

Maryland Commission for Women

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 21, 2017

5 p.m.

Attman-Glazer Building – Room 158
45 Calvert Street, Annapolis, Maryland

Commissioners Attending:

Wandra Ashley-Williams, Secretary
Tawanda Bailey
Marianne Brackney T/C
Tammy Bresnahan
Deborah Cartee
Gloria Chang
Nicole Ingram T/C
Velvet Johnson
Bonnie Luna
April Nyman
Corinna Shen
Ummu Bradley Thomas
A. Diane Williams, Vice Chair
Tamara England Wilson
Yun Jung Yang T/C

Commissioners Absent:

Homayara Aziz
Lee Bachu, Chair
Lorna Forde
Marion Manski
Anita Riley
Carole Sepe
Marylou Yam

Staff Attending:

Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director
Yael Hanadari-Levy, Student Intern

- I. Call to Order.....Vice Chair A. Diane Williams**
Vice Chair A. Diane Williams called the meeting to order at 5 p.m. She welcomed all those in attendance to the first meeting of the program year. Chair Lee Bachu is traveling today and not able to attend this evening's meeting, but she sends her regards to the commissioners. Vice Chair Williams reminded the commissioners that a major focus of today's meeting is to review and approve the proposed work plans for each committee.
- A. Approval of Agenda**
Vice Chair Williams called for approval of the agenda. Commissioner Thomas so moved. The motion, seconded by Commissioner Bresnahan, passed unanimously.
- B. Approval of Minutes:**
Vice Chair Williams called for approval of the minutes of the June 15 MCW meeting. Commissioner Wilson so moved. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion which passed with 13 in favor and one abstention.

II. Chair’s Report.....Vice Chair A. Diane Williams

A. MCW Meeting Dates for 2017 - 2018

Vice Chair Williams thanked the commissioners and staff for all their hard work over the summer months. She noted that the Listening Tour Committee continued to hold forums in July and August, Commissioners participated in the NAACP WIN event, and that the MCW committees met to develop their proposed work plans for the 2017 – 2018 program year. She then called attention to the list of dates for MCW meetings through June 2018, included in the packets for tonight’s meeting. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather expressed regret that this evening’s meeting falls during Rosh Hashanah and asked commissioners to review the dates of future meetings carefully and let her know as soon as possible if there are dates that should be adjusted.

B. Calvert County CFW “I Can” Initiative

The Calvert County Commission for Women has launched an initiative designed to encourage girls and women to prepare themselves for career in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). It has developed a series of four seminars, each focusing on a different STEM field, bringing in speakers to discuss their careers. The Calvert County CFW has offered to share the project with others and the MCW sent the information about this initiative to the other CFWs in the state.

III. Unfinished Business/New Business

No unfinished business or new business was brought before the Commission.

IV. Committee Reports

A. Hall of Fame.....Commissioner Brackney

The 2018 HOF planning committee met via conference call on September 19, and the chairs of the HOF and Women of Tomorrow planning committees held a conference call earlier to set the proposed dates for the two awards programs. The proposed date for the ceremony is Thursday, March 15, 2018 in the Miller Senate Office Building (MSOB) in Annapolis. Senator Roger Manno has very generously offered to sponsor the event again. The dates for nominations for the HOF will be Monday, September 25 – Friday, October 27. It is hoped that the Selection Committee will review the nominations and make the final decisions regarding whom to induct by December 2. Vice Chair Williams noted the need to ensure that the membership of the Selection Committee reflects the rich diversity of our state’s population. The HOF committee has agreed to aim for four honorees, and has committed to selecting no more than six if there are that many exceptional candidates. Commissioner Brackney moved approval of March 15, 2018 as the target date for the Hall of Fame/Women of Tomorrow ceremony, pending the availability of the MSOB. The motion was seconded and passed with 14 in favor and 1 abstention.

B. Women of Tomorrow.....Executive Director Vaughan-Prather

The co-chairs of this committee, Commissioners Forde and Sepe, were unable to attend this evening’s meeting. The staff was asked to report that the proposed dates for the nominations for the Women of Tomorrow are:

- 10/16 – 11/9 Nominations Open
- 12/8 Selection Committee makes final decision on honorees
- 3/15/2018 Ceremony

C. Listening Tour.....Commissioners Yang and Ingram

Since the June MCW meeting, the Listening Tour traveled to the beautiful Abingdon Library in Harford County on July 11 for a very successful and dynamic session, and then to Allegany County on August 9 for a powerful forum at the Allegany College of Maryland in Cumberland. Commissioners Yang and Thomas also met in Cambridge with Senator Addie Eckardt to develop plans for a session in the upper shore region.

The remaining destinations for the Listening Tour are:

- St. Mary’s County on September 28
- Worcester County on October 17
- Baltimore City with City Council Vice President Sharon Green Middleton on October 23
- Mid and Upper Eastern Shore with Senator Addie Eckardt on October 24
- Girl Scouts of Central Maryland at McDaniel College in Westminster, Carroll County on November 6

The committee will spend the next several months analyzing the information gathered during the course of this project, and developing the report and recommendations. It will need the input of the MCW’s other committees as it works through this data.

In addition to the public forums, the committee has also been conducting a survey in four languages, and has so far received close to 1000 responses. Commissioner Yang asked for the Commissioners’ help in reaching out to the Hispanic community in the state to encourage participation in the survey. The staff has done considerable outreach, but the assistance of the commissioners would be helpful. It is planned that the survey will close on December 1.

D. Education and Outreach.....Commissioners Bailey and Wilson

The committee is meeting this evening after the MCW adjourns to finalize its proposed work plan for 2017 – 2018 and will present it at next month’s MCW meeting for approval. Already this year, eight Issue Alerts have been sent out to the MCW’s distribution lists, and one to the CFWs in the state. A major focus of the committee’s work is likely to be the state-wide CFW Round Table meeting, which will be discussed a little later this evening.

E. Legislation and Public Policy.....Commissioner Bresnahan

The committee has not had a chance to meet, but a work plan has been drafted and will be presented to the MCW for approval at the next meeting. The commission already approved two pieces of legislation for action in 2018 – the Rape Survivors Family Protection Act and the Discrimination in Employment – Conditions related to Childbirth bill. The MCW supported both of these bills in the 2017 Maryland General Assembly but both failed. In May, Commissioner Aziz proposed that the MCW support another bill that failed in 2017: Health Insurance - Coverage of Fertility Preservation Procedures for Iatrogenic Infertility. It will be reviewed and the committee will make a recommendation as to whether to include it on the MCW’s legislative agenda as well.

F. Public Relations and Communications

No report.

G. Health and Wellness.....Commissioner Cartee
Committee Chair Yam was unable to attend tonight’s meeting and she asked Commissioner Cartee to report on the committee’s work. The Committee met via conference call on September 11 and drafted its proposed work plan for this year. It will continue sending health issue alerts, reviewing and updating the MCW’s online women’s health resource and information directory, and will complete work on resources on Human Trafficking and on Women and Opiate Addiction. Commissioner Thomas moved approval of the Health and Wellness Committee proposed work plan. Commission Secretary Ashley-Williams seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

V. Liaison Reports

A. Maryland Women’s Heritage Center.....Executive Director Vaughan-Prather
Commission Chair Bachu, who is the MCW’s liaison to the MWHC, asked the staff to report on the developments at the MWHC. As reported earlier this year, the Center lost its free space at its former location on West Lexington Street in Baltimore. So far, it has been unable to locate another suitable facility, despite exploring a number of possibilities. All the Center’s possessions have been packed up and placed in storage while the search continues. Any commissioner with any contacts or ideas of possible new locations is urged to contact the Center and offer assistance.

B. Women Offenders Task Force.....Commissioners Bailey and Wilson
After the 2017 Women Moving Forward Conference at the Maryland Correctional Institute for Women (MCIW), the MCW was invited to participate in Women Offenders Task Force, which had been relatively inactive for some time. Commissioners Bailey and Wilson attended a meeting of the Task Force over the summer which led them to question whether there is a useful role for the MCW to serve on this board. Commission Secretary Ashley-Williams noted that the Women in the NAACP Maryland, Reproductive Justice Inside, and other community organizations are looking into some of the issues relating to the women in the MCIW. After further discussion, Commissioner Bailey moved that the MCW focus its time and attention on the Women Moving Forward Conference, rather than on the Women Offenders Task Force. Commissioner Wilson seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

C. Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women...Commission Secretary Ashley-Williams
At the last meeting of the MLAW Board of Directors, it decided that it needed to renegotiate the agreement it had reached with the MCW which would have permitted the MCW to sponsor MLAW’s planned November 18 conference for \$1000 and would permit the MCW to bring up to 30 representatives of county CFWs to the conference. For the past two years, the MCW has done this and then held the annual CFW Round Table meeting in the afternoon at the MLAW Conference site. The MCW’s goals in this arrangement were:

- Bring representatives of CFW from around the state – people and organizations not previously involved with MLAW – and encourage their engagement
- Provide the county CFW representatives access to the training offered at the MLAW Conference to enhance their capacity as advocates for women
- Avoid the duplicative effort of a similar conference just for CFW members

Attendance at MLAW’s events increased dramatically last year, and the MLAW Board decided this arrangement no longer serves its needs. The Board instead proposed that the \$1000 would not include the mid-day meal, and that the MCW would cover any additional cost that might be incurred for the use of a room for the Round Table meeting. This would likely bring the total cost to the MCW to at least \$1600. Individual registration for last year’s full-day MLAW Conference was \$45 per person, including the mid-day meal.

Commissioner Chair Bachu, Secretary Ashley-Williams (both are members of the MLAW Board) and Commissioner Bailey discussed this development and propose that the MCW do the following:

- Sponsor the MLAW Conference as a “Silver Sponsor” for \$200.
- Send representatives to the conference
- Help publicize and support the conference
- Organize a separate meeting of the county CFWs in the spring, to thank them for hosting the various sessions of the Listening Tour and provide them a briefing on the findings and recommendations stemming from that project.

The Listening Tour Committee Co-chairs support this proposal. Commissioner Luna moved to accept this recommendation. Commissioner Cartee seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

MCW Vice Chair Williams moved that the MCW purchase enough individual admissions to the MLAW Conference to provide that a total of five commissioners may attend, including any that may be included with the sponsorship. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion which passed with a vote of 10 in favor and one opposed.

Commissioner Ashley-Williams took this moment to thank the MCW for its support of and participation in the NAACP Maryland WIN Conference last July.

D. Maryland FMLI Task Force.....Executive Director Vaughan-Prather

The Maryland Family and Medical Leave Insurance Task Force was established by state law in 2016 and has been meeting over the past year to consider options for creating a paid family and medical leave insurance program for employees in the state. It is chaired by Senator Brian Feldman and Delegate Ariana Kelly, and includes representatives of various state agencies, such as the Commissioner of Labor and Industry, representatives of the state Treasurer and the Comptroller, as well as representatives of numerous business and advocacy groups, and the Commission for Women. It has received presentations from jurisdictions that have already developed or are in the process of developing paid family and medical leave programs (including D.C., Rhode Island, Massachusetts, California, etc.). This month, it opened its meeting for public comment. The Task Force meets again in November and must develop a report of its findings and recommendations before the end of this calendar year.

E. 19th Amendment Commemoration Commission.....Vice Chair A. Diane Williams

The Governor has appointed Major General Linda Singh chair of the Commission on the Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Passage of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The Commission has met and formed four committees:

- Coordination and Communication
- Events
- Historic Sites and Research
- Marketing, Advertising and Tourism

MCW Vice Chair A. Diane Williams will chair the Coordination and Communication Committee. She moved that the MCW post links to the 19th Amendment Commemoration Commission’s activities on the MCW’s social media sites. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. She noted that the 19th Amendment Commission meets monthly and she will provide another update at the MCW’s next meeting.

F. Friends of the MCW.....Vice Chair A. Diane Williams
 Vice Chair Williams has invited Helen Holton, Chair of the Friends of the Maryland Commission for Women, to speak to the MCW at its October meeting. Ms. Holton is looking forward to this opportunity.

VI. Staff Report.....Executive Director Vaughan-Prather

A. Staffing

Management Associate Tammy Wise is on parental leave and the Executive Director has been the only staff in the office since the middle of July. We are now fortunate to have Yael Hanadari-Levy, a senior at Walter Johnson High School in Bethesda, as an intern in the office three afternoons per week (2:30 – 5 p.m.) for the school year. The MCW’s long-standing volunteer, Bev Thoms, continues to work in the office two afternoons per week.

B. NACW – Student Intern’s Project

Two high school student interns, Sidney Yi of Sidwell Friends in D.C. and Amber Lee of Centennial High in Ellicott City, worked close to full time for several weeks in July and August. In addition to assisting with the Listening Tour, including helping to analyze the data and draft the reports of the forums, and staffing the forums, they conducted research for the National Association of Commissions for Women – identifying and contacting every CFW in the United States and gathering their most up to date contact information so that NACW may reach out to them. They were also very helpful in maintaining the MCW’s social media presence.

C. ACIE Professional Fellows Program

Unfortunately, the MCW will not have a Professional Fellow from the American Councils for International Education this fall. However, the MCW Executive Director has been invited to speak at the orientation conference for the fellows that will be in the U.S. this fall, as part of a panel discussing citizen advocacy in public policy making – a new concept in many of the countries represented by these “fellows.”

VII. Announcements

No announcements were brought before the commission.

VIII. Adjournment.....Vice Chair A. Diane Williams
Vice Chair Williams thanked all the commissioners for their very hard work and their dedication to the women of Maryland and adjourned the meeting at 6:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director
Maryland Commission for Women

DATE: October 13, 2017

APPROVED: October 19, 2017