

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

Summary of Discussion

March 28, 2012

7:00 p.m.

Attending:

Vanessa Atterbeary, President
Maria Montserrat Alvarado
Jennifer Cryor Baldwin
Liz Callihan
Debra Bright Harris
Chandra Walker Holloway
Maliha Ilias
Colleen Kelly
Nick Martinez
Larniece McKoy Moore
Jaclyn Lichter Vincent

Absent:

Leila Aridi Afas
Wilma Holmes
Manar Morales
Leticia Mederos

Staff:

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

Guests:

Calli Lipping

I. Call to Order/Approval of Minutes and Agenda.....President Atterbeary
President Atterbeary called the meeting to order at 7:19 p.m.

II. Introduction of New Commissioner

Elizabeth “Liz” Callihan was appointed by the County Executive to fill the term vacated by former commissioner Noha Bakr when she moved out of state. The appointment was confirmed by the County Council on Tuesday, March 27. Commissioner Callihan and the other commissioners introduced themselves.

III. Approval of Minutes and Agenda.....President Atterbeary

President Atterbeary called for approval of the agenda with the addition of one item. Commissioner Alvarado moved, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, approval of the agenda as amended and the minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Executive Committee Report.....President Atterbeary

A. Women’s History Month

Commissioners Bright Harris, Holmes and Kelly along with the CFW staff represented the CFW at the Joint Proclamation of Women’s History Month on Tuesday, March 27. The CFW also wrote in support of state legislation paving the way for the inclusion of a statue of Harriet Tubman in the U.S. Capitol. Executive Vaughan-Prather represented the CFW at the Montgomery College Women’s Studies Scholarship Awards Event early in the morning on the 27th, as well. She reported that Dr. DeRionne Pollard, President of

Montgomery College, gave a very compelling and courageous keynote at that event, decrying the recent comments by members of Congress and nationally known media figures, attacking women's issues resolved decades ago, including family planning and reproductive freedom. She called for civility in public discourse, and urged reason in the face of intimidation.

B. Recruitment of New Commissioners

The legislation establishing the CFW, created staggered terms for its 15 commissioners, so that each year, five commissioners complete their three-year terms at the end of June. Each term is for three years, and county policy permits commissioners to request reappointment if they have served less than a total of five years (one full term, and less than two years of another term). This year, the commissioners who are completing their terms are: Vanessa Atterbeary (eligible for reappointment) Leila Aridi Afas (has served two full terms, not eligible); Leticia Mederos (eligible); Manar Morales (eligible); and Jaclyn Lichter Vincent (has served two full terms, not eligible). Therefore, there will be at least two full terms to fill, and possibly others. It is important for all commissioners to consider their current commitments and demands on their time. Commissioners who find that they are not able to fulfill the obligations of time remaining in their terms, may want to consider stepping down in June and advising the Executive Committee now so that recruitment for new commissioners can include their term as well. Commissioners Bright Harris and Martinez have agreed to serve on the interview committee again.

C. Committee Evaluation and Review Board (CERB)

Every ten years, the County appoints a board to evaluate all the county's officially appointed boards, committees and commissions, and a new CERB has just been appointed. This is tremendously important as the CERB will review whether each board is working within its mandate, and whether it is achieving its goals. This time, the County Council has also asked the CERB to determine where cost savings could be made. The CERB has sent a letter to all the advisory boards asking for a report by May 6, to include:

- A description of the work the board does, citing the enabling legislation, the membership and make up of the board and the subcommittee structure;
- Justification why the advisory board should continue;
- A list of accomplishments from the prior two years, including any direct services to residents;
- A statistical review of the advisory board members' workload;
- A two-year work program outlining planned activities and goals for the future;
- A description of the amount of County government resources used and a plan to reduce the use of these resources

Commissioners Atterbeary, McKoy Moore, Alvarado, Holloway, Callihan and Martinez agreed to develop the response.

All commissioners are asked to send to Vanessa a list of their liaison activities with other organizations, what they do and how much time they spend on these activities.

D. Plans for Future CFW Activities

Typically, the CFW holds its annual planning meeting in September, but to be able to respond to the CERB request for a two-year plan, the CFW considered it’s priorities for the future.

Among the activities to which the CFW has already committed are:

- Annual Women’s Legislative Briefing
- Seminars for Divorcing Families
- 40th Anniversary Event to Recognize 10 women of historical significance to Montgomery County by their inclusion into the CFW’s Women’s History Archives
- Development on an initiative to address pathways for low income single mothers to complete college, possibly in partnership with Montgomery College
- Project to encourage more girls to prepare to careers in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math fields (including health and allied health professions)

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

A. County Executive’s Budget Proposal for the CFW

In his FY 13 Budget Proposal, County Executive Isiah Leggett included \$70,000 for the CFW to contract for counseling services. Of course, the budget must go before the County Council and much could change before it is finalized, but the Commissioners decided to write to the County Executive and thank him for this budget item. The Community Engagement Cluster’s Budget, which includes the CFW, is scheduled for a work session in the County Council’s Government Operations Committee on Monday, April 23 at 9:30 a.m. in the 7th floor hearing room of the Council Office Building.

B. Summer Intern

A college student from the University of Maryland, majoring in Sociology and Women’s Studies has asked for a 16-hour per week, unpaid summer internship at the CFW. We are looking forward to working with her.

B. Requests for Service.....Americorps Intern Carrington

Ms. Carrington reported that she has responded to 68 requests for assistance in the past month, even though the CFW does not advertise the availability of an information and referral service. By far the largest number of these requests have been for help with family problems and relationship issues including divorce and separation. But there have also been requests for career counseling, housing emergencies, legal representation and other issues.

VI. Committee Work

A. 2012 Women’s Legislative Briefing.....Holmes

President Atterbary received a letter from the president of the Prince George’s County Commission for Women asking for a meeting to discuss the 2012 WLB, and suggesting that it be held in Prince George’s County. After considerable discussion, it was decided that she should respond saying that she is happy to meet, and expressing how much the MC CFW values its partnership with the PG CFW, but stating clearly that the WLB was founded by the MC CFW, that it is the MC CFW’s signature event to which it contributes extensive resources, and that we do not consider it an option to hold it in another

jurisdiction. The MC CFW's considers the unity and cooperation of the many organizations that work together on the WLB to be the hallmark of the program and would be happy to work with the PG CFW on other issues and events of regional concern. However, the date has already been set and the venue reserved for the 2013 WLB.

Commissioners Bright Harris and Ilias have agreed to co-chair the 2013 WLB, and plan to call a meeting of the planning committee in May or June.

B. Program Planning Leadership Committee.....Kelly/Ilias

The Program Planning Committee will sponsor two seminars related to family law as a "pilot project" in April. Speakers have been confirmed and the dates have been set for:

- Thursday, April 19 Overview of the Legal Process of Separation & Divorce
- Thursday, April 26 Child Custody and Child Support Issues

A fee of \$10 will be charged and registration will be set up on Eventbrite.

C. 40th Anniversary Committee.....Lichter Vincent/Aridi Afas

Neither Commissioner Lichter Vincent nor Aridi Afas were able to attend tonight's meeting, and the date is fast approaching for the CFW's 40th anniversary. The Commission decided to hold an event on June 7 – the actual 40th anniversary on the enactment of the CFW's enabling legislation - and to select 10 women to include in the Women's History Archives, joining the 30 who were included when the Archives was first developed to celebrate the Commission's 30th anniversary. Commissioners Walker Holloway, McKoy Moore, Alvarado and Baldwin agreed to schedule a conference call as soon as possible and to help develop plans for a June 7 program.

VII. Old Business

A. Sister City Program

At last month's meeting, the CFW heard from representatives of Human Rights Matter! who are concerned about the county's consideration of a community in Israel where significant abuses of women's human and civil rights have been reported. The Executive Committee considered this matter further and drafted a letter to the County Executive suggesting that women's human and civil rights should be a consideration in all of the County's partnerships.

VIII. Adjournment

Given the lateness of the hour, the remaining items on the agenda for tonight's meeting were tabled and the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Minutes submitted by
Judith Vaughan-Prather

Minutes approved April 25, 2012