



**Baltimore County Commission for Women  
Minutes of the Meeting  
Thursday, November 17, 2016**

**Present:** Bella Owens, Vonzella Perry, Carmen Christiana, Kelly Carter, Jennie Fernandez, Dorothy Foos, Sheila Derman, Linda Forsyth, Ruth Howard, Sabrina Jones, Jacqui Lampell, Renee McGuirk-Spence, Frances Smith, Helene Waranch, Nitsa Zdziera, Nancy Surosky, Emily Hunter

**Excused Absences:** Lynda Stahl, Kimberly Bowen, Phyllis Hall, Cecelia Myrick

**Unexcused Absences:** Theresa Barrett, Cheryl Brooks

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

**Minutes:** Minutes of October 20, 2016 accepted with revision.

**Treasurer's Report:** Beginning balance \$8,777.81, \$35.00 Paid, ending balance remaining, \$8,742.81 until June 30, 2017.

**President's Report:** Bella opened the meeting with a comment regarding the past election and how we must reevaluate what we do as a group to reflect the mood of the country. Delivery and information – how are we going to move to be more effective? Voice is important now as tone toward women has changed. She also mentioned the Montgomery County Commission for Women's "Legislative Briefing" taking place January 29, 2017. Also announced no December meeting.

### **Committee Reports**

**Women's Health:** Sabrina Jones had no report but will be thinking about an initiative in March.

**Women's Equality/Diversity:** Kelly Carter spoke to the group about hosting a "Tea and Talk", open conversations between women of Muslim and other religious backgrounds (or non). After an informal survey of 10 women of various backgrounds it was clear they had minimal to no relationships with Muslims. Why: Social media for the most part views Muslims in a negative light. Purpose: to change the misperception of the Muslim community and vice-versa. Goal: to bring female participants together where they can speak openly about their concerns in Q&A fashion while gaining a better understanding of the Muslim or other Religious Backgrounds (or non).

Long Term Goals:

- Beginning February conduct quarterly "Tea & Talks" (sponsorships)
- Build strong relationships with the Muslim community
- Identifying community needs while working together to meet those needs collectively.

Ruth talked about the October 21<sup>st</sup> Sun article on the Muslim hate crime which occurred in Dundalk.

**Woman of the Year:** Renee set the nominations review date for Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. prior to the 6:00 p.m. Women's Commission meeting. Reviewers include: Frances, Emily, Lynda, Jacqui, Dottie, and Nitsa.

Helene and Jacqui will meet in a separate meeting sometime in December to work on the commission's 40<sup>th</sup> year anniversary.

**Public Policy:** Sheila Derman attended MLAW's conference which took place October 22, 2016 at Anne Arundel Community College and provided the commissioner's with a handout of a listing of the hot topics and legislation for the 2017 Legislative Session. There was a motion and all voted in favor.

**Human Trafficking:** Frances reported that Cass Freeland hopes to pull together details of the spring class at Goucher College. A meeting on November 28<sup>th</sup> for the Human Trafficking task force has been scheduled with Dr. Branch, Director, Health Department, to provide him with an overview and proposal of the task force for his consideration as it would fall under his agency. The group will report back in January.

**Domestic Violence:** Nitsa talked about the informative presentation given by Sgt. Brady, SVU, BCPD and Rosalyn Berkowitz, BSN, SAFE Program, GBMC at the October meeting.

**Old Business/New Business:** Old: Bella reported that Linda would work on the resource manual. New: none.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 7:05 p.m.