

Minutes for the Commission for Women

Commission for Women Meeting – September 11, 2023

Call to Order

The Commission for Women met on September 11, 2023, in Government Center conference rooms 9/10. The meeting was called to order at 7:17 p.m. by Phylicia Woods.

Attendees

Helen Cole – Hunter Mill District; Alyssa Batchelor – At-Large; Amber Beichler – At-Large; Enjoli Ramsey – Braddock District; Alesia Taylor-Boyd – Lee District; Carla Post – Dranesville District; Pamela Montesinos – Sully District; Phylicia Woods – Providence District; Liz Hernandez Ramirez – Student Representative.

Members Participating Remotely

Emily McCoy – Ex- Officio from home; Jordan Tautges – Springfield District – from Colorado due to travel for work.

Absent: Mattie Palmore – At-Large, Underserved; Sabrina Rose-Smith – Mason District; Lanita Thweatt – Mt. Vernon District.

Staff in attendance: Toni Zollicoffer; Lois Kirkpatrick

Visitors: None

Public Comment: None

Guest Speakers: None

Start time: 7:17 p.m.

End Time: 9:32 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Carla Post made a motion to approve the minutes. Alyssa Batchelor seconded the motion. Phylicia Woods and Jordan Tautges abstained because they did not attend the July 10 meeting. None opposed; the motion passed.

Approval of Financial Report

Pamela Montesinos made a motion to approve the financial report. Helen Cole seconded the motion. None opposed; none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Introduce Student Representative – Liz Hernandez Ramirez introduced herself to the group.

Old Business

Roberts Rules of Order Refresher – Sabrina Rose Smith was absent, so this topic will be moved to the October 9 meeting.

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Biennial Report – Helen Cole said that the graphic artist is scheduled to send the report to Lois Kirkpatrick on Friday, September 15, and the commission’s biennial report committee will meet to review it on Tuesday, September 19. The commission will vote on printing it at the commission’s October 9 meeting. The group discussed various ways to market the report, such as asking members of the Board of Supervisors to link to the report in their newsletters, and printing promotional cards with QR codes that link to the report.

Operating Policies and Procedures Manual – Section 2.0 of the manual, “Access and Visibility Into the County,” will be revised to delete all language about staff meeting with the county executive and the deputy county executives. Toni Zollicoffer explained reasons why staff will not do this, including that the deputy county executive does not want it. The remainder of section 2.0, and section 2.1, “Individual Communication With Supervisors,” will be edited to remove duplicative language. Commissioners were asked to read the whole document and vote on it at the October 9 commission meeting.

T-Shirts and K9 Krawl – T-shirts with the commission’s logo were distributed to members. Lois Kirkpatrick thanked Carla Post for recommending the vendor, who provided environmentally friendly shirts. Lois Kirkpatrick explained the K9 Krawl, which is the Fairfax County Police Department’s event for Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month Activities – Jordan Tautges created a spreadsheet of events commissioners can attend in October, either individually or in groups. Lois Kirkpatrick explained that the county attorneys have directed staff to follow the Freedom of Information Act protocols whenever more than two members of county boards, authorities or commissions attend an event. Toni Zollicoffer said that Braddock District Supervisor James Walkinshaw will issue a Domestic Violence Awareness Month proclamation at an October Board of Supervisors meeting. Phylicia Woods said that Providence District Supervisor Dalia Palchik is interested in collaborating with the commission on a Domestic Violence Awareness Month event next year.

Women and Girls Research Project – Toni Zollicoffer announced that preliminary results should be released in December.

Reproductive Rights County Team – An interdisciplinary group of representatives from Fairfax County government agencies will convene in November to prepare in case there’s legislation that may impact reproductive rights in Fairfax County. Interested commissioners are welcome to participate.

New Business

Leveraging Commissioners’ Memberships in Other Organizations – Due to Lanita Thweatt’s absence, this topic will be moved to the October commission meeting.

Mahsa Jina Amini Proclamation – Phylicia Woods explained that because this is no longer a Fairfax County event and has been moved to Washington, D.C., the commission is not participating.

Renewing NACW Membership – Lois Kirkpatrick explained that the commission has participated in the National Association of Women’s events and activities for several years. Helen Woods made a motion to

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approve spending \$100 to renew the commission's membership. Alesia Taylor-Boyd seconded the motion. None opposed; none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Community Updates – Phylcia Woods reminded the group that missing three or more commission meetings may lead to removal from the commission. She also reported on the meeting she attended with Alesia Taylor-Boyd and Helen Cole about county boards, authorities and commissions' equity efforts. Toni Zollicoffer said that the commission has been praised for its efforts and achievements with equity and inclusion. Phylcia Woods said that the commission should be mindful of women in the community age 60+ who may prefer printed communication from the commission. Amber Beichler stated that the county's aging LGBTQ+ community needs a lot of support.

Pamela Montesinos said that accessing county information and services about transportation and family planning in Spanish is difficult. She reported on county workshops and activities commission members might be interested in, and announced the Capital Area Food Bank is releasing a new hunger report.

Amber Beichler is helping to form a new group called the Virginia Queer Collective, and mentioned that if a new school board gets voted in this fall, the Fairfax County Public Schools' policy on transgender students may change.

Liz Hernandez Ramirez said that there are students at her school looking to interview leading women, such as those in the commission. Lois Kirkpatrick suggested that she email individual commissioners to set up interviews.

Main Motions

Helen Cole made a motion to spend \$100 to renew the commission's membership in the National Association of Commissions for Women. Alesia Taylor-Boyd seconded the motion. None opposed; none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

Carla Post made a motion to adjourn. Alesia Taylor-Boyd seconded the motion. None opposed; none abstained. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.m.