

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

Summary of Discussion

January 9, 2014

7:00 p.m.

Attending:

Chandra Walker Holloway, President
Maliha Ilias
Katie Smith
Debra Bright Harris
Farah Nageer-Kanthor
Karmen Rouland
Manar Morales
Natalia Farrar
Nick Martinez
Linda Amendt

Heather Reichardt
Lorna Forde
Barbara Mintz

Absent:

Safia Qadri
Maria Montserrat Alvarado

Staff:

Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director

I. Call to Order.....President Walker Holloway

A. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. The agenda for the meeting as well as the November meeting minutes were approved unanimously. The Commissioners thanked Commissioner Mintz for providing dinner this evening.

II. Executive Committee report.....President Walker Holloway

A. Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame

The Montgomery County CFW’s nomination of Henrietta Lacks for the Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame has been selected. Ms. Lacks will be inducted at a ceremony on Thursday, March 20 in the President’s Conference Room of the Miller Senate Office Building in Annapolis. The Commissioners thanked Commissioner Amendt for leading the initiative to nominate Henrietta Lacks, with considerable help from Commissioner Smith, President Walker Holloway and Executive Director Vaughan-Prather. Commissioner Amendt has been asked to present at the Induction Ceremony.

B. Montgomery County Council

Councilwoman Valerie Erwin is resigning her position on the County Council to accept a position as Executive Director of the Center for Working Families. The deadline for nominations to fill her seat is January 8. The Council will appoint one of the candidates to serve until the next election. Primaries are scheduled in June with the elections on November 4.

C. Proposed New Inductees for MC Women’s History Archive

The Commission discussed adding Senator Jennie Forehand and Councilwoman Valerie Ervin to the Montgomery County Women’s History Archive. Senator Forehand, who has announced that she will not seek re-election at the end of her current term, is the longest serving female State Senator in the General Assembly. Councilwoman Ervin is the first African American woman elected to the Montgomery County Council. The Executive Committee recommended that these two extraordinary women be inducted at the closing reception of the 2014 Women’s Legislative Briefing. The motion was made by Commissioner Bright-Harris and seconded by Commissioner Morales. The motion to induct Senator Forehand and Councilwoman Ervin to the Women’s History Archives passed unanimously.

D. Women’s History Month Display

The Commission has the opportunity to design a display on the first floor of the Rockville Library in celebration of Women’s History Month. Last year’s theme was ‘Women in Science’ while this year’s theme is ‘Women of Character, Courage and Commitment’. The display needs to be set up on March 1st. Commissioner Ilias volunteered to coordinate this effort with the help of Commissioners Amendt, Reichardt and Martinez.

E. CFW Book Discussion

President Walker Holloway mentioned that the “book club” meeting in December provided an informal and comfortable venue for Commissioners to get to know each other better, while discussing a book relating to women’s issues. Given its success, the Commission will be making these discussions a regular but optional event for Commissioners to attend if they can. The schedule for future book discussions is:

February 13 – ‘Lean In’ by Sheryl Sandberg,

March 6 – ‘The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks’ by Rebecca Skloot,

May 15 – “Overwhelmed: Work, Love, and Play When No One Has the Time” by Brigid Schulte

F. Confirm Meeting Dates through June 2014

Executive Committee Meetings will occur at 9 am on the first Tuesday of the month.

Future meetings are as follows:

February 4

March 4

April 1

April 29 (For the May CFW meeting)

June 3

Full Commission meetings will occur on the second Thursday of the month at 7 pm.

Future meetings are as follows:

February 13th

March 13th

April 10th

May 8th

III. Staff Report.....Executive Director Judith Vaughan-Prather

A. County Attendance Requirements for Commissioner

The Commission discussed the County's attendance policy whereby which states that a commissioner who is not in attendance for more than three meetings in any 12- month period, or who fails to attend three consecutive meetings, has resigned from the Commission. New attendance records will be kept beginning with the January meeting.

B. Updating CFW Brochures

The English language version of the divorce handbook is almost completely updated and was published this month. It is hoped that the Spanish language version of that guidebook will be ready for publication very soon. The contractor hired to coordinate this project has still to complete work on updating the remaining four CFW informational brochures available in three to six languages:

- Domestic Workers Employment Guide (three languages)
- Employment Rights of Pregnant Women (five languages)
- Sexual Harassment in the Workplace (six languages)
- Violence in Relationships (six languages)

These brochures are available on the CFW website at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw, but contain inaccurate contact information for the CFW.

C. Montgomery County Diversity Seminars

The MCCFW has been invited to present two seminars as part of the County Government's diversity initiative. The seminars are offered at noon on workdays and the primary audience will be County employees but they are open to the public. The CFW counseling service staff is coordinating the seminars, and has agreed to the following topics and dates:

- **Special Issues Confronting Senior Women – March 19, 2014**
Commissioner Mintz agreed to serve as a panelist in this seminar.
- **Special Issues Confronting Muslim Women – April 8th, 2014**
Commissioners Ilias and Qadri agreed to serve as panelists in this seminar.

D. Counseling Services update

The Counseling Center continues to receive very positive feedback on its services. An average of 35 clients are served by the Counselors each week. Divorce seminars have also been scheduled throughout the remaining fiscal year. However, the social workers on staff are all serving in temporary positions. The staff has been advised that the positions must be converted to contracts by the beginning of the next fiscal year.

IV. Committee reports

- A. 2014 Women’s Legislative Briefing.....Bright-Harris**
The 2014 Briefing has 73 community co-sponsors. The Commissioners were reminded to register for the Briefing as soon as possible if they haven’t already. Commissioner Bright-Harris shared the program and asked Commissioners to volunteer to help coordinate each of the sessions. Commissioners signed up for various sessions and were each given a sheet detailing their duties and responsibilities as coordinators both before and on the day of the Briefing. The speakers have been mostly confirmed. Twenty-six youth have signed up to attend the special “teen track” seminars. Publicity is key now and the Briefing was advertised in the recent issue of *Washington Parent*. Executive Director Judith Vaughan-Prather was interviewed yesterday by My MC Media reporter Valerie Bonk, highlighting the Briefing. The interview aired on the My MC Media Channel and on You Tube at <http://www.mymcmedia.org/legislative-briefing-tackles-topics-concerning-women/>
- B. Policy and Legislation (PAL) Committee.....Smith**
Commissioner Smith noted that the Maryland General Assembly began the 2014 session yesterday. She shared list of the important dates related to the Maryland General Assembly and distributed a brief description of legislation of possible interest to the Commission. Commissioner Smith recommended that Commissioners, especially those on the Policy and Legislation Committee should follow ‘Maryland Watch’ and the ‘Maryland General Assembly’ website. She reminded the CFW that the county’s minimum wage bill passed. Commissioner Farrar inquired about a proposed bill to make joint custody a presumption in Maryland divorce cases, and volunteered to get more information to share with the PAL Committee.

V. Liaison Reports

- A. MLAW.....Smith**
The annual MLAW Legislative Reception will be held February 4 in Annapolis.
- B. Teen Dating Violence Task Force/Choose Respect Conference.....Forde/Alvarado**
The Fifth Annual Choose Respect Teen Dating Violence Conference will be held on Sunday, February 23, 2014 from 1:00 PM to 4:30 PM. The conference is an educational and fun-filled afternoon for middle school and high school students, their parents, and youth service providers. The free event will include workshops, refreshments, and live entertainment. The workshops for students in grades 8 – 12 will encourage discussion about such issues as dating abuse, domestic violence, how to identify and promote healthy relationships. Participants in grades 6 and 7 will focus on the dynamics of healthy friendships. Adult attendees will discuss how dating violence affects teens and the importance of starting a dialogue about these issues with their teens. As many as one in three teens will experience dating violence and half of them will never report it. Registration and more information is available at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/5th-annual-choose-respect-montgomery-teen-dating-conference-registration-2870434547#>

C. Community Service Update

Commissioner Rouland delivered the gift card purchased with contributions from individual commissioners and staff for the National Center for Children and Families (NCCF).

VI. Announcements

Commissioner Ilias informed everyone that former Commissioner Noha Bakr's mother has passed away. A condolence card will be provided for the Commissioners to sign and Commissioner Ilias will send it to Commissioner Bakr.

VII. Adjournment

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:59 p.m.

Minutes Submitted by
Maliha Ilias
Commissioner