

**Montgomery County Commission for Women
21 Maryland Avenue, Suite 330, Rockville, MD 20850**

Summary of Discussion

September 7, 2011

6:00 p.m.

Attending:

Vanessa Atterbeary, President
Leila Aridi Afas
Maria Montserrat Alvarado
Noha Bakr
Jennifer Cryor Baldwin
Debra Bright Harris
Chandra Walker Holloway
Wilma Holmes
Maliha Ilias
Colleen Kelly
Nick Martinez
Larniece McKoy Moore
Leticia Mederos
Manar Morales
Jaclyn Lichter Vincent

Absent:

Leticia Mederos

Staff:

Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director
Consuwella Carrington, Americorps Intern

I. CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES....President Atterbeary

President Atterbeary called to meeting to order at 6:40 p.m. Commissioner Morales moved and Commissioner Bright Harris seconded approval of the minutes of the July 25, 2011 meeting as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Morales moved and Commissioner Martinez seconded approval of the agenda for tonight's Commission meeting as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

II. Business Meeting

A. Family Law Services

Last week, a group of attorneys, mediators, and financial planners, including representatives of the Montgomery County Bar Association Family Law Division, the Montgomery County Women's Bar Association, the Divorce Roundtable, and attorneys who had volunteered for the CFW's former Counseling Center, met at the CFW office. Members of this group requested the meeting to discuss the possibility of developing some programming for women experiencing separation and divorce, that could still be offered through the CFW. Commission President Atterbeary attended, along with Commissioners Bakr, Kelly, and Ilias, and the Executive Director.

The proposal from that meeting is the possibility of a seminar to be offered once per month, with the attorneys, mediators and financial planners volunteering their expertise as speakers. The possibility of continuing the Legal Call-Back Service was also discussed.

B. Maryland Women's Hall of Fame

The Maryland Commission for Women is requesting nominations for its Women's Hall of Fame. Last year, the CFW nominated the late Maryland Delegate Jean Cryor, but she was not selected. It has sometimes taken years to successfully nominate even very prominent candidates such this. Commissioner Lichter Vincent moved and Commissioner Aridi Afas seconded the motion that the CFW nominate Ms. Cryor again this year. The motion was enthusiastically and unanimously passed.

C. Council Meetings

The CFW decided to request a meeting with the County Councilwomen to discuss the recent cuts to the CFW's budget and the elimination of its Counseling Center. Schedule conflicts over the summer have prevented setting up the meetings, but President Atterbeary will make the necessary arrangements soon.

D. Women's Legislative Briefing 2012

Executive Director Vaughan-Prather met with a representative of Kaiser Permanente to discuss the possibility of Kaiser becoming a premier sponsor of the annual Women's Legislative Briefing (WLB), and although no final decision has been made, there was a very positive expression of interest. A proposal of the "benefits" of premier sponsorship (exhibit table, logo placement on publicity, speaking opportunity, etc.) was requested. There is some possibility the Kaiser would support a broader conference that addressed women's issues in general, not only legislative issues, if the CFW and the planning committee were interested in that change, for the future. For now, the focus will remain on the January 12 WLB. The Executive Director will develop a draft proposal. Commissioner Morales offered to assist.

Last year, Maryland AARP provided \$1500 in support of the WLB and offered to support the event again this year, possibly at a higher level.

The first meeting of the 2012 WLB Planning Committee will be next Wednesday, September 14 at 7 p.m. at the White Oak Library.

E. Structure of Executive Committee

The CFW Executive Committee is typically made up of the three CFW officers (President, First and Second Vice Presidents) and the chairs of its committees for any given year. Last month, the CFW decided that the Chair of the Women's Legislative Briefing planning committee will serve on the Executive Committee since that is the Commission's largest and most visible event. This year, there are co-chairs of the WLB, Wilma Holmes and Jennifer Cryor Baldwin. Both will serve on the Executive Committee.

F. Elections of CFW First and Second Vice Presidents

Commissioner Morales submitted her intent to run for the office of First Vice President, and both Commissioners Cryor Baldwin and Walker Holloway submitted their intent to run for Second Vice President, prior to this evening's meeting. Commissioner Cryor Baldwin withdrew her name from consideration, and Commissioners Morales and Walker Holloway were elected by acclamation.

The Executive Committee will now consist of:

- President Atterbeary
- First Vice President Morales
- Second Vice President Walker Holloway
- WLB Co-Chair Cryor Baldwin
- WLB Co-Chair Holmes

G. Introduction of New Staff

The CFW was fortunate in being selected to sponsor an intern from Americorps' Project Change. Consuwella Carrington was introduced. She just began her internship at the CFW this week. The internship is close to full time and will extend until August of 2012

III. Annual Planning Meeting

A. Orientation to the Planning Meeting

President Atterbeary reviewed the goals of the meeting: to develop a consensus for the CFW's work for this year and the responsibilities of the commissioners in carrying out that agenda.

B. Consideration of Past and Current Commitments

The Commissioners reviewed the work of the Commission in FY 11, including the WLB, the Workplace Flexibility Conference, the National Association of Commissions for Women (NACW) Conference, the Policy and Legislative Action Committee, the Newsletter, Community Service Day and the provision of scholarships for middle school girls from families of low income, enabling their participation in computer camps offered by Montgomery College. Commissioner Lichter Vincent reported that the Policy and Legislative Action (PAL) Committee has typically monitored legislation introduced in the Maryland General Assembly and the U.S. Congress and developed a legislative agenda for the CFW – a list of bills in would actively advocate. The CFW also sits on the board of the Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW).

The CFW has already decided to offer the WLB in 2012. Commissioners Aridi Afas and Morales reported that the work on the other two conferences was successful and is complete. It was decided last year to discontinue the computer camp scholarship program due to lack of funding and staffing.

The CFW needs to consider whether it can continue to publish an e-newsletter and whether it will participate in Community Service Day. Further consideration of the Newsletter and Community Service Day was referred to the Executive Committee.

C. CFW Capacity for Initiatives/Projects

President Atterbearly said that the CFW has typically been able to support three active committees/initiatives and the annual Women’s Legislative Briefing. However, with the elimination of all staff except the CFW’s director, the CFW will obviously have to reduce the number and scope of its initiatives this year, and Commissioners will have to be much more actively involved in the work, not just the leadership, of any projects undertaken. She advised the commissioners to think carefully and realistically about their other commitments and constraints as they consider the agenda for the CFW this year. It would be unwise to announce projects and events that the CFW plans to undertake only to find that the commissioners don’t really have the time they hoped they would have to make those projects successful.

Vice President Morales suggested that CFW regular meetings could be structured such that there is a brief “business meeting” followed by work on the committees/initiatives/events. The other commissioners agreed with that suggestion.

D. Determination of Priorities/Initiatives

Commissioner Aridi Afas moved and Manar Morales seconded the motion that the Women’s Legislative Briefing remain a priority. The motion passed unanimously.

After much discussion. Commission Ilias moved and Commissioner Aridi Afas seconded the motion that the CFW establish two additional priority initiatives:

- A committee to develop the family law seminars and legal call back program
- A committee to plan an event to commemorate the CFW’s 40th anniversary, which will occur in June 2012. The actual date of the commemoration is yet to be determined.

The motion passed unanimously.

The Commissioners then formed committees to address each of these three initiatives. Names for the three committees will be developed later.

2012 Women’s Legislative Briefing	40th Anniversary Commemoration	Program Planning Leadership Committee
Co-Chairs: • Wilma Holmes • Jennifer Cryor Baldwin	Co-Chairs: • Leila Aridi Afas • Jackie Lichter Vincent	Co-Chairs: • Colleen Kelly • Noha Bakr
Members: • Leticia Mederos • Maliha Ilias • Debra Bright Harris • Jackie Lichter Vincent	Members: • Chandra Walker Holloway • Larniece McKoy Moore • Jennifer Cryor Baldwin	Members: • Montse Alvarado • Vanessa Atterbearly • Nick Martinez • Manar Morales • Maliha Ilias

D. Liaisons

Each year, the CFW members represent the CFW on a number of other organizations with related concerns. The Commission decided that its liaisons for this year will be:

- Domestic Violence Coordinating Council Montse Alvarado
- Divorce Roundtable To be decided
- BPW Women of Achievement Leila Aridi Afas
- Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women Letty Mederos
- Family Justice Center Montse Alvarado
- Subcabinet on Senior Issues Judith Vaughan-Prather
- Teen Dating Violence Preventions Taskforce Montse Alvarado

E. Review of Goals

President Atterbary thanked the commissioners for all their very hard work in setting the CFW’s agenda for FY 12. She reminded the commissioners that it will take their personal commitment and hard work to make these projects a success. Committees should meet before the next CFW meeting to develop their plans for the year.

F. Next CFW Meeting

At the July meeting, it was left undecided whether the CFW would meet on September 21 as scheduled, since it held its planning meeting tonight. The Executive Committee will discuss this and let the commissioners know as soon as possible whether the CFW will meet again in September.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Judith Vaughan-Prather
Executive Director