

# Maryland Commission for Women

## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 19, 2023

5 p.m.

### Virtual Meeting

#### Commissioners Attending:

Tawanda A. Bailey, Chair

Jonathon Carrington

Gloria Dent

Essita Duncan

Judith Emmel

Kathryn M. Fiddler

Sarah Klein

Lauren M. Lambert

Patricia McHugh Lambert

Christine Lee

Brenda J. McChriston

Maxine Griffin Somerville, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair

Evelyne S. Steward

LaShaune Stitt

Lenita Walker

Tamara Wilson

#### Commissioners Absent:

Pier Blake

Maggi G. Gaines

Linda Han

Jenny Peña Dias

Monica Watkins

#### Staff Attending:

Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director

Tammy Wise, Management Associate

#### I. Call to Order..... Chair Bailey

The meeting was called to order at 5:04 p.m. by Chair Bailey.

##### A. Approval of Agenda

Chair Bailey welcomed the commissioners in attendance and thanked them for their expressions of sympathy during the past month. She called for approval of the agenda for tonight's meeting. Commissioner Fiddler noted that Talbot County was misspelled. With that correction, Commissioner Lambert moved approval of the agenda. Commissioner Dent seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

##### B. Approval of Minutes

Chair Bailey called for approval of the minutes of the September 21, 2023 Commission meeting. First Vice Chair Somerville moved approval of the minutes as submitted. Commissioner Duncan seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

#### II. Executive Committee Report.....Chair Bailey

##### A. Commissioner Resignations

Commissioner Cartee has been appointed to the Maryland Board of Dental Examiners and cannot serve on more than one state board or commission at a time. Her second term on the MCW will end in June 2024, so she has submitted her resignation now to accept this new and much deserved appointment. Her contributions to the MCW's work were many and much appreciated. She asked Chair Bailey to express her appreciation of all that she experienced during her nearly eight years on this Commission.

## **B. Statement Regarding Senator Dianne Feinstein**

U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein died on September 29, 2023, after serving in the Senate from 1992 until her death, the longest serving female senator in U.S. history. She was an advocate for women's rights and a role model for women leaders. The MCW conducted an email vote to approve publishing a statement of appreciation for Senator Feinstein's contributions on the MCW website and Facebook page. The email vote was unanimous. At tonight's meeting, Commissioner P. Lambert moved validation of that vote. First Vice Chair Somerville seconded the motion which passed unanimously. The statement, as published, read:

*The Maryland Commission for Women is deeply saddened by the death of Senator Dianne Feinstein, a true leader in the ongoing work towards equality. Her legacy is one of unwavering commitment to the issues facing women today, and her example is a beacon to the women leaders of tomorrow.*

## **C. Election of Second Vice Chair**

MCW Bylaws provide that when the office of Second Vice Chair is vacated, the election to fill that position will take place at the next MCW meeting. The office was vacated last month by the resignation of Commissioner Dorman. Chair Bailey nominated Commissioner P. Lambert for that office. Commissioner Wilson seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Newly elected Second Vice Chair said that she is honored to serve.

Chair Bailey asked Second Vice Chair Lambert to serve as coordinator between the work of the PAL Committee and the Executive Committee. She asked First Vice Chair Somerville to serve as coordinator with the ARC Committee. All three officers will liaise with the ACE Committee.

## **III. Unfinished Business**

### **A. Proposed Bylaws Amendments**

Commissioners P. Lambert, Dent and Klein volunteered to form a temporary "taskforce" to look over the current Bylaws, the previously proposed amendments and to consider if any other changes are needed. All Commissioners were asked to review the current Bylaws and were invited to submit any suggestions. It is unclear whether provisions regarding attending virtually or in-person are a Bylaws issue or a matter of practice. The group will meet next week and present its recommendations in writing to the MCW at the November meeting.

### **B. County CFW Initiative**

Second Vice Chair P. Lambert plans to send the MCW Annual Report, which included a section on local CFWs, to the Carroll County Board of Commissioners. She suggests that the MCW continue to write every year to each of the seven counties in the state that still have no local CFW and offered to coordinate this effort.

## **IV. New Business**

### **A. USM Women's Conference**

The Commission has been invited to sponsor and staff an exhibit table the University Systems of Maryland Women's Conference at the Universities of Maryland Shady Grove Campus October 26 - 27. After some discussion, it was decided that the Commission doesn't have the "band width" to put together an exhibit table and staff it this year. Commissioner Klein offered to respond to the invitation. Commission Chair Bailey asked the ACE Committee to review the

Commission’s policy regarding sponsorship of/participation in community events. The staff will send the current policy to the committee.

**V. Committee Reports**

**A. Advocacy, Collaboration and Engagement (ACE) Committee.....Klein**

The committee has developed a proposed mission statement, along with a process and form to be used to ask that the MCW address an issue. The mission statement, process and form were sent to the commission for review before today’s meeting. In general, the proposed mission of the ACE Committee is to help the Commission raise its visibility for the purpose of maximizing its potential reach. After some discussion, including some relatively minor amendments to the proposed mission statement, Second Vice Chair P. Lambert moved to accept the proposed mission statement as amended. First Vice Chair Somerville seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Second Vice Chair P. Lambert then moved approval of the proposed process and form, as submitted. Commissioner Duncan seconded the motion which passed unanimously. The approved documents are attached to these minutes.

**B. Policy and Legislation (PAL) Committee.....Duncan**

**1. MLAW (Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women)**

The MLAW Fall Conference is scheduled for November 4, featuring Lt. Governor Aruna Miller as the keynote speaker and Del. Edith Patterson. The MCW will sponsor the conference at the Platinum level (\$500) which includes five admissions and has invited the local CFWs to send a representative as a guest of the MCW. Commissioners Bailey, Duncan, Klein and Watkins, along with Management Associate Wise will attend, representing the MCW.

**2. Legislation**

The PAL Committee meets again on November 9 at 1 p.m. Among other things, it is considering proposed legislation that would require sexual harassment prevention training for all employees in the state.

**II. ARC Committee.....Vaughan-Prather for Blake**

The Call for Nominations for the Maryland Young Women Leaders Awards was launched on Monday, September 25 with a closing date of October 13 at 4 p.m. A total of 37 nominations were received. The Selection Committee has been established, consisting of professors from Salisbury State, Morgan State and Frostburg State Universities, along with the Executive Director of the Women’s Bar Association of Maryland. The committee will meet on October 30 to determine the winners of this year’s awards. A request has been sent to the First Lady’s staff asking to hold the induction/awards ceremony at Government House in March 2024. No response has been received yet. We have also reached out to the five women to be inducted into the Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame, to coordinate with their staffs.

**VI. Liaison Reports**

**A. The Foundation for the Maryland Commission for Women (TFMCW)..... Steward**

The Foundation is one of the primary sources of funds for the MCW programs and has funded all three of the recent major research projects and the ARC ceremony. The Foundation needs new board members and must elect a new President. Commissioners are encouraged to consider serving. The Foundations needs to update its fundraising plan and take responsibility for implementing it. Second Vice Chair P. Lambert noted that the Commission should also be asking for more resources in its budget.

Discussion followed regarding the relationship between the MCW and its Foundation and the roles for both regarding fundraising. Commissioner Steward noted that the MCW holds an annual planning meeting where it sets its agenda for the coming year, after which the Foundation sets its fundraising goals for that year to support the MCW’s needs.

**B. Maryland Women’s Heritage Center..... Chair Bailey**

The Center has been very busy organizing events. It used to host a physical exhibit of the Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame but doesn’t have enough space in its new facility. Notre Dame of Maryland University generously offered space on its campus for the exhibit. The University President, a former commissioner, has invited all the commissioners to a dinner and preview of the exhibit on the University campus on November 6.

**C. Women Moving Forward Conference.....L. Lambert and Blake**

No report.

**D. Maternal Mortality Review Stakeholders Group**

No report.

**E. UMD Safe Center..... First Vice Chair Somerville**

No report

**F. Maryland Semiquincentennial (MD 250) Commission.....Emmel**

This Commission has been meeting regularly making plans to celebrate Maryland’s 250<sup>th</sup> birthday and is looking forward to incorporating the Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame into the events.

**G. National Association of Commissions for Women..... Somerville**

No report.

**H. Maryland Commission on LGBTQ Affairs.....Carrington**

A date will be set in the early months of 2024 for the Executive Director of the Commission on LGBTQ Affairs to present a training at one of the MCW meetings. First Vice Chair Somerville commented that when the MCW has a guest speaker, every commissioner possible should be in attendance, in-person.

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

**A. Annual Report**

The FY 2023 MCW Annual Report is at the print shop and will be shared with the Commissioners as soon as hard copies have been received. In the meantime, it is available on the MCW website, and digital copies have been sent to the Governor, Lt. Governor, DHS Secretary, Speaker of the House, President of the Senate and President of the Caucus of Maryland Women Legislators.

**B. Staffing Plans**

Executive Director Vaughan-Prather plans to retire effective December 1, with a final date in the office of November 17. Commissioner Klein drafted a letter from Chair Bailey that has been sent to the DHS Secretary urging the speedy hiring of a new equally qualified director, urging that the position be maintained as a “civil service” position, and offering the MCW’s assistance in selecting a new director.

Executive Vaughan-Prather thanked Administrative Specialist Tammy Wise for her assistance with the technology for this evening’s meeting.

**VIII. Announcements**

**A. November Executive Committee Meeting:** Thursday, November 9, 2023, at 4:30 p.m. Virtual

**B. November MCW Meeting:** Thursday, November 16, 2023, at 5 p.m. In-person

**IX. Adjournment**

No further business being brought before the Commission, Chair Bailey thanked the Commissioners for all their work and wished them a very good weekend. The meeting was adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

**Respectfully Submitted:** November 10, 2023

**By:** Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director

**Approved:**

**Advocacy, Collaboration, and Engagement Committee of the MCW  
(ACE)  
Mission Statement**

Reflecting the importance of the MCW as the state’s advisory board for women’s issues and with the intent to serve as a model for other Maryland women’s organizations, ACE acts as the public relations arm of the MCW. With special emphasis on promoting the MCW, its work, and its positions, ACE will:

- (1) recommend to the MCW positions, policies, and non-legislative actions that support and advocate for MD women,
- (2) identify and explore opportunities for collaborating with external partners, and
- (3) make recommendations to the MCW of how to raise the profile and increase the visibility, funding, and relevance of the organization.

**MCW Process for Submitting an Issue or Recommendation for Consideration**

Instructions:

Draft your proposal using the template on the next page. Items marked with an asterisk (\*) must be completed for consideration.

1. **Submission:** Email the proposal with key information to the full ACE committee and the Executive Director.
2. **Timing:** The ACE committee meets monthly on the Thursday after the full MCW meeting, and proposals received at least 5 days prior to ACE’s meeting will be considered. Proposals received within 5 days of the ACE meeting may be considered the following month.
3. **Exceptions:** Any proposal that is time-sensitive, such as a statement in response to current events, should be marked as TIME-SENSITIVE and sent to both ACE and the Executive Committee for consideration.
4. **Disposition:** At the ACE meeting, ACE members will reach consensus (or vote if necessary) on whether to recommend the proposal to the full Commission.
  - a. If a majority of the ACE committee decides in favor of making a recommendation, the proposal will be submitted to the Executive Committee and Executive Director to be placed on the MCW agenda for New Business and will be provided to the full Commission (by the Executive Director) with that meeting’s agenda items.
  - b. If the ACE committee decides against making a recommendation, prompt notification (with explanation where possible) will be made to the Commissioner who made the proposal.
  - c. A Commissioner may appeal a negative outcome to the Executive Committee.
5. If the full Commission votes to pursue the proposal, it moves to the appropriate committee for action.

## PROPOSAL TEMPLATE

To: Maryland Commission for Women  
From: [YOUR NAME]  
Date: [01/01/24]  
Re: [TITLE OF YOUR PROPOSAL]

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### BACKGROUND and RATIONALE\*

[Here is where you provide some context for the issue. You may wish to include data or other information providing background. This does not need to be original work product; you can use reliable sources and simply footnote them. If you are recommending legislation, you do not need to provide legislative language. 1-2 paragraphs maximum.]

### COMMISSIONER'S STATEMENT OF INTEREST

[Tell your fellow Commissioners why this issue is important to you.]

### PROPOSAL\*:

[What is it you want the MCW to do about this issue? Issue a statement, host a roundtable, write a letter, etc.? Be as specific as you can about action items. 1-2 paragraphs maximum.]

### OPTIONAL ACTIONS FOR COMMISSIONERS

[This is where we would invite or suggest actions for the commissioners to take to support the overall proposal, obviously optional.]

### PARTNERSHIPS

[What other organizations and stakeholders might you suggest partnering with and why?]

### IMPACT AND OUTCOMES\*

[What will be the results of implementing your proposal? How will it benefit and support women? How will you measure success?]

### FOLLOW-UP

[Are there any specific next steps that will be necessary to ensure effective implementation and lasting impact?]