

City of Fairfax

Commission for Women

Meeting Minutes for September 15, 2020 (*Virtual Meeting*)

Present: Pat Addison, Stacey Hardy-Chandler, Lisa Whetzel, Brenda Kuhlman, Teresa Presson, Beth Young, Hulian Larson, Laila Acquavella, and staff support Lesley Abashian.

Not Present: Mary Baker, Roxann Rowley

I. Welcome: Pat and Lesley welcomed all members.

II. Approval of the Minutes of August 18, 2020: Minutes approved by members

III. **Discussion-Suffrage Events Debrief:**

Pat thanked members for the participation on suffrage events. Stacey noted all the Commission had been able to accomplish despite COVID and planted seeds for future collaborations. Lesley reported that overall spending from the CFW budget for the August events was \$50, stating that Public Works making the banner and suffrage stickers and the Communication Dept's work on the suffrage videos helped to get expenditures down. Members agreed that we should determine better placement of banners in future events.

Suffrage Rocks: Pat discussed sending thank-you notes to Teresa's daughter's friends who assisted with rock painting. If CFW uses rock painting in the future, will make sure to increase use of social media to advertise the activity. Lesley suggested that Mayor Meyer be given a suffrage rock. Teresa agreed to deliver it to him.

The City's suffrage web page continues to be active.

Videos depicted City resident voices about "What Suffrage Means to Me" were well received. The videos played on Channel 12 and via social media. Laila discussed other ways to share the videos. Stacey noted the high quality of the production promoted a great deal of interest.

Use of robots with suffrage messages: If CFW uses the Starship robots in future events, it was agreed that increased social media messaging should be utilized. Teresa suggested doing this activity again for the 101 anniversary, noting how people were distracted with COVID this year. Stacey added this opens doors for more partnership opportunities with Starship.

Movie Night: Members who participated in the event (Pat, Lisa, Teresa, Stacey) reported that the CFW members had limited interactions with attendees via the CFW table at the movie, most likely impacted by COVID restrictions. Lisa walked around and handed out flyers about voter registration to attendees during the event.

Idea for future events would be to have a summary of planned events in City Scene prior to the events.

IV. **Update-EDA-CFW Woman Owned Businesses Event:** Teresa and Beth discussed the very real possibility of a virtual event in October. Instead of one speaker, there would be a panel followed by facilitated breakout room discussion. This event will piggyback on upcoming EDA and Chamber events, so it is still in discussion stage. The event would be free of charge. The date and further information will be announced.

V. **Update- Women of Influence Award Presentation:** The award presentation is scheduled for September 24 and will occur at 6 pm, prior to the City Council meeting. Since the Council continues to meet virtually, a socially distanced in-person presentation is planned in front of City Hall. Mayor Meyer agreed to participate in the event. The 2 award winners are Janet Jaworski and Susan Barborek. Janet is unable to attend in person so her award will be accepted by her award nominator Louise Armitage, the previous staff support for the CFW. Pat's husband agreed to take photos of the event. During the Council Meeting, the awardees will be acknowledged by Mayor and Council.

Pat asked that members arrive at 530 to assist with set up.

VI. **Human Services Update:**

Lesley noted that City Hall continues to be accessible to residents by appointment only due to continuing COVID-19 restrictions.

Lesley provided an update on the City's Connected Care childcare program created by the City's Parks Department in response to resident childcare challenges linked to school remaining 100% virtual. The program is housed at Green Acres and is partially funded by CARES Act funds. Parents will pay a portion of the program costs based on a sliding scale. This program will end when students go return back to 100% in-person classes.

Lesley provided information about how CARES Act funding is being used to assist residents with food assistance and assistance with delinquent water/sewage bills. Information about the September Stuff the Bus food drives was also provided.

Lesley requested for input on projects that related to upcoming dates of note. She also asked if there are dates of note that should be added to the CFW list.

Lisa suggested partnering with the Fairfax County Office for Women and Domestic and Sexual Violence Services for the upcoming October dates of note. Suggestions included possibly a banner or other awareness activities. Stacey suggested the pinwheel idea used for child abuse awareness. Another suggestion was to provide information regarding a link between domestic violence and animal abuse at veterinarians' offices. Lesley discussed having the lights at Old Town Plaza fountain be purple to coincide with Domestic Violence Awareness. If we place the silhouette statues in the City Hall Atrium, Laila volunteered to create decals.

Future topics of interest might include: Paid Family Leave, the "digital divide" and view of internet access as a basic utility for families, and equality issues highlighted in the pandemic.

Upcoming Dates of Note (September-October):

- September: Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month
- September: National Suicide Prevention Month
- October: Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- October: Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

VII. Around the Table Sharing: Members discussed how some semblance of normal is returning as FCPS discusses a plan for in person classes, people going back to their offices on select days and outdoor sports that allow in person participation. Lisa stated she sees the strong impact of COVID with increased numbers of evictions, the end of CARES Act funding , and overwhelming numbers of new cases for Coordinated Service Planning (700/August). Stacey was a presenter for a recent Suicide Prevention Panel sponsored by SPAN. Pat continues to be a part of a GMU program that supports future special education leaders. Lesley will participate in an upcoming Political Leadership Academy at GMU.

VIII. Pat called the meeting to end, reminding members that the next meeting will occur on October 20, 2020 and will be a virtual meeting.