

Maryland Commission for Women

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 21, 2018

5 p.m.

George Howard Building 3430 Courthouse Drive, Columbia, Maryland

Commissioners Attending:

Lee Bachu, Chair

Homayara Aziz

Tawanda Bailey

Tammy Bresnahan

Deborah Cartee T/C

Gloria Chang

Amanda Costley

Lorna Forde

Lauren Lambert

Bonnie Luna

Marion Manski T/C

Brenda McChriston

Ishrat Memon

April Nyman

Roberta Pardo

Patrisha Robinson

Carole Sepe

Corinna Shen

Evelyne Steward

Ummu Bradley Thomas

Tamara England Wilson

Yun Jung Yang

Commissioners Absent:

Marianne Brackney

Maureen Colburn

Marylou Yam

Staff Attending:

Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director

Tammy Wise, Management Associate

Guests:

Dr. Rita Kirshstein

Antonio Thomas, Student

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

The meeting was called to order at 5:15 p.m. by MCW Chair Bachu who welcomed those in attendance. She called for approval of the agenda for tonight's meeting. Commissioner Yang moved approval of the agenda. The motion, seconded by Commissioner Wilson, passed unanimously.

Chair Bachu called for approval of the minutes of the May 17, 2018 MCW meeting. Commissioner Bailey so moved. Commissioner Steward seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Chair Bachu introduced and welcomed new commissioner Ishrat Memon, who was just appointed to the MCW by the Governor last week. With her appointment, all 25 of the commission positions on the MCW are now filled.

II. Briefing on the Listening Tour Report.....Rita Kirshstein, Ph.D.

Dr. Kirshstein is a sociologist with many years experience conducting social science research. The MCW was fortunate to have been able to contract with her to conduct the analysis of the data collected during the Listening Tour forums and survey, and to assist with writing the report of the project.

Dr. Kirshstein congratulated the MCW on its Listening Tour project and the impressive amount of hard work that it involved. She said the biggest challenge in developing the report was in finding an appropriate method to combine the data collected from the survey's close-ended questions with the data collected from the 19 public forums held around the state which, by their very nature, produced much more open-ended responses, to produce meaningful results. She noted that a total of 723 individuals participated in the various public forums and that 684 completed survey questionnaires were received, meaning that more than 1400 Maryland women contributed their voices to this project.

The survey collected demographic data from the respondents so it was possible to make some comparisons across groups. There were some differences by age, ethnicity, educational level, geographic region and other demographic characteristics, with level of education as the biggest differentiator between the groups. However, there was also a certain level of agreement as well. Overall, the top five issues identified by the women who participated in this project are:

1. Domestic violence and sexual assault
2. Paid time off from work at the time of birth or adoption, or the need for extended leave for medical reasons
3. Drug abuse and addiction problems
4. Too few women in leadership positions in government, education, corporations, etc.
5. Access to affordable, quality child care.

Although these are the issues that received the most votes or mentions, there were many other important issues that the women of Maryland discussed, including:

- Housing for people of limited income
- Counseling for victims of violence
- Transportation
- Equal Pay, and
- Access to Affordable Health Insurance Coverage

The report also lists the top issue identified at each of the 19 forums and Dr. Kirshstein noted that the differences from one region to another are interesting.

Since this project asked Maryland women to speak for themselves, the report does not include recommendations from the MCW on each of these issues. Instead, it lists some of the steps the respondents and participants said they thought would help improve the situation.

Chair Bachu thanked Dr. Kirshstein for all her help with this important project and for her informative presentation.

III. Chair’s Report.....Chair Bachu

A. MCW Annual Planning Meeting

For the past few years, the MCW has devoted its June meeting to planning its agenda for the next fiscal year (July 1 – June 30). In order to take the information from the Listening Tour Report into account as it plans its activities, the MCW decided to move the planning meeting to September this year, after the Report has been finalized and published. It is likely that several of the committees will need to work over the summer months to prepare for that meeting, especially the Education and Outreach Committee which is planning the August 18 conference where the report will be presented. Commissioner Yang suggested that the Commissioners consider reviewing the MCW’s standing committees, as provided in the Bylaws, and be prepared to discuss whether the MCW still needs six standing committees or could there be fewer so that new committees may be appointed during planning meetings to address specific issues.

B. MCW Meeting Schedule

The schedule of meetings for the coming year (July 2018 – June 2019) was included in the packets for tonight’s meeting. Chair Bachu encouraged commissioners to mark all the meetings on their calendars now. The MCW does not typically meet in July and August, so other than the August 18 conference, the next meeting of the MCW will be Thursday, September 20.

IV. Unfinished Business

No unfinished business was brought before the Commission.

V. New Business

No new business was brought before the Commission.

VI. Committee Reports

A. Listening Tour.....Commissioner Yang

The draft final report was circulated to the commissioners via email yesterday with the request that everyone review it (with apologies for the short notice), so that it may be approved, at least in concept, this evening. Commissioner Wilson moved that the report be accepted as written and that the MCW move forward toward publication. Commissioner Lambert seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

B. Education and Outreach.....Commissioner Bailey

Commissioner Bailey met with Commissioner Yang earlier this week to review the planned agenda for the August 18 conference and to begin identifying possible speakers. She reviewed the list of topics and commissioners volunteered to serve as moderators for the round table issue discussions at the conference:

- Violence Against Women: Commissioners Costley and Pardo
- Drug Abuse and Addictions: Commissioners Lambert and Chang
- Too Few Women in Leadership Positions: Commissioners Thomas, Sepe and Forde
- Paid Parental Leave: Commissioners McChriston and Steward
- Access to Quality, Affordable Child Care: Commissioners Memon and Nyman

In addition to its work on the upcoming conference and supporting the Listening Tour, the Education and Outreach Committee distributed 35 issue alerts over the past year, including two in May, to our distribution lists which reach over 800 individuals. The Committee will continue to work on plans for the August 18 conference.

C. Policy and Legislation.....Commissioner Bresnahan
No report.

D. Public Relations and Communications.....Commissioner Aziz
No report.

E. Health and Wellness.....Chair Bachu for Commissioner Yam
Over the past year, the Committee has issued 24 health alerts to our distribution lists, including three since the May meeting. Two more will be distributed before the end of this month.

VII. Liaison Reports

A. Maryland Women’s Heritage Center..... Chair Bachu
The Heritage Center is still looking for a new home.

B. 19th Amendment Commemoration Commission.....Chair Bachu
No report

C. MLAW.....Chair Bachu
The next meeting of the MLAW Board of Directors in Monday, June 25.

D. Baltimore City CFW.....Commissioner Wilson
In accordance with the Baltimore City Charter, the Baltimore City Commission for Women is comprised of 19 appointed members confirmed by the City Council. All other members will be designated as general body members. The Commission will have nine committees based on feedback from surveys. Each committee will select two co-chairs and the Commission will select a Chair.

Each member of the Baltimore City Commission for Women will serve in one of three roles: Chair of the Commission (1), Co-Chair of a committee (18), or general body member. General Body meetings will occur quarterly, co-chairs of committees will determine frequency of committee meetings. The committees are:

- Aging Women
- Domestic Violence
- Education
- Employment and Economic Opportunity
- Health Education & Equity
- Housing
- Public Safety
- Women in Leadership
- Youth Opportunities

E. WAG Foundation.....Commissioner Yang
The foundation will meet over the summer months to elect new officers and will continue fundraising. At least four of the seven board members must be current commissioners. Commissioner Yang encouraged anyone who was interested to join the board.

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

A. FY 18 Budget Wrap Up

The Commission programs on a fiscal year of July 1 – June 30. The small operating budget appropriated to the Commission has been almost entirely expended. No further purchases are planned until after the start of a new fiscal year.

B. NACW Conference

The NACW annual conference will be held in Los Angeles this August. NACW plans to launch a Voices of American Women initiative modeled in large part after the Voices of Maryland Women Listening Tour and Survey. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather is a current member of the NACW Board of Directors and plans to attend the conference.

C. DHS Mandatory Training

Executive Director Vaughan-Prather will be out of the office two days next week attending training required of all DHS managers. Several more days of training will be required over the coming year.

D. Staff Summer Schedule

Executive Director Vaughan-Prather will be out of the office for the first week of July for vacation and August 1 – 4 attending the NACW Conference. Management Associate Wise will be in the office if Commissioners need anything. The two staff members will try to alternate vacation schedules with each other over the summer to provide office coverage.

IX. MCW Officer Elections

For the office of MCW Chair, Commissioner Yun Jung Yang was the only nominee. Commissioners cast their ballots and she was elected unanimously.

For the office of MCW Vice Chair, Commissioner Lorna Forde and Commissioner Tawanda Bailey were nominated. Commissioners cast their ballots and Commissioner Bailey was elected by a majority vote.

For the office of MCW Secretary, Commissioner Carole Jaar Sepe was the only nominee. Commissioners cast their ballots and she was elected unanimously.

Chair Bachu congratulated the candidates and thanked them for their willingness to serve.

X. Announcements

Executive Director Vaughan-Prather thanked Chair Bachu for her three years of leadership as Chair of the MCW and presented her with a gift from the MCW as a token of appreciation.

XI. Adjournment.....Chair Bachu

The meeting was adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director
Maryland Commission for Women

APPROVED: September 20, 2018