

Maryland Commission for Women

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 18, 2021
5 p.m.

Video Conference Call

Commissioners Attending:

Yun Jung Yang, Chair
Tawanda A. Bailey, First Vice Chair
Carole Jaar Sepe, Second Vice Chair
Tammy Bresnahan
Deborah L. Cartee
Gloria Chang
Maureen G. Colburn
Amanda L. Costley
Melissa H. Curtin
Essita Duncan
Kristi S. Halford
Eugenia B. Henry
Lauren M. Lambert
Patricia M. Lambert
Beth Anne Langrell

Bonnie N. Luna
Brenda J. McChriston
Ishrat N. Memon
Roberta Pardo
Corrina Yi-Yuan Kuo Shen
Luanne Ruddell
Maxine Griffin Somerville
Evelyne S. Steward
Tamara E. Wilson
Marylou N. Yam

Staff Attending:

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

I. Call to Order.....Yang

A. Call to Order

A quorum having been established; the meeting was called to order at 5:06 p.m. by MCW Chair Yang. She welcomed everyone and noted the excellent attendance at this evening's meeting.

B. Approval of Agenda

Chair Yang called for approval of the agenda for tonight's meeting. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather noted that Commissioner Pardo's name was misspelled. Commissioner Wilson moved approval of the agenda as amended. Commissioner Langrell seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

C. Approval of Minutes of the January 21, 2021 MCW Meeting

The Chair called for any amendments to the minutes of the January MCW meeting. Commissioner Shen noted that her recognition and appreciation of the support of the Pai Ping Foundation and Commissioner Henry's generosity in funding the MYWLA scholastic awards should have been included in the record of her liaison report for the Foundation for the MCW.

Executive Director Vaughan-Prather noted a couple of grammatical errors in the minutes Commissioner Langrell moved approval of the minutes of the January MCW meeting with these corrections. Commissioner Henry seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

II. Executive Committee Report..... Yang

A. Black History Month

The Commission watched a video featuring Commissioner Wilson and Governor Hogan recognizing some of Maryland’s African American heroes and commemorating Black History Month. All agreed that the video is excellent and commended Commissioner Wilson, who is Chair of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture, in addition to her service on the MCW.

B. March MCW Meeting

Traditionally, the MCW’s Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame and the young women’s award ceremony has been held on the third Thursday of March, and the MCW did not meet that month. This year, because of the pandemic, the recognition and induction will be virtual, so a meeting of the MCW is possible. Chair Yang asked the commissioners to mark their calendars for March 18 for that meeting. That is also the date scheduled for the launch of the 2021 Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame/Maryland Young Women’s Award website, so a shared review of the new website can be part of the agenda for that meeting.

III. Unfinished Business

A. CFW Roundtable Meeting..... Somerville

It is still hoped to hold the CFW Roundtable Meeting on Thursday, May 6, 2021 at 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. as a virtual event. The planning committee will set dates for sending “save the date” notices and invitations to the county/city Commissions for Women in the state.

B. MCW Enabling Legislation

In previous months, there was discussion of whether the legislation establishing and empowering the MCW has become outdated, and whether it still serves the MCW well. The excellent review of enabling legislation of other CFWs around the country provided by a law clerk in Commissioner Pat Lambert’s office is still under consideration by the Executive Committee. The issue will be brought back to the MCW for discussion at a future meeting.

IV. New Business

A. Girls Global Academy.....Colburn

Commissioner Colburn serves on the Board of Directors of the Girls Global Academy. The Academy plans to “spotlight” accomplished women for their contributions to the community. She invited the commissioners to send her their contact information if they are interested. Executive Vaughan-Prather offered to put her in touch with the three living 2021 HOF inductees who might also make interesting profiles to spotlight.

V. Committee Reports

A. Policy and Legislation (PAL) Committee..... Bresnahan

1. MCW Legislative Platform

The Policy and Legislation Committee has developed its recommendations for the Commission’s own legislative platform for 2021. Letters developed by members of the PAL Committee have been sent on each of the 11 bills in the MCW’s platform:

Bill No.	Bill Name	Commissioner
HB 581 SB 486	Essential Workers Act	Carole Jaar Sepe
HB 205 SB 427	Public Schools - Menstrual Products Availability	Brenda McChriston
HB 411 SB 43	Criminal Law - Law Enforcement Officers - Prohibition on Sexual Activity	Pat Lambert
HB 147 SB 250	Love is No Defense Act	Amanda Costley
HB 359 SB 437	Smart Start Data Marker (3-year study of Public Schools provisions for pregnant and parenting students)	Kristi Halford
HB 524 SB	Pregnant Incarcerated Continuity of Care Act 2021	Essita Duncan

Commissioner Bresnahan thanked all her committee members for their hard work. Chair Yang complemented the committee on the strong team effort.

2. Women’s Legislative Briefing

Commissioner Halford served as the MCW’s liaison to the 2021 Women’s Legislative Briefing, coordinated by the Montgomery County CFW. The event was a virtual conference held on January 31, 2021, 12:30 – 4:30. The theme for this year was: *Beyond 2020: Advocating with Strength for Equality and Justice*. An opening plenary session included a panel of women working “on the front lines” in health, public safety, corrections, government, etc. It was followed by breakout sessions on such topics as economic justice, safety, shattering the glass ceiling, etc. Commissioners Yang, Bailey, Bresnahan, Sepe, Halford, Somerville, Duncan, Steward, Memon and McChriston all participated, along with both staff members. The MCW is a community co-sponsor of this event. There were 567 attendees, in addition to the speakers – a real success for this first virtual attempt.

3. **MLAW**.....Curtin
MLAW held its virtual briefing on its agenda on January 28. It was also well attended with more than 230 registrants.

4. Other Women’s Legislative Briefings:

In addition to the Montgomery County CFW-coordinated briefing and the MLAW briefing, the Prince George’s County CFW and MCASA held legislative briefings online. The Job

Opportunities Task Force is also scheduling a similar event. Commissioner Pat Lambert suggested considering how these events might be coordinated statewide next year.

B. Achievement and Recognition (ARC) Committee..... Cartee

Since an in-person ceremony is not possible this year, the ARC Committee is working with the DHS Communications Office to create pages on the MCW internet site that will recognize and memorialize this year’s honorees. It is planned that the “website” can be ready to go live on March 18. The Communications Office created a beautiful graphic design for the webpages; each honoree is sending a video to be posted there; both the Foundation for the MCW and the Pai Ping Foundation which donated the scholastic award funds will be recognized. Much thanks is due to all the committee members who are working so hard on this project.

C. Status of Women in Maryland (SWIM) Committee..... Yam

The collection of data is now finalized. Commissioners Steward, Sepe and Yang, along with the Executive Director have been meeting with the graphic designer hired by the Foundation for the MCW and hope to have the report ready for publication by March 18. The Committee is suggesting that the report be titled: *Maryland Women: A Status Report*. Commissioner Yam thanked her committee members for all their very hard work. The Executive Director noted that the MCW will need to brief the DHS Secretary before public release of the report and may want to offer a briefing to the Governor or his staff as well. Chair Yang said that she is sure that the Commission, and the Foundation will both be proud of this report.

VII. Liaison Reports

A. The Foundation for the Maryland Commission for Women.....Shen

The Foundation is very proud of the work being done with its sponsorship. It is still seeking new board members and has elected one new member: Earl Henry. Commissioner Shen thanked Commissioner Eugenia Henry for her continued generosity in support of the Foundation.

B. The Maryland Women’s Heritage Center..... Yang

The MWHC board held a board meeting last week. The Heritage Center has scheduled a program on February 23, A Salute to Maryland Black Women Legislators. Registration is available on the Center’s website. Chair Yang asked the staff to send the flier and registration information to all the commissioners.

C. Women Moving Forward Conference.....Colburn and McChriston

No update at this time

D. Maternal Mortality Review Stakeholders Group..... Langrell

No update at this time.

E. Maryland Women’s History Museum..... Luna

No update at this time.

F. UMD SAFE Center..... Costley

No update at this time.

VIII. Staff Report..... Vaughan-Prather

A. MCW Website Updates

The staff is working with the DHS Communications Office to develop a few upgrades to the MCW’s website, hoping to incorporate some of the changes Commissioners have recommended.

B. Annual Report;

The [2019 – 2020 Annual Report](#) has been published on the MCW website. Printing of the hard copies is underway. When they are received, the staff will send a copy to each commissioner.

VIII. Announcements

1. The **Frederick County CFW** will hold its Raving About Women event on March 11. Staff was asked to send more information to all commissioners.
2. The **Calvert County CFW** is holding its annual Women of the World event on April 17. Because of the pandemic, the date was changed several times, and the CFW has now decide to hold the event virtually. MCW Chair Yang has been invited to provide the keynote address.
3. Commissioner P. Lambert noted that too many friends and colleagues are suffering from depression amid this pandemic and the isolation it has necessitated. She encouraged commissioners to take care of themselves, to seek care if they need it, and to reach out to friends and colleagues who may need support. Commissioner McChriston agreed, noting that the current situation is creating so much stress. Commissioner Steward also noted that the demand for counseling and coaching is growing and offered her help. Commissioner Langrell said that there has been a huge increase in the numbers of people seeking help at organizations like hers. Commissioner Pardo noted that domestic violence has increased in these challenging times. She recommended that commissioners consider supporting the nonprofit organizations that can help.

Executive Director Vaughan-Prather suggested that the MCW create a one-page “issue alert” about this, encouraging women to take care of themselves as well as others and offering contact information for organizations offering help. Commissioners Langrell, McChriston, Steward, P. Lambert, Bailey, Pardo, Henry and Memon all volunteered to work on this. Commissioner McChriston will convene the group. Commissioner Halford offered to help with outreach/publicity when the document is ready.

4. **International Women’s Day is March 8.** Commissioner Sepe reported that this year’s theme is “Choose to Challenge.”
5. **Next MCW Meeting Dates:**
 - Executive Committee – March 11, 2021
 - **MCW Meeting – March 18, 2021**

IX. Adjournment..... Yang

Chair Yang thanked all the commissioners again and noted that we had 100% attendance at this evening’s meeting.

Commissioner Wilson noted that it is important that everyone take the same advice we are offering to each other – take some time to care for yourself. Chair Yang seconded that thought. She thanked everyone for their hard work especially during this challenging time and reminded the commissioners that “We are making a difference.”

The meeting was adjourned the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director
Maryland Commission for Women