

Maryland Commission for Women

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 16, 2023

5 p.m.

Virtual Meeting

Commissioners Attending:

Tawanda Bailey, Chair

Andrea Bottner Deborah Cartee
Beth Anne Dorman
Essita Duncan
Judith Emmel
Kristi Halford
Kaprece James
Lauren M. Lambert
Patricia McHugh Lambert
Christine Lee
Brenda J. McChriston
Roberta Pardo, 2nd Vice Chair
Carole Jaar Sepe

Maxine Griffin Somerville, 1st Vice Chair
Evelyne S. Steward
Lenita Walker
Yun Jung Yang

Commissioners Absent:

Tammy Bresnahan
Kathryn M. Fiddler
Eugenia B. Henry
Jenny Peña Dias
Monica Watkins
Tamara E. Wilson

Staff Attending

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

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

A quorum having been established; the meeting was called to order at 5:01 p.m.

A. Meeting Inspiration

Chair Bailey read a quote from Rosa Parks, as inspiration for tonight's meeting:

"Memories of our lives, of our works and our deeds will continue in others."

--Rosa Parks

B. Approval of Agenda

Chair Bailey welcomed the commissioners. She added two items to the agenda and called for approval of the agenda for tonight's meeting, as amended. Commissioner Lambert moved approval of the agenda as amended. Commissioner Lee seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

C. Approval of Minutes of the January 19, 2023 MCW Meeting

The Chair called for approval of the minutes of the January MCW meeting. Commissioner P. Lambert moved approval of the minutes as submitted. Commissioner Duncan seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

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

A. Commissioner Resignation

Commissioner Menucci has found that her travel schedule makes participation in and contribution to the work of the MCW difficult and she has submitted her resignation.

B. Women’s Bureau Regional Meeting

Several MCW Commissioners attended the U.S. D.O.L. Women’s Bureau virtual meeting for Mid-Atlantic Region CFWs on February 7, including Commissioners Bailey, Duncan, Emmel, James, Steward and Walker. All members of Commissions for Women in the eight-state region (Maryland, Virginia, D.C., Delaware, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Kentucky) were invited to attend. The meeting featured the work of the Hamilton County Ohio Commission on Women and Girls, a relatively new commission – established in 2017 - that is already accomplishing a great deal. That Commission’s priorities include achieving pay equity and employment opportunity across genders, having more women in leadership positions, and ensuring women and girls' health and safety. It has successfully advocated the provision of no-cost period product dispensers in all county-owned buildings.

The Women’s Bureau has posted information on its website about employment protections for pregnant or nursing workers, and a national database on childcare prices (NDCP). It has scheduled a virtual Mid-Atlantic Region Stakeholders meeting on March 9 at 11 a.m.. Staff will forward the invitation to the MCW Commissioners.

C. Social Media Initiative.....Pardo, 2nd Vice Chair

No report.

D. NSA WERG “Meet and Greet”

On February 3, Chair Bailey, First Vice Chair Somerville and ACT Chair Wilson, accompanied by Executive Director Vaughan-Prather met with the National Security Agency Women Employees Resource Group, and presented a briefing on the MCW’s work and especially the report on Maryland women and the pandemic at the NSA offices in Annapolis Junction. It was impressive to learn of the work these women accomplish in a male-dominated field. Possibilities for future collaboration include inclusion of women and girls in STEM-related careers.

E. African American History Month Activities

The MCW distributed an issue alert on Transportation Equity Day describing the history-making experience of Irene Kirkaldy Morgan whose courageous refusal to give up her seat on a bus on July 16, 1944 and subsequent mistreatment and, incarceration led to the Morgan v. Virginia case before the Supreme Court. The decision of June 3, 1946, outlawed segregation in interstate travel.

A virtual flier highlighting all the African American women inducted into the Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame will be distributed in February, as well.

F. Guest Speaker for Future Meeting

The MCW will invite the Administrative Director of the Maryland Commission on LGBTQ Affairs to present a briefing about that Commission’s work at a future meeting of the MCW.

III. Unfinished Business

No unfinished business was brought before the Commission.

IV. New Business

- A. The Commission has been invited to present a briefing on the SWiM Reports to a virtual meeting of the CCBC chapter of the American Association of Women in Community Colleges on March 1. MCW Chair Tawanda Bailey and ACT Committee Chair Tamara Wilson will present the briefing. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather will accompany them.
- B. MCW Chair Bailey has been invited to participate as a panelist in a program organized by the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights to be held at Busboys and Poets in Columbia on March 20. The entire Commission for Women is invited to attend the event.
- C. MCW Chair Bailey and Executive Director Vaughan-Prather have been invited to meet virtually with the Maryland Nonprofits Association on March 23 to give a brief overview of the role of The Maryland Commission for Women and how nonprofits might be able to engage with the Commission’s work.

V. Committee Reports

A. Advocacy and Collaboration Taskforce (ACT).....P. Lambert for Wilson

The Committee is drafting a letter to send to Carroll County encouraging the establishment of a Commission for Women in that county.

B. Policy and Legislation (PAL) Committee..... Halford

1. MCW 2023 Legislative Platform

The Committee is very busy developing correspondence on the eight bills the MCW selected to support as its legislative agenda for 2023. The “Love is No Defense Act,” the “Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Youth” bill and the “Access to Period Products” legislation have all had hearings and the MCW has submitted its letters on them – thanks to Commissioner Duncan.

Recently, the Baltimore County CFW asked the MCW to join in supporting another bill that would require signage on public transportation vehicles, including ride-sharing vehicles, that provides resources for victims of human trafficking, and training for all transportation provider employees on how to recognize signs that a customer may be a victim of human trafficking. Commissioner Halford recommends adding this bill to the MCW’s legislative agenda and then sharing the MCW’s entire legislative agenda with the county/city CFWs in Maryland, inviting them to join in supporting these bills. Commission Dorman moved that this bill be added to the MCW legislative agenda. Commission Yang seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Commission Dorman then moved that the MCW share its legislative agenda with the other CFWs in the state and urge them to support these bills as well. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Yang and passed unanimously.

2. MLAW.....Dorman

MLAW held its virtual legislative briefing (different from the Women’s Legislative Briefing sponsored by the Montgomery County CFW) on February 1 at 5 p.m. MCW supported the event as a sponsor. It included an opening by Comptroller Brooke Lierman who spoke about

harnessing the collective power of women. MCW Commissioners attending included Commission Chair Bailey, Commissioners Halford, James, McChriston and Walker, along with Executive Director Vaughan-Prather. All agreed it was an excellent event with much well-presented and important information. MLAW is supporting 11 bills this year; six have been heard already. A link to the MLAW agenda has been sent to all commissioners.

3. Women’s Legislative Briefing.....McChriston
The WLB was held virtually on Sunday, January 29, 12:30 – 5 p.m. with an audience of almost 400. The MCW was a community co-sponsor of this event. The theme of this year’s WLB was *Empowered Women Protect Democracy*. Commissioners who attended included Commission officers Bailey and Somerville, and Commissioners Dorman, James, Sepe, Steward, Lee, Emmel, L. Lambert, McChriston and Walker. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather and Management Associate Wise also attended. Commissioner Lambert noted that the session on justice-involved women, featuring the wonderful speaker DeAnna Hopkins, was excellent. The MC CFW hopes to be able to hold the WLB as an in-person event next year.

C. ARC Committee..... L. Lambert
Commissioner L. Lambert thanked the staff for all the hard work preparing the website which will “go live” on the morning of March 16. The Committee is working on a proposal that would allow the Commission to make exceptions to its “normal” selection process for the HOF, when situations warrant such an exception.

The ceremony in 2024 will be held in-person. The Maryland Hall in Annapolis has already reserved space for the event for March 21, 2024. Commission Chair Bailey suggested trying to arrange to hold the June 2023 MCW planning meeting at Maryland Hall as a “site visit.”

VI. Liaison Reports

A. The Foundation for the Maryland Commission for Women (TFMCW)..Steward for Henry
No report.

B. Maryland Women’s Heritage Center.....Bailey
The Center has several events scheduled for March – Women’s History Month. It will hold a webinar on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion on February 28; an event inviting anyone to share memorabilia of the Baltimore Women’s Industrial Exchange, on the morning of March 11, and then an artists’ reception at the Center that afternoon.

C. Women Moving Forward Conference.....McChriston
This year’s conference was excellent. Future WMF Conferences will likely be held in the fall.

D. Maternal Mortality Review Stakeholders Group.....Peña Dias
No report.

E. Maryland Women’s History Museum.....Emmel
There have been no new developments since the last report.

F. Maryland Semiquincentennial (MD 250) Commission.....Emmel
Along with the transition in state government, there will be new staff for this commission.

G. UMD SAFE Center.....Somerville

The SAFE Center has adopted the following as its legislative priorities for 2023:

HB297|SB292 - Safe Harbor and Service Response

Sponsored by Delegate Bartlett and Senator Waldstreicher

- Decriminalizes prostitution for minors so that when law enforcement encounters a minor engaged in sex work, that child will be referred to DSS and the relevant Regional Navigator and not the Department of Juvenile Services. In addition, this bill aims to protect minors from being criminally prosecuted or proceeded against for certain criminal or civil offense if the minor committed the offense as a direct result of sex trafficking.

HB861|SB788 - Criminal Injuries Compensation Board (CICB) Reform

Sponsored by Delegate Smith and Senator Hettleman

- Creates a non-discriminatory victim compensation process that is accessible to all victims of crime, or their family members left behind, provide prompt and crucial financial support when it is needed most, and remove unnecessary and arbitrary denials of financial relief for victims of crimes.

HB215|SB450 - Nuisance Law - Sponsored by Delegate Palakovich Carr and Senator Gile

- Prohibits the eviction of tenants for utilizing emergency public services, such as law enforcement, fire department, and emergency medical services, and prohibits local jurisdictions from passing ordinances that penalize owners and tenants of housing who utilize emergency public services

HB588|SB366 - Health Insurance – Access to Care Act

Sponsored by Delegate Pena-Melnyk and Senator Lam

- Alters the purpose of the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange Fund to include the provision of funding for the establishment and operation of the Qualified Resident Enrollment Program
- Requires the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange to establish and implement the Program to allow qualified residents to obtain coverage, facilitate the enrollment of qualified residents in qualified health plans, and, based on the availability of funds, provide premium assistance and cost-sharing reductions to qualified residents; etc.

HB119|SB0199

Primary and Secondary Education – Comprehensive Health Education Framework

Sponsored by Delegate Atterbeary and Senator Lam

- Requires the State Department of Education to develop a comprehensive health education framework and for each county board of education to create an age-appropriate curriculum that is consistent with the comprehensive health education framework. *Importantly, topics around healthy online relationships will be added to the mandatory education topics.*

HB705|SB798 - Right to Reproductive Liberty

Sponsored by Speaker Jones and Senator Ferguson

- This legislation will lead to a ballot measure to create a constitutional amendment to protect the rights of individuals to make their own reproductive health decisions in Maryland.

H. National Association of Commissions for Women (NACW).....Sommerville
See Staff Report.

VII. Staff ReportVaughan-Prather

A. NACW Quarterly Meeting & Upcoming Annual Conference

NACW held a virtual quarterly membership meeting on January 30. Approximately 10 individuals attended including representatives from Hawaii, Oklahoma, Prince George’s County MD, Pennsylvania, and several from Massachusetts. They all shared information about their Commission’s work. The next quarterly membership meeting is scheduled for April 24 at 7 p.m. The national conference is tentatively scheduled for August 10 – 14 in Boston, Massachusetts.

B. Health and Issue Alerts

The MCW office has issued several issue alerts in February, including those for African American History Month and National Heart Health Month.

VIII. Announcements

A. Human Rights Day in Annapolis – Commissioner McChriston announced that she plans to attend this event tomorrow morning. It is sponsored by the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights. It is expected that Lt. Governor Aruna Miller and Attorney General Anthony Brown will participate.

B. Howard County Women’s Leadership Conference – Commissioner McChriston announced that this event is being hosted by the Howard County Chamber of Commerce.

C. Executive Committee Meeting: Thursday, March 9, 2023 @ 4:30 p.m. (Virtual) – First Vice Chair Somerville will convene this meeting as Chair Bailey will be out of town.

D. ARC Reception - TENTATIVE: Thursday, March 16, 2023 @ 5:00 p.m. In-Person
The Commission hopes to hold a reception on this date honoring the HOF inductees and recipients of the MYWLA award at Government House, but as of the date of this meeting – those plans are not confirmed. Commissioners are asked to hold this date on their calendars.

IX. Adjournment

No further business being brought before the Commission, Chair Bailey thanked the Commissioners for the very spirited discussion this evening. The meeting was adjourned at 6:13 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted: April 13, 2023

By: Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director

Approved: April 20, 2023