

Maryland Commission for Women

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 26, 2025

5:00 p.m.

In Person

Commissioners Attending:

LaShaune Stitt, Chair
Patricia Lambert, First Vice Chair
Tazeen Ahmad
Pier Blake
Judy Carbone
Judith Emmel
Maggi Gaines
Linda Has
Jodi Kelber
Sarah Ackerstein Klein
Brenda McChriston
Lenita Walker
Monica Watkins

Commissioners Absent:

Jonathon Carrington
Gloria Dent
Tekisha Everette
Lauren Lambert
Christine Lee, Second Vice Chair
Shanna Pearson-Merkowitz
Evelyne Steward
Stacey Rebbert
Nykidra Robinson

Staff Attending:

Ariana Kelly, Executive Director
Brett Jordan, Program Manager
Camille Fabiy, Program & Policy Assistant
Hannah Breslau, Research Intern
Genesis Franco, Management Associate

Guests:

Sharon Blugis, Founder/Deputy Director of RJM

5:10 I. Call to Order.....Commissioner LaShaune Stitt, Chair

The meeting was called to order at 5:34 p.m. Chair Stitt welcomed all Commissioners and guests.

A. Land Acknowledgement

B. Attendance for June Meeting

C. Approval of Agenda and May Minutes - Chair LaShaune Stitt called for approval of the agenda and May Minutes. Commissioner Pat Lambert moved approval of the agenda.

Commissioner Brenda McChriston seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

5:15 II. Acknowledgement of Outgoing Commissioners.....LaShaune Stitt

Commissioners Lauren Lambert, Brenda McChriston, Eveleyne Steward, and Judith Emmel are concluding their terms. Chair Stitt expressed her appreciation for their service.

5:25 III. Review of FY25 Accomplishments.....LaShaune Stitt

A. Executive Committee.....LaShaune Stitt

B. Outreach, Advocacy and Awards.....Pier Blake

C. Research, Policy and Legislation.....Monica Watkins

D. MCW Foundation Committee.....Sarah Ackerstein Klein

5:40 IV. Overview & Goals for FY26 Planning Session.....Pat Lambert

A. In Today's Session We Will:

Discuss and Approve Updated Goals for FY26

Discuss Major Deliverables & How They Relate to Our Statutory Responsibilities

Discuss Subcommittee Assignment Process

Go over FY26 Calendar of Meetings

B. In Today's Session We Will Not:

Discuss Specific Tactics

B. At September Meeting We Will:

Approve Final FY26 Integrated MCW and Foundation Plan

5:50 V. Review of Updated FY26 Goals & Committee Structure.....LaShaune Stitt

A. Outreach, Advocacy & Awards Committee Goals.....Pier Blake

Pier Blake, Chair of the Committee, discussed the committee's goals and areas of focus.

Prioritize Women's History During 250th Year

Strengthen County/Local Commissions Relationships & Supports

Explore Statewide & National Partnerships

B. Research, Policy & Legislation.....Monica Watkins

Monica Watkins, Chair of the Committee, provided the commission with an overview of their goals. She emphasized maintaining focus on the three key areas: women's health, women in the workforce, and the care economy, while also proposing moderate changes.

Execute OTC Birth Control Collaborative

Increase Legislative Capacity

Provide Useful Research & Public Engagement on State Policy Issues

- C. MCW Foundation.....Sarah Ackerstein Klein
Sarah Ackerstein Klein, President of the Foundation, shared important updates and the Foundation's goals with the Commission. She emphasized her interest in finding creative ways to raise funds. More defined goals will be planned out at their next meeting on July 14th.

Execute Treasurer Transition

Support MCW Internship Program

Fundraise for Fall 2026 YWA Awards

6:05 VI. Review New Organizational ChartAriana Kelly

Executive Director Ariana Kelly described the organizational chart, explaining that the two main committees will each have their own subcommittees.

6:10 VII. Group Discussion on Subcommittees.....MCW Staff

Each staff member provided an overview of their subcommittees, highlighting their objectives and the value they will bring to the commission.

A. Women's History

Hall of Fame & Government House Event, Heritage Center, 250 Commission

B. Legislation

Feb Night in Annapolis, Session Report, Legislative Agenda, MLAW

C. County/Local Commissions

In Person Meeting Nov 1, Virtual Chairs Meeting, Communications & Events

D. Policy Issues

October State Agencies Town Hall, Research Publications, Interim Policy Work

E. State/Federal Partnerships

Tracking Federal Impact on Maryland Women, Advisory Council of Women's Statewide Orgs

F. OTC Collaborative

Implementation of OTC Access, Interim Report to Legislature, Briefing

6:45 VIII. VOTE:

A. Outreach, Advocacy & Awards Committee Goals

Chair Stitt motion to approve the Committee Goals. Commissioner Pat Lambert moved approval of the Committee goals. Commissioner Tazeen Ahmad seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

B. Research, Policy & Legislation Committee Goals

Chair Stitt motion to approve the Committee Goals. Commissioner Pat Lambert moved approval of the Committee goals. Commissioner Pier Blake seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

6:55 IX. Announcements.....

No announcements were made.

7:00 X. Adjournment.....Chair Stitt

Chair Stitt thanked everyone for attending the meeting today. There being no further business, she adjourned the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Ariana Kelly, Executive Director
Maryland Commission for Women
09/18/2025