

Minutes for the Commission for Women

Commission for Women Meeting – May 8, 2023

Call to Order

A full-body meeting of the Commission for Women was held on May 8, 2023, in Government Center conference rooms 9/10. The meeting was called to order at 7:21 p.m. by Phylicia Woods.

Attendees

Phylicia Woods – Providence District; Helen Cole – Hunter Mill District; Jordan Tautges – Springfield District; Alessandra Simmons-Robles, Student Representative; Alyssa Batchelor – At-Large; Amber Beichler – At-Large; Enjoli Ramsey – Braddock District; Alesia Taylor-Boyd – Lee District; Lanita Thweatt – Mt. Vernon District.

Members Participating Remotely

Emily McCoy – Ex- Officio; from home. Pamela Montesinos – Sully District – from home due to the Anti-Hunger Policy Conference in D.C.

Absent: Carla Post – Dranesville District; Sabrina Rose-Smith – Mason District; Mattie Palmore – At-Large, Underserved.

Staff in attendance: Toni Zollicoffer and Lois Kirkpatrick

Visitors: None

Public Comment: None

Guest Speaker: None

Start time: 7:21 p.m.

End Time: 9:23 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Jordan Tautges made a motion to approve the minutes of the April meeting. Amber Beichler seconded the motion. None opposed; none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Financial Report

Jordan Tautges made a motion to approve the financial report. Alesia Taylor-Boyd seconded the motion. None opposed; none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

Commissioner Duos Reports – Representatives from the research duos reported their findings on the four topics below. Alyssa Batchelor volunteered to send a summary of the reports to commissioners. The group agreed to decide which topic(s) to pursue as a commission when the group meets in June.

Teen Depression and Mental Health: Enjoli Ramsey and Helen Cole.

Child Care Access: Pamela Montesinos and Carla Post.

Reproductive Health: Alesia Taylor-Boyd and Alessandra Simmons-Robles.

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Violence Against Women: Jordan Tautges and Mattie Palmore.

Biennial Report – Helen Cole announced the following topics and writers of the commission’s biennial report. Commissioners were asked to send their write-ups to Lois Kirkpatrick by July 14.

1. 50th anniversary and policies and procedures manual- Emily McCoy.
2. Women’s History Month 2022 and 2023 celebrations – Jordan Tautges, Alessandra Simmons-Robles.
3. Teen art contest sponsorships – Pamela Montecinos.
4. Partnering with Fairfax County on girls’ softball fields report – Carla Post.
5. Partnering with Fairfax County on women and girls research report - Helen Cole.
6. Report on COVID’s impact on Fairfax County women – Alyssa Batchelor.
7. August 2022 retreat – Enjoli Ramsey, Mattie Palmore.
8. Appointment of a trans woman commissioner – Amber Beichler.
9. Facebook campaign – Alesia Taylor-Boyd.
10. Phylcia’s Channel 16 interview for Women’s History Month – Phylcia Woods.
11. New logo – Alyssa Batchelor.
12. Photos and any additional 2023 activities – Lanita Thweatt, Sabrina Rose-Smith.
13. Statement on Repeal of Roe v. Wade – Alyssa Batchelor.
14. Why we need a commission for women – Phylcia Woods.

Girls’ Fastpitch Softball Action Plan Review – Lois Kirkpatrick said that the girls’ softball report was presented to the Board of Supervisors at their February 7, 2023 meeting. Board Chair McKay recommended including \$300,000 in the fiscal year 2024 budget for maintenance of the girls’ softball facility at Wakefield. Girls will also have the opportunity to use the softball fields in the new Patriot Park sportsplex from Mondays-Thursdays. Commissioners Carla Post, Alesia Taylor-Boyd and Phylcia Woods participated in the task force that produced the report for the Board of Supervisors.

Women and Girls Research Project – Toni Zollicoffer reported that the University of Virginia will conduct the research. Phylcia Woods and Helen Cole are participating in the committee that is scoping the project.

Co-Host City of Alexandria Webinar – Alyssa Batchelor made a motion for the commission to accept the invitation by the City of Alexandria’s Commission for Women to co-host an online webinar on June 8: “Virginia Post-Dobbs: Challenges and Opportunities.” In discussing the webinar with an organizer, Ms. Batchelor was assured that it would not violate the commission’s policy on non-involvement with political lobbying. Alessandra Simmons-Robles seconded the motion. None opposed; none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Virtual Meetings in 2023 – Lois Kirkpatrick reminded the group of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act that allows county boards, authorities and commissions to meet virtually up to two times per year or for 25% of its scheduled meetings, whichever is greater. Alyssa Batchelor made a motion for the commission to meet virtually in July and December. Lanita Thweatt seconded the motion. None opposed; none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

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Approve Appreciation Fund – Lois Kirkpatrick proposed using commission funds to buy commemorative items to thank members when their service on the commission ends. Alyssa Batchelor made a motion to allow thank-you items to be purchased in compliance with county policy. Amber Beichler seconded the motion. None opposed; none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Lois Kirkpatrick also reminded the group that the commission’s bylaws state that members who miss three meetings in a row, or more than half of the meetings in a 12-month period, can be recommended for removal from the commission.

Commissioner Community Updates – Amber Beichler will speak on June 6 at the Board of Supervisors’ pride month proclamation. Jordan Tautges reported that she had participated in the “Take Back the Night” event organized by the Arlington Commission on the Status of Women. Pamela Montecinos participated in a Northern Virginia Family Services event for entrepreneurs. One of the micro-loan recipients has successfully launched a business selling Argentinian empanadas. Amber Beichler invited commissioners to the Reston Pride event on June 3. Alessandra Simmons-Robles said that this was her last meeting and thanked the group for the opportunities she was given. Phylcia Woods thanked Ms. Simmons-Robles for her service.

Main Motions

Alyssa Batchelor made a motion for the commission to co-host an online webinar, “Virginia Post-Dobbs: Challenges and Opportunities” with the City of Alexandria Commission for Women. Alessandra Simmons-Robles seconded the motion. None opposed; none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Alyssa Batchelor made a motion for the commission to meet virtually in July and December. Lanita Thweatt seconded the motion. None opposed; none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Alyssa Batchelor made a motion to use commission funds to get thank-you items (in compliance with county policy) for members whose service on the commission has ended. Amber Beichler seconded the motion. None opposed; none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

Alyssa Batchelor made a motion to adjourn. Helen Cole seconded the motion. None opposed; none abstained. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:23 p.m.