

Minutes for the Commission for Women

Commission for Women Meeting – February 13, 2023

Call to Order

A full-body meeting of the Commission for Women was held on February 13, 2023, virtually via Zoom. It was called to order at 7:16 p.m. and was presided over by Chair Phylcia Woods, who read the Freedom of Information Act notice. Phylcia Woods moved to affirm that the meeting was being held in accordance with FOIA. Alyssa Batchelor seconded the motion. None opposed; none abstained; the motion passed unanimously.

Attendees

Phylcia Woods – Providence District; Helen Cole – Hunter Mill District; Emily McCoy – Lee District (Ex-Officio); Mattie Palmore – At-Large, Underserved; Enjoli Ramsey – Braddock District; Jordan Tautges – Springfield District; Alesia Taylor-Boyd – Lee District; Lanita Thweatt – Mt. Vernon District; Sabrina Rose-Smith, Mason District; Pamela Montesinos – Sully District; Alessandra Simmons-Robles, Student Representative; Alyssa Batchelor – At-Large.

Absent: Carla Post – Dranesville District

Staff in attendance: Toni Zollicoffer and Lois Kirkpatrick

Visitor: Amber Beichler

Start time: 7:16 p.m.

End Time: 9:33 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Emily McCoy stated that the motion made by Carla Post during the commission's January 9, 2023 meeting was incorrectly written in the minutes. Because Carla Post was not at the meeting to clarify her intent, Alyssa Batchelor made a motion to revisit the approval of the minutes at a future meeting. Alesia Taylor-Boyd seconded the motion. Phylcia Woods abstained due to absence from the January meeting. The motion passed.

Approval of Financial Report

Alyssa Batchelor moved to approve the financial report. Helen Cole seconded the motion. None opposed; none abstained; the motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

Return to In-Person Meetings – Lois Kirkpatrick reported that at their February 7 meeting, the Board of Supervisors ended the state of emergency in Fairfax County. This means that all Fairfax County boards, authorities and commissions must return to meeting in person in March 2023. Lois Kirkpatrick explained that conference rooms in the Pennino building have been reserved for Commission for Women monthly meetings through December. Commissioners with qualifying circumstances may continue to participate in the meetings remotely. Other commissioners may miss two meetings per year for personal reasons such as travel for work or vacation.

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Approve Expenditure for Name Tags and Business Cards – At the January 2023 meeting, commissioners requested name tags and business cards to use at the Women’s History Month breakfast. Lois Kirkpatrick noted that metallic name plates cost about \$15 per commissioner, and 100 business cards cost about \$10 per commissioner. Alyssa Batchelor moved that the commission approve \$500 to pay for the name tags and business cards. Helen Cole seconded the motion. None opposed; none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Women’s History Month – Lois Kirkpatrick reviewed the decisions made so far on the event planned for March 31, 2023. Each commissioner is asked to invite their appointing member of the Board of Supervisors, as well as 10 guests. The planning committee plans to offer \$1,500 to journalist Nancy Lyons Sargeant for making the keynote speech. The planning committee will meet in person on March 8, 15, 22 and 29. The committee will inform staff of their meeting location so that it can be properly noticed per FOIA laws.

Status of Commissioners Pairing Up to Research 2023 Projects – Alyssa Batchelor and Lois Kirkpatrick reviewed the creation of four two-person committees that are tasked with researching projects the commission could pursue in 2023. The committees are scheduled to report out at the May commission meeting. The committees are: Helen Cole and Enjoli Ramsey, teen depression and mental health; Pamela Montesinos and Carla Post, child care access; Alesia Taylor-Boyd and Alessandra Simmons-Robles, reproductive health; Mattie Palmore and Jordan Tautges, violence against women.

Status of Women and Girls in Fairfax County Study – Toni Zollicoffer provided a recap of this project. Requests for proposals were sent out and several universities responded. At the November 2022 meeting, a number of commissioners volunteered to serve on this project. Lois Kirkpatrick will email the request for proposals to commission members as a backgrounder on the project.

New Business

Nominate Officers – The commission’s bylaws state that every two years, officers are elected at the April meeting and take office in July. Two months prior to the election, candidates must be nominated. Mattie Palmore moved to have the current chair and vice-chairs serve another term as officers. Pamela Montesinos seconded the motion. None opposed; none abstained; the motion passed unanimously.

Approve Public Comment Procedures – The Department of Family Services director has instructed all DFS-related boards, authorities and commissions to allow public comment. Helen Cole moved that there be six minutes available during the administrative portion of the commission’s monthly meetings for public comment, and that a maximum of three speakers be allowed to make public comment at each monthly meeting, and that there be a two-minute time limit per speaker. Alyssa Batchelor seconded the motion. None opposed; none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Alyssa Batchelor moved to make available a first-come, first-served sign-up sheet for public comments at each meeting. Mattie Palmore seconded the motion. Lanita Thweatt opposed; none abstained. The motion passed.

Appoint Parliamentarian – Sabrina Rose-Smith agreed to serve as the commission’s parliamentarian.

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National Association of Commissions for Women Conference – This year’s NACW conference will take place in person August 10-14 in Boston. Three commissioners expressed an interest in attending: Alesia Taylor-Boyd, Alyssa Batchelor and Alessandra Simmons-Robles. The commission will approve the expenditure in a meeting closer to the conference dates.

Commissioner Community Updates – Jordan Tautges asked commissioners to email her and Alesia Taylor-Boyd statements they can include in social media posts. Lanita Thweatt reported that the Health Department honored organizations that served the community during the past three years of the pandemic. Pamela Montesinos attended the event. Alyssa Batchelor noted that there is a house bill in the Virginia General Assembly that would allow boards, authorities and commissions to continue to meet electronically. Emily McCoy reported that a first responder who the commission had honored in a past Women’s History Month event is helping with rescue efforts of earthquake victims overseas. Phylcia Woods invited everyone to attend the Black History Month event on Friday, February 17.

Main Motions

Alyssa Batchelor moved that the commission approve \$500 to pay for name tags and business cards for each commissioner. Helen Cole seconded the motion. None opposed; none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Mattie Palmore moved to have the current chair and vice-chairs serve another term as officers. Pamela Montesinos seconded the motion. None opposed; none abstained; the motion passed unanimously.

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Adjournment

Jordan Tautges moved to adjourn the meeting; Mattie Palmore seconded the motion. None opposed; none abstained; the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:33 p.m.