

Maryland Commission for Women

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 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
Amanda L. Costley
Melissa H. Curtin
Essita Duncan
Kristi S. Halford
Eugenia B. Henry
Lauren M. Lambert
Patricia McHugh Lambert
Beth Anne Langrell
Bonnie N. Luna
Ishrat N. Memon
Roberta Pardo

Corrina Yi-Yuan Kuo Shen
Maxine Griffin Somerville
Evelyne S. Steward
Tamara E. Wilson
Marylou N. Yam

Commissioners Absent:

Gloria Chang
Maureen G. Colburn
Brenda J. McChriston
Luanne Ruddell

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 5:04 p.m. by MCW Chair Yang. She welcomed everyone and noted that in past years on this date, the Commission is celebrating at the induction ceremony for the Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame and the recipients of the young women leaders’ awards. This year, because of the pandemic, the induction and presentation of awards will be virtual. We hoped the new website for this purpose would “go live” today and planned to spend some of this evening’s meeting reviewing it. However, the web development team had to delay the publication until next week. Thursday, March 25 is the new date. Commissioners, and the public, will be advised as soon as the site is ready.

B. Approval of Agenda

Chair Yang called for approval of the agenda for tonight’s meeting. She added updates on the MLAW and the Women’s Legislative Briefing to be discussed during the Legislative Committee report. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather noted that Commissioners have been discussing via email the possibility of the MCW issuing a public statement of solidarity with the AAPI community in response to the eight murders, seven of them women and six of those

were Asian American women, in Georgia earlier this week. That item was added to the agenda under New Business. Commissioner Shen moved approval of the agenda as amended. Commissioner Henry seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

C. Approval of Minutes of the February 18, 2021 MCW Meeting

The Chair called for any amendments to the minutes of the February MCW meeting. Commissioner Pardo moved approval of the minutes of the February MCW meeting as submitted. Commissioner Wilson seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

II. Executive Committee Report..... Yang

A. CFW Roundtable.....Somerville

The three officers met with Commissioner Somerville on March 10 to discuss plans for the 2021 Roundtable meeting of Commissions for Women in Maryland. An agenda for this meeting and a timeline for planning was drafted. The meeting was tentatively scheduled for May. The planning group will share more information with the full Commission as it develops.

B. Appointment and Reappointment of Commissioners

Commissioners Costley, Colburn, L. Lambert, McChriston, Pardo, Steward and Yam are all in terms that will be complete on June 30, 2021. At their request, Commissioners L. Lambert, McChriston, Pardo and Steward were appointed by the Governor to second terms, and two new commissioners were also appointed. All six are scheduled for Senate Confirmation on March 22; all six new terms will begin July 1, 2021 and will be full four-year terms. Commissioners Costley, Colburn and Yam did not request re-appointment as they are moving on to new endeavors. All three continue serving through the end of their current terms on June 30. Chair Yang and the Commissioners expressed their regret at losing the three who are not continuing and thanked all seven of these commissioners for their valuable contributions over the past several years. Those who are not returning will be very much missed!

C. June MCW Meeting

The June meeting of the MCW is typically organized as an annual planning meeting to set the agenda and priorities for the coming program year. The Executive Committee is discussing the format and timing of that meeting and will report back at the April meeting.

D. Calvert County WOW Event

Chair Yang was invited to provide the keynote address for the 2020 Women of the World event sponsored by the Calvert County Commission for Women. The event was rescheduled more than once due to the pandemic, and is now planned as a virtual event to be held Saturday, April 17 starting at 10:30 a.m. Chair Yang will prepare pre-recorded remarks to be included in the program.

III. Unfinished Business

A. Women and Self-Care Issue Alert..... Steward

A team, convened by Commissioner McChriston and including Commissioners Langrell, Curtin, P. Lambert, Bailey, Pardo, Henry, Memon and Steward met several times to develop a series of four beautiful “health alerts” to be sent out one each week of April during National Stress Awareness Month. The team is considering how it can make these accessible to the various language minorities in Maryland. Commissioner Wilson, who chairs the Commission on African American History and Culture, recommended reaching out to the Governor’s

Office on Community Initiatives and asking that the fliers be shared with the several ethnic commissions it serves as a very effective strategy for broadening the MCW's outreach.

IV. New Business

A. Statement of Solidarity with the AAPI Community

Chair Yang thanked Commissioner Steward for her statement of unity with the AAPI community in light of the events in Atlanta earlier this week in which eight people were murdered, seven of them were women and six of those women were Asian Americans. There has been an unprecedented increase in violence against and harassment of Asian Americans in the year since the pandemic began. It was proposed that the MCW issue a public statement of solidarity with the AAPI community. Commissioner P. Lambert moved that the Chair and Executive Director draft a statement and that they are authorized to send it out on behalf of the commission. Commissioner Luna offered an amendment: that all commissioners be given an opportunity to view and comment on the draft statement. Commissioner P. Lambert withdrew her motion. She then moved that the three officers and the Executive Director work together to draft a statement from the MCW on this issue and send the draft to the full Commission asking for feedback or approval within 24 hours. Commissioner Curtin seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

V. Committee Reports

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

1. MCW Legislative Platform

Commissioner Bresnahan could not attend tonight's meeting. She prepared the report below and asked Commissioner Halford to present it to the Commission.

Maryland Women's Commission
Priority Legislation Update
Submitted by Tammy Bresnahan
March 18th, 2021

HB 359/SB 437 Maryland Longitudinal Data System - Student Data - Pregnant and Parenting Students adds data on pregnant and parenting students to the data collected, organized, managed, disaggregated, reported on, and analyzed by the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) Center. The bill takes effect July 1, 2021.

Update

No Movement on either bill since the bill hearings in the House on January 27 and in the Senate on February 25th.

HB 581/SB 486 Labor and Employment - Employment Standards During an Emergency (Maryland Essential Workers' Protection Act) is an emergency bill that establishes numerous benefits and protections for essential workers, as defined by the bill, during an emergency, and related responsibilities for each employer of an essential worker. Among other things, the bill requires an employer to provide hazard pay and personal protective equipment (PPE) at no cost to essential workers. The bill also requires the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange (MHBE) to provide a special enrollment period (SEP) during an emergency for an essential worker who is not insured under a group health benefit plan sponsored by the employer. The bill applies prospectively and may not be applied or interpreted to require the payment of hazard pay for work performed in an emergency before the bill is enacted.

Update

No Movement since the bill hearings on February 5th in the House and February 11th in the Senate.

HB 147/SB 250 Criminal Law – Sexual Crimes – Repeal of Spousal Defense (Love Is No Defense to Sexual Crimes) repeals an exemption from prosecution for specified sexual crimes if, at the time of the alleged rape or sexual offense, the person was the victim’s legal spouse.

Update

HB 147 has passed the House 125 to 4 and is waiting a hearing in the Senate. SB 250 hasn’t moved from Judicial Proceedings Committee

HB 205 /SB 427 Public Schools - Provision of Menstrual Hygiene Products – Requirement requires each local board of education to ensure that each public school provide, at no charge to the students, menstrual hygiene products via dispensers in the restrooms at the school. A public middle or high school must install menstrual hygiene product dispensers in at least two restrooms on or before October 1, 2021, and in specified restrooms on or before August 1, 2025. A public elementary school must install menstrual hygiene product dispensers in at least one restroom on or before October 1, 2021. The bill takes effect July 1, 2021.

Update

HB 205 passed 93 to 43/SB 427 passed 47-0

HB 235 Correctional Services - Pregnant Incarcerated Individuals - Substance Abuse Assessment and Treatment requires correctional units to screen pregnant incarcerated individuals for substance use disorder (SUD) at intake using a validated screening tool, regardless of the jurisdiction of confinement or the length of time that the individual is expected to be at the correctional unit. The bill also establishes requirements for correctional units relating to the assessment, treatment, and release of pregnant incarcerated individuals with an SUD.

Update

HB 235 no movement since bill hearing on January 26th.

HB 411/SB 43 Criminal Law - Law Enforcement Officers - Prohibition on Sexual Activity expands the list of individuals a law enforcement officer is statutorily prohibited from engaging in sexual contact, vaginal intercourse, or a sexual act with to include (1) a victim, witness, or suspect in an investigation during the course of an investigation that the law enforcement officer is conducting, supervising, or assisting with and (2) a person requesting assistance from or responding to the law enforcement officer in the course of the law enforcement officer’s official duties. These additional prohibitions do not apply if the officer had a prior existing legal sexual relationship with the individual, unless an interim, temporary, or final protective order between the parties is in effect at the time of the sexual contact, vaginal intercourse, or sexual act.

Update

HB 411 passed 98 to 36/SB 43 passed 47 to 0

Other Legislative Information:

- 1380 House bills have been introduced
- 967 Senate bills have been introduced

2. MLAW.....Curtin
MLAW has traditionally held a briefing to present the outcome for the bills it supports each year, when the legislative session concludes. The MLAW Board meets this coming Monday to decide whether to hold a virtual briefing this year since in-person events are still not possible. The entire board was saddened by the sudden and very unexpected death of one of its members, Linda Mahoney. Ms. Mahoney has been a leader for years in several of the state’s women’s advocacy organizations including Maryland NOW, and the Maryland Chapter of the Business and Professional Women (BPW). Her leadership and support will be sorely missed.

3. Women’s Legislative Briefing.....Halford
No update.

B. Achievement and Recognition (ARC) Committee..... Cartee
The website announcing the 2021 inductees into the Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame and the recipients of the 2021 Maryland Young Women Leaders Award was scheduled to “go live” today and would have been shared during tonight’s meeting. However, the design team advised the MCW that the date cannot be met. The plans are now to “go live” next Thursday, March 25. It is going to be beautiful and will be worth waiting for. A program book is also in design and will be printed in hard copy. Chair Yang commended Commissioners Cartee, Pardo, Lambert and their entire committee for all their creativity, dedication and very hard work. She also commended Tom Nappi and Donna Gardner in the DHS Graphics Office for their incredible design and collaboration. Commissioners Pardo and L. Lambert thanked Commissioner Cartee for her calm and wise leadership on this committee.

C. Status of Women in Maryland (SWIM) Committee..... Yam
Maryland Women: A Status Report is in almost-final draft form. The Committee has been working very hard proofreading first the contents of the research and now the design, converting the data to graphics. The Committee is concerned that the report may not be published in time for the planned release at the CFW Roundtable Meeting scheduled for May 6. Since that date has not been published and invitations have not yet been sent, the SWIM Committee is recommending that the date be postponed to June to be sure the final report will be ready. Time is needed to finalize the presentation and print the report, to present it to the DHS Secretary and to offer a briefing to the Governor before “going public” with the findings. Commissioner Yam thanked her committee members for all their very hard work. Chair Yang, First Vice Chair Bailey, Second Vice Chair Sepe, and Commissioner Somerville will meet next week to select a new date for the Roundtable meeting.

VI. Liaison Reports

A. The Foundation for the Maryland Commission for Women.....Shen
No report.

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

Community advocate Linda Mahoney, who passed away last week, was also a dedicated member of the Board of Directors of the Heritage Center, and the Board mourns her loss.

The MWHC board will meet April 10. The Heritage Center has two webinars scheduled this month:

March 25 at 6 p.m. African American Suffragists in Maryland

March 26 at 7 p.m. Marylanders Rise Up for ERA

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

No report.

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

No report.

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

Commissioner Luna sent a written update to the Commissioners shortly before tonight’s meeting. There have been many challenges but also some progress towards opening..

F. UMD SAFE Center..... Costley

No report.

VII. Staff Report..... Vaughan-Prather

A. Women’s History Month Activities

- On March 1, the staff developed and sent an issue alert about Women’s History Month
- On March 3, a message was sent reminding readers that on this date in 1913, the first women’s suffrage march in Washington was held
- On March 8, an issue alert was sent regarding International Women’s Day
- On March 15, an issue alert was sent on the birthday of the late Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg
- Another issue alert will be sent out on March 26, the birthday of the first woman Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor.

VIII. Announcements

A. The new website for the Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame and Maryland Young Women Leaders Award will go live and public on Thursday, March 25.

B. The Frederick County CFW held its Raving About Women event on March 11, virtually for the first time. (In 2020, the RAV event, which included an award for Commissioner Bailey, was one of the last in-person programs held before the pandemic caused the cancellation of most other planned events, including the MCW’s Hall of Fame and Women of Tomorrow ceremony.) Commissioner Sepe attended the program this year and reported that it was very nice.

C. Commissioner Sepe noted that the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill to extend the deadline for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. The measure now goes to the U.S. Senate.

D. Commissioner Pardo reported that former Commissioner Nyman is recovering well from her recent surgery.

E. Next MCW Meeting Dates:

- Executive Committee – April 8, 2021
- **MCW Meeting – April 15, 2021**

IX. Adjournment..... Yang

Chair Yang thanked all the commissioners again for their very hard work and dedication throughout the weeks in between meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director
Maryland Commission for Women

APPROVED: April 15, 2021