



Meeting Minutes

May 23, 2017

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) convened for its regular monthly meeting at 6:00 p.m. on the above date in Room 203 at the Greensboro Cultural Arts Center, with Chair Deborah Goddard presiding.

Present: Commissioners Goddard, Jasper-Morant, White, Sevier, Lucas-Patrick

Absent: Commissioner Hughes, Foster

Council Liaison: Marikay Abuzuaiter

HRC Liaison:

Human Relations Department Staff: Love Crossling, Jodie Stanley

Visitors: Josie Williams

I. Call to Order

Chair Goddard called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

II. Moment of Silent Meditation

Chair Goddard called for a moment of silent meditation.

III. Introduction of Visitors and Speakers

Josie Williams thanked all for inviting her to speak on behalf of the Housing Coalition. She stated that they were located in the Self Help building, and continued with a description of their services, which included homelessness prevention and housing counseling. They were also involved with the revitalization of the Cottage Grove corridor in partnership with Cone Health and UNCG. This project was focused on healthy food access, and they were currently working with the City and other local agencies to provide healthier food options to the residents of this area. She shared brochures and encouraged them to share with other community members.

Chair Goddard asked if someone who lived in public housing could receive services in getting a permanent home. Williams stated that yes, they could certainly come to the Housing Coalition, but the

Coalition acted more as a referral service. There were limited funds available for extenuating circumstances, but that was not the case for every client. They used established relationships with local agencies to advocate for services. White asked if they had to be employed, and Williams confirmed that yes, they needed to be employed. She noted that the Housing Coalition was the only agency for particular neighborhoods, and that their most helpful service was to sit down with a housing counselor that would act as an advocate. White stated that she often encountered people who were looking for shelter. Williams shared that she saw that often and shared a personal experience of difficulty in finding services when her income was only \$5 over the limit. She added that she had an apartment that she rented out not-for-profit.

Commissioner Lucas-Patrick asked if they planned to start an open market to provide healthier food options. Williams shared that they had grant funds and were developing partnerships to provide a mobile market that would accept EBT card payments. Williams also pointed out that many immigrants and refugees, to survive, were making and selling home made goods. She stated that it had been discussed that providing the space for immigrants and refugees to make and sell wares would allow them to expand their market and make a profit. She shared that community gardens that were currently being used by immigrants and refugees were not always safe, depending on nearby soil or water contamination, and that it was a concern. She finished by stating that the Coalition was committed to

Wendee Cutler with BJH Foundation started by sharing that she moved to Greensboro in 1989 from San Francisco with her husband, Ivan. She had been involved with a myriad of organizations from Church World Service, PTA, treasury positions, volunteering at Temple Emanuel. She was also the executive director of BJH Foundation, a grant foundation with a very narrow focus – to serve the Jewish older adult population in North Carolina. Over the past 11 years, they'd awarded over 2 million dollars without fundraising, which averaged out to 2-300 thousand dollars every year. Greensboro is their home, and after an experience with City Academy, she shared that she really felt that it was important to give back and wanted to see how she could get involved with CSW.

Hughes asked if the foundation was national or local. Cutler shared that it was local, but that grants could be awarded only in North and South Carolina.

Chair Goddard thanked Cutler for sharing and noted again that she was from City Academy, which was a great connection point for many residents. Numerous people had recently expressed interest in CSW, specifically the AAUW pay equity program, the expunction program for women, and several contacts from High Point including the YWCA and the Community Foundation. After a season of hearing that CSW was not active or productive, she stated that it was very encouraging to hear so much interest from community members and that it was due to the hard work of the commissioners. She noted that Maria Harkin reached out to Laura Tew and wanted to provide a new AAUW Pay Equity event for the Latino community.

Chair Goddard also noted that they had a new commissioner, Fanta Dorley, but that she would not be able to attend until August.

IV. Committee Reports

Chair Report

Chair Goddard praised all Commissioners for submitting monthly reports, and for having already completed four programs this year. She thanked everyone for being committed to attendance at programs,

and the attendance of events held by other boards and commissions, and for being visible and spreading the word about the work of CSW.

Goddard raised the issue of decorum or improper motive in sponsoring events and desiring to be a commissioner. Dr. Crossling stated that the commission reserved the right to use discretion in those matters so that the body would not be improperly represented. Dr. Crossling also advised that they were to relay information to the Council liaison if they were concerned about someone desiring appointment with the wrong motive.

Domestic Violence Committee:

No updates, but Commissioner White hoped to create some programs.

Education Committee:

Chair position was vacant.

Women and Equality Committee :

Chair Goddard stated that the chair position was vacant, but plans for the Equality Day Breakfast were well underway. The flyer was completed and had been sent to all commissioners, she noted that there was an early bird special until August 4, and she encouraged all commissioners to review the invitation list and to include any addresses that they wanted added to the list. She also noted that they would spend the Friday before the event decorating. She also announced that the Girl Scouts offered that they could provide greeters for the event.

White asked again how it worked to reserve a table. Stanley advised that commissioners could call Marion Davis to reserve a table, and that the early bird pricing was valid as long as they paid before August 4.

Health Committee:

Commissioner Sevier stated that she had not yet met as a committee but she was actively engaging her network and was still working to create an event that was designed to enhance self-advocacy, not just for seniors, but including seniors. Goddard asked how the Sisters event was. Lucas-Patrick stated that Sevier did a wonderful job. Sevier thanked the commissioners for their support, adding that spoke on clinical research and it was a great event. Lucas-Patrick noted that a member of the press took a photo of several commissioners and it might be published in the paper.

Services to the Aging

Chair Goddard applauded Commissioner Hughes and all those that supported the 50+ Forum, stating that it was well attended and a success. Hughes agreed, adding that she met many new people and she felt that it was a success. She was thankful for the Center staff that supported the event. Hughes stated that there was a resident who attended that expressed concerns about the number of handicapped spaces. There were only two spaces, and he felt that wasn't enough, especially for the Senior Center. There were no other concerns expressed. All agreed that the energy of the event was great and many people seemed to enjoy it.

Hughes added that she had also attended the Elder Abuse Walk, which was attended by about 600 people. They also offered free shredding services, Zeta Phi Beta sorority offered snow cones and a fun energy for kids, there was an entertainment group made up of seniors that did a great job. Hughes mentioned that supporting other agencies was so important for networking.

Leadership Through Service Committee

Chair Goddard mentioned that she would possibly create another event with AAUW, as well as the LeadHerShip Entrepreneurial event in September.

Staff Report

Dr. Crossling shared that commissioners could expect a survey requesting feedback for the upcoming commission retreat, stating that including the commissioner's feedback was important and valuable. Incorporating their feedback was important to the retreat's success. The first part of the survey would collect information on topics that interested them, the second part determined their availability and interest in volunteering with planning, and the third covered the design of the retreat. The survey should only take 5-7 minutes to complete.

She continued by sharing that staff had just completed an annual report gathering important data for the department for the 2016-2017 year, and that it would be circulated for review as soon as management was able to review it.

Crossling finished with an announcement about programming, starting with a thanks to all commissioners for understanding and offering grace to staff during a period of being short staffed. She stated that staff was open and available to begin discussing additional programming.

Cutler asked about the annual retreat, who was expected to attend and how it worked. Crossling shared that staff organized a retreat twice a year for those who served on boards and commissions connected to Human Relations. She stated that it was valuable to gather all interested parties to discuss policy, procedure, programming and to plan out the future fiscal year. Crossling went on record saying that it would be her preference that the retreat take place in July, not September, but that it was necessary to wait until then because new appointments were made by Council in August. Cutler asked if a date had been set. Crossling stated that no, the date would be set based on feedback received from the survey. Goddard commented that they had just had a retreat in March. Crossling agreed, and stated that it was beneficial to have the retreat year round to include, train and brainstorm with new commissioners who were appointed in August and had a few months to become acclimated to being on the commission.

Goddard asked if the budget was more favorable towards commissions in the coming year. Crossling shared that the department was in the process of requesting staff support so additional funds would not be available to commissions. She was well aware of the needs of the commissions and wanted to further discuss the allocation of funds. Budget delegates advised her to advocate for additional staff in an effort to increase programming, which would include the programming budget. Crossling stated that there may be areas of creative freedom to tap, within reason and with permission, otherwise allocated funds for programming purposes. Crossling encouraged commissioners to continue to submit ideas and the program proposal forms, finishing by saying that as often as possible, staff would not say no.

Crossling added that Council Member Abuzuaiter was always supportive of the department's requests for additional funds. Goddard clarified that if there were funds left over from the breakfast, it was up to the discretion of the Commission how to use it. Crossling confirmed this. Goddard shared that it was often

difficult to find great speakers for the events when there were no funds available to pay them. Crossling shared that an important component of the annual report was to track the volunteer hours to argue the need for additional funding. Hughes asked if Goddard reached out to the Women of Guilford. Goddard shared that they were not currently active, but according to her connections, they had plans to resume meeting in August.

VI. Approval of Minutes

Goddard asked that Charmagne be changed to Charmaine. Cutler noted that it was in both paragraphs.

Motion to Approve the May Minutes

Motion 1st: Commissioner Hughes

Motion 2nd: Commissioner Jasper-Morant

Unanimous approval

VII. Announcements

Chair Goddard announced that due to excellent attendance as well as the lack of programming in the month of July, the Commission would not meet in July. Sevier asked if the July executive meeting would take place. Goddard stated that meetings would resume in August.

Council Member Abuzuaiter reminded them to apply for City Academy by Friday. Many in the group agreed that it was an eye-opening experience and highly recommended it.

VIII. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Motion 1st: Commissioner Sevier

Motion 2nd: Commissioner White

Unanimous approval

Chair Goddard adjourned the meeting at 7:01 pm.

Chairperson
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Approved: _____
Date

