commissioner Yam reported that, with the help of the MCW intern Bev Thoms, the MCW developed and sent out 14 Health Alerts so far this year, and may send out another one or two more before the end of the fiscal year. The Committee is also adding some new topics to the MCW's Online Women's Health Information and Resource Directory. The Committee is working on the development of information on women and Opioid Addictions/Substance Abuse, and also on Human Trafficking. The Committee has been watching the results of the Listening Tour and hopes to use some of the information gained to guide its work as well.
5. **Education and Outreach:** Committee Chair Tawanda Bailey reported that the committee shared a total of 83 Alerts over the past year, each going out to distribution lists totally more than 725 people. Of these, 17 were about the Listening Tour, 14 were the Health Alerts Commissioner Yam just described, and 52 were Issue Alerts. The Commission also conducted the very well received CFW Roundtable meeting last fall. The Committee also helped the MCW participate in the 2017 Women's Legislative Briefing and the WE3 Conference. The Committee plans to continue to support the Listening Tour project, and to use that information to guide its work as well. In addition, the committee supported the Women Moving Forward Conference at the Maryland Correctional Institute for Women. Commissioner Bailey participated actively on the WMF Steering Committee and the MCW offered two workshops at the conference. Commissioner Bailey suggested that the MCW may want to take an even more active role in supporting that conference and she thanked Commissioner Wilson for volunteering to share the liaison responsibilities for the newly established Women Offenders Network.
6. **Bylaws Review:** Commissioner Manski could not be here this evening but she has agreed to continue to chair this committee. The committee is still waiting for a response to its inquiry regarding the application of Roberts Rules of Order.
7. **Listening Tour:** Commissioner 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. She especially thanked Chair Bachu and Vice Chair Williams for their support, and mentioned that she is privileged to work with her co-chair Nicole Ingram and the entire MCW on this project. So far this year, the Listening Tour has conducted 12 sessions in 12 jurisdictions which have been attended by a total of 562 and 847 surveys have been completed in four languages. For this coming year, the committee hopes to complete the tour by the end of December with greater outreach to the Spanish-speaking community, and to complete the report with recommendations by June of 2018. Commission Vice Chair Williams reminded the commissioners of the interest in this project shown by the Chinese-language media and she asked the staff to post the promotional video created on the MCW website. Commissioner Wilson is helping to arrange a session in Baltimore City with the support of a City Councilwoman and Commissioner Luna is helping to arrange sessions out on the Eastern Shore.

Chair Bachu thanked all the committees for their very hard work and commended their excellent outcomes. She encouraged all commissioners to join a committee of their choice to continue this good work into the coming year. She then called for reports from the MCW liaisons to other organizations.

1. **Friends of the MCW:** Vice Chair Williams said that the FMCW is a 501(c)3 organization formed in 1997 for the purpose of supporting, benefitting and assisting the MCW or programs and activities that enhance and promote the mission of the MCW, and to receive any funds or properties donated to support MCW activities. Vice Chair Williams noted that the MCW's fundraising efforts fell a little short this year, raising about \$500 less than needed for the Hall of Fame/Women of Tomorrow ceremony and that extra expense was covered by the FMCW. Vice Chair Williams requested an update from the FMCW Chair and read a text message she received in response:

"September 30 or October 21 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Annapolis are the dates we are holding for a program planning retreat. Our goal is working together to provide information, opportunities and resources to women and girls in Maryland."

After considerable discussion, Commissioner Yang said that she and a few other commissioners plan to establish a non-profit whose purpose will be to raise funds for the MCW and its activities. They have already developed the paperwork and will file articles of incorporation very soon. Commissioner Sepe reminded the MCW that when the Executive Committee met via conference call with the chair of the FMCW, the FMCW Chair stated that the FMCW does not raise funds and that it expects the MCW to raise money for its activities.

Commissioner Nyman commented that the purpose of a "Friends" organization is to support the work of that organization so that donors may give to a non-profit. Commissioner Johnson asked if the FMCW is required to report on its activities and expenditures on a regular basis to the MCW. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather said that it is her understanding that the FMCW articles of incorporation and bylaws, as of 2011, provide no oversight authority by the MCW over the membership or activities of the FMCW, nor any requirement to account to the MCW for its activities or finances.

After considerable discussion, Vice Chair Williams agreed to request the following information:

- What is the agenda for the event?
 - What is the expected outcome?
 - What is the cost?
 - Who is invited?
 - Who is covering the cost?
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2. **Women Offenders Task Force:** Commissioner Bailey said that one outcome of the Women Moving Forward Conference at the MCIW was an invitation from the Department of Corrections to participate in the Women Offenders Task Force. She thanked Commissioner Wilson for volunteering to serve as co-liaison with her to this group. The first meeting will be in July.

3. **19th Amendment Commemoration Commission:** Vice Chair Williams reported that Major General Linda Singh has been appointed chair of this commission and it is hoped that meetings will begin soon.
4. **Family and Medical Leave Insurance Task Force:** Executive Director Judith Vaughan-Prather represents the MCW on this task force as provided by its enabling legislation. The group has resumed meeting after a hiatus during the Maryland General Assembly, and has heard from a number of expert witnesses, including representatives from the state of Rhode Island where an employee-paid FML insurance program has been operating successfully.

C. Committees:

Committee chairs having been appointed, the MCW reviewed the entire list of committees and liaisons, and formed the membership of each as listed on the attached forms.

D. Sponsorship of Events:

A list of events co-sponsored or officially attended by the MCW during the past year was reviewed and after discussion, a determination of those events to officially participate in again was discussed. Commissioner Wilson asked if committing to these events now would limit the MCW's ability to sponsor other events that may come up during the year. Commissioner Sepe reminded the MCW that it recently adopted a policy regarding sponsorship of events and that some of these events might not meet those criteria. After more discussion, Commissioner Riley moved that the MCW support all the events on the list except the NAACP National Conference (which will probably not be held in Maryland next year). Vice Chair Williams seconded the motion. Commissioner Thomas proposed a friendly amendment that the Maryland Women's Heritage Event also be removed from the list since it is unclear whether that event will be offered again this year. The motion maker accepted the amendment. A roll call vote was taken and the motion, as amended, passed by a vote of 8 in favor to 7 opposed.

III. Wrap Up and Adjournment

MCW Chair Bachu asked the committees, instead of meeting further tonight, to convene over the summer to develop their proposed work plans for the coming year and to submit those proposals to the MCW office before September 1. She thanked the commissioners for their hard work this evening and over the past year, and for their commitment to continue that work into the new program year. She adjourned the meeting at 6:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director
Maryland Commission for Women

DATE: September 21, 2017

APPROVED: September 21, 2017