

Maryland Commission for Women

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 13, 2023

3 p.m.

AARP MD Offices, One Park Place, Suite 475, Annapolis, MD

Commissioners Attending:

Tawanda A. Bailey, Chair
Pier Blake
Jonathon Carrington
Gloria Dent
Beth Anne Dorman – 2nd Vice Chair
Essita Duncan
Judith Emmel
Linda Han
Sarah Klein
Lauren M. Lambert
Patricia McHugh Lambert
Christine Lee
Evelyne S. Steward
Lenita Walker
Tamara E. Wilson

Commissioners Absent:

Andrea Bottner
Deborah Cartee
Kathryn M. Fiddler
Maggi G. Gaines
Eugenia B. Henry
Brenda J. McChriston
Jenny Peña Dias
Maxine Griffin Somerville, 1st Vice Chair
Monica Watkins

Staff Attending:

Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director
Tammy Wise, Management Associate

I. Call to Order.....Bailey

Having established a quorum, Chair Bailey called the meeting to order at 3:18 p.m. She welcomed all in attendance, especially the new commissioners, to the Commission's annual planning meeting.

A. Approval of Agenda

Chair Bailey called for approval of the agenda for tonight's meeting. Commissioner P. Lambert moved approval of the agenda. Commissioner Duncan seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

B. Approval of Minutes

Chair Bailey called for approval of the minutes of the June 15, 2023 Commission meeting. Commissioner P. Lambert moved approval of the minutes as submitted. Commissioner Dorman seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

C. Women's Bureau Request

Earlier this week, a memo from the U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau was forwarded via email to the Commissioners, requesting information about resources, demographic information or statistics that have been collected/published in your locality/state regarding Gender-Based Violence or Harassment in the workplace. Commissioners are encouraged to review the request and respond directly to the Women's Bureau with any relevant information that would like to share.

II. Introductions and Team Building

Commissioners were invited to introduce themselves and then to engage in a “getting to know you exercise” that provided a venue for relaxed interaction and introductions.

III. Report of the 2022/2023 Committee Work

A. Policy and Legislation (PAL) Committee.....Duncan

The MCW supported a platform of bills addressing the needs of women in our state and had a very successful year in Annapolis during the Maryland General Assembly. Five of the eight bills supported by the MCW passed!

- HB 0004/SB 0129 - Love Is No Defense – passed
- HB 0808/SB 0859 - Reproductive Health Protection Act – passed
- HB 0705/SB 0798 - Declaration of Rights - Right to Reproductive Liberty – passed
- HB 0297/SB 0292 - Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Youth – passed
- HB 495/SB 350 - Child Care - Early Childhood Development- Scholarship Program – passed

The other three bills supported by the MCW failed this year. The PAL Committee should consider adding these bills to its 2024 Legislative Agenda:

- HB 0523/SB 0759 - Prevention of Forced Infant Separation Act – never left committee
- HB 0087/SB 0052 - Access to Period Products – never left committee
- HB 1053/SB 0203 - Human Trafficking – Transportation – never left committee

B. Achievement and Recognition Ceremony (ARC) Committee.....L. Lambert

The Achievement and Recognition Committee is responsible for the Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame (HOF) and the Maryland Young Women Leaders Awards (MYWLA). The Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame was established to honor women in our state who have made significant and lasting contributions to the arts, athletics, business, education, government, humanities, human rights, law, medicine, philanthropy or science. The Young Women’s Leaders Award was established to honor and award young women in Maryland with outstanding records of academic achievement, leadership and community service. Each year, the Commission issues the solicitation and nominations are submitted.

The Committee establishes two panels of women from different organizations to review all the nominations and determine who receives the awards. Traditionally honorees are inducted into the Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame during a ceremony and the biographies of all the honorees are posted on the Maryland State Archives website. This year, the MCW launched its webpage on March 16th and had a beautiful ceremony at the governor’s mansion with Governor and Mrs. Moore and Lt. Governor Miller there to meet the honorees and present the awards.

Commissioner L. Lambert thanked her committee vice chairs, Commissioner Walker, who coordinated the HOF and Commissioner Lee who coordinated the MYWLA.

C. Advocacy and Collaboration Taskforce (ACT).....Bailey for Wilson

The Taskforce was established last year to address the 10 recommendations laid out in *At the Heart of the Pandemic: Maryland Women and the COVID19 Crisis* research report published in April 2022. This study was the third of a three-part research initiative, the Status of Women in Maryland (SWiM) project, launched in 2016 with *the Voices of Maryland Women Listening Tour*, with a report of the findings published in 2018. That research was followed by *Maryland Women – a Status Report*, published in 2021. The recommendations third research initiative –

the pandemic report, fell into two groups: those that the MCW would address directly and those that would fall to government agencies, private businesses, schools and programs to address.

The Committee's accomplishments in the past year included:

- Wrote to every jurisdiction in the state that still does not have a local Commission for Women; Baltimore City, as a direct result of this advocacy, re-established its CFW this year
- Encouraged current Commissions to amplify the voices of women and issues that impact them in their local jurisdictions
- Brought staff from the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights to provide DEI and bias training to the MCW
- Brought the Executive Director of the newly established Maryland Commission on LGBTQI Affairs to discuss the work of that Commission and possibilities for collaboration
 - Engaged in outreach with Government agencies to share the findings and recommendations from the Status of Women in Maryland (SWiM) reports, including conducting four government agency briefings
 - Encouraged the PAL Committee to incorporate several of the report's recommendations into the MCW's 2023 Legislative Agenda, including
 - Access to affordable, quality childcare and preschool programs,
 - Adequate wages and benefits for childcare workers,
 - Compensation for persons who took on health risks presented by the pandemic to ensure that Marylanders had access to basic necessities and health care,
 - Training for new occupations available post-pandemic and for upskilling, especially in technical fields,
 - Affordable and consistent internet for all residents of Maryland,
 - Programs that address the mental health needs of women,
 - Paid leave for all employees.

The taskforce made progress in this fiscal year, but there are a few things that must continue to fully address the recommendations of the SWiM report. The MCW should consider the following for 2023-2024:

- Continue our outreach in establishing a Commission for Women in jurisdictions where there are none
- Expand our reach by supporting the efforts of existing county/city Commissions for Women
- Connect with the state's ethnic commissions to expand our focus to include more diverse groups.

IV. Structure of the Planning Discussion.....Dorman

The purpose of tonight's meeting is to reach consensus on the priorities and initiatives of the MCW for FY 24, to establish the MCW's working committees, to develop a workplan for the MCW, and to agree on the responsibilities of each commissioner in accomplishing the agenda for the year.

Second Vice Chair Dorman reviewed the MCW's legislative mandate and its established criteria for the selection of its priorities and committees.

V. Brainstorming MCW Priorities

The PAL and ARC Committees are standing committees of the Commission and so will continue their work in FY 24. The ACT is an “ad hoc” committee that has accomplished much in its first year. Commissioners were invited to suggest possible issues and activities in which the Commission might engage, and whether to continue the ACT into the new program/fiscal year. Commissioner Carrington suggested that the MCW might consider reviewing all its work to ensure that it is using language that does not make assumptions about individuals’ gender identity and is not binary regarding gender identity and gender expression. Many other issues and strategies for addressing those issues were considered including developing greater visibility and support for the MCW’s work, collecting more data on women’s issue in the state, mentoring programs, telling individual women’s stories, in-the-field community service, mentoring programs, research on the impact of gun violence on women, single mothers and poverty and many others. Commissioner Steward suggested conducting a commissioner skill set survey to identify the talents and expertise individual commissioners may contribute to the MCW’s work.

After much discussion, the consensus of the commission was that many of the wide range of issues considered could be folded into the focus of the ACT if the focus of that committee is broadened. It was decided to change the ACT name to the Advocacy, Collaboration and Engagement (ACE) Committee and to ask that committee to focus on broadening the MCW’s outreach, position the MCW in a very visible way, support local CFWs, community engagement, and publish public statements on important and current issues, including data collection to support those positions.

VI. Formation of Committees

Commissioners were invited to volunteer to serve on at least one of the three committees for FY 24, and Chair Bailey appointed the leadership for each committee:

Policy and Legislation (PAL) Committee

- Essita Duncan, Chair
- Pat Lambert, Vice Chair
- Sarah Klein
- Lenita Walker

Achievement and Recognition Commemoration (ARC) Committee

- Pier Blake, Chair
- Gloria Dent, Vice Chair for MYWLA
- Lenita Walker, Vice Chair for HOF
- Judi Emmel
- Pat Lambert
- Evelyne Steward

Advocacy, Collaboration and Engagement (ACE) Committee

- Sarah Klein, Chair
- Jonathon Carrington
- Linda Han
- Lauren Lambert
- Christine Lee
- Evelyne Steward

The Commissioners not in attendance at tonight’s meeting will be asked to select the committee on which they want to serve, before the September MCW meeting. Each committee is to convene at least once before the September MCW meeting to develop its proposed goals and plans to accomplish those goals for presentation and approval at that MCW meeting.

VII. Liaisons, Sponsorships

The Commission reviewed the list of organizations to which it has maintained “formal” liaison relationships with over the past year, and the list of events to which it has committed sponsorship, and approved the following:

A. Liaisons:

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|---|----------------------------------|
| • Maryland Women’s Heritage Center | Tawanda Bailey |
| • Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW) | Essita Duncan |
| • Women’s Legislative Briefing Planning Committee | Sarah Klein |
| • Women Moving Forward Conference | Lauren Lambert, Pier Blake |
| • Maternal Mortality Review Stakeholders Group | Jenny Peña-Dias |
| • National Association of Commissions for Women | Maxine Griffin Somerville |
| • Maryland SAFE Center | Maxine Griffin Somerville |
| • Maryland 250 Commission | Judi Emmel |
| • Maryland Commission on LGBTQ Affairs | Jonathon Carrington |
| • Foundation for the MCW (members of the board) | Eugenia Henry, Foundation Chair |
| | Beth Anne Dorman |
| | Evelyne Steward |
| | Monica Watkins, Found. Secretary |

B. Sponsorships and Memberships

Commissioner P. Lambert moved that the list of proposed sponsorships and memberships be approved as submitted with the caveat that other events and organizations may be added throughout the year, with the MCW’s approval and budget permitting. Commissioner Klein seconded the motion which passed unanimously. The approved list includes:

- MLAW Fall Conference
- MLAW Membership
- Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA) Membership
- Women’s Legislative Briefing (WLB) Sponsorship
- Women Moving Forward (WMF) Conference Sponsorship
- National Association of Commissions for Women Membership
- Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) Membership
- Maryland Women’s Law Center Event Sponsorship

VIII. Announcements

A. September Executive Committee Meeting: Thursday, September 14, 2023 at 4:30 p.m. Virtual (MCW Officers and Committee Chairs)

B. September MCW Meeting: (In-Person)

Thursday, September 21, 2023 at 5 p.m.

Attman-Glazer Building

45 Calvert Street, Secretary’s Conference Room

Annapolis, MD

IX. Adjournment

No further business being brought before the Commission, Chair Bailey thanked the Commissioners for all their work and wished them a wonderful summer. The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted: September 15, 2023

By: Judith Vaughan-Prather, Executive Director

Approved: September 21, 2023