



**Baltimore County Commission for Women
Minutes of the Meeting
Thursday, October 20, 2016**

Present: Bella Owens, Vonzella Perry, Carmen Christiana, Lynda Stahl, Kimberly Bowen, Cheryl Brooks, Jennie Fernandez, Sheila Derman, Sabrina Jones, Renee McGuirk-Spence, Cecelia Myrick, Frances Smith, Helene Waranch, Nitsa Zdziera, Phyllis Hall, Nancy Surosky

Excused Absences: Linda Forsyth, Theresa Barrett, Dorothy Foos, Ruth Howard, Jacqui Lampell

Unexcused Absences: Emily Hunter, Kelly Carter

Call to Order: 6:03 p.m. by President Bella Owens.

Minutes: Minutes of September 15, 2016 accepted as submitted.

Treasurer's Report: Beginning balance \$8,874.81, \$97.00 Paid, ending balance remaining, \$8,777.81 until June 30, 2017.

President's Report: Bella opened the meeting stressing to all the commissioners diligence in attending the meetings, there are ten scheduled for this fiscal year and attendance is very important as we are a government agency. She also announced that beginning October 1, 2016 all meetings will become "open meetings" meaning that the public may attend them. The agenda will be uploaded to the county's site twenty four hours prior to the meeting as well as the minutes. There was brief discussion on the success of the African American Festival.

Committee Reports

Women's Health: Sabrina Jones provided a recap of the well-attended event:

- 260 in attendance (group was diverse)
- 27 vendors, 3 Paid
- Expenses totaled \$478.48; \$328.48 (less paid vendors)

Phyllis Hall spoke about breast cancer awareness month and gave out bags with information to all the commissioners at the meeting and reminded everyone about the upcoming Komen Race for the Cure on Sunday, October 23rd in Hunt Valley. She also spoke about the administration of flu shots at seven different locations throughout the county as well as the Affordable Care Act enrollment period November-January.

Public Policy: Sheila Derman attended MLAW's conference which took place October 22, 2016 at Anne Arundel Community College and will provide a report at November's meeting. She asked for commissioners to provide issues.

Women's Equality/Diversity: Bella Owens reported on behalf of Ruth Howard and Kelly Carter. Frances commented on the 2 million tweet responses generated from a New York Times article on sexual harassment. Helene asked if this was being discussed in the public schools. Renee commented that a national bill was passed to start discussion in an age appropriate way earlier than the 5th grade. Educators will need to take a course in the health curriculum. Cheryl spoke about the current policy in place in the public school system.

Woman of the Year: Renee, co-chair, provided a brief overview of the event scheduled for March 9, 2017. Applications will need to go out soon so that they can be reviewed in January. Bella mentioned that 2017 marks the 40th anniversary of the commission and asked for suggestions as to how to best celebrate this milestone. Both Sheila and Helene said that they would review past history in the archives that could be of interest and put in a timeline presentation.

Human Trafficking: Bella announced that the County Executive is in support of the development of a Human Trafficking task force. Next steps will include: creating a list of possible members comprising the task force, a mission statement, and determining under which agency it should fall under. The Montgomery County model will also be reviewed. Frances Smith suggested the announcement of the task force at Goucher College. She's been in discussions with Cass Freeland, Program Chair for Community-Based Learning at Goucher pursuing the inclusion of human trafficking in the Story-telling Theme of the second semester. They will also discuss resources with Michelle Daugherty Siri, Executive Director, Women's Law Center of Maryland.

Domestic Violence: Nitsa spoke about the recent letter sent to Police Chief Jim Johnson extending support to the unfounded rape cases in Baltimore County included in the BuzzFeed article and request to have someone from the department speak to the commissioners. As a result of the request Sgt. Rosemarie Brady, Special Victims Unit, BCPD, and Rosalyn Berkowitz, BSN, Forensic Nurse Examiner, SAFE Program, GBMC, provided the commissioners with a presentation and background on sexual assaults. Upon conclusion of the presentation a request was made to tour the SAFE Room at GBMC.

Meeting Adjourned: 7:37 p.m.