

January 18, 2022 (Virtual)

Name	Present
Patricia Addison	X
Teresa Presson	X
Stacey D. Hardy-Chandler	X
Laila Acquavella	X
Mary Baker-Mezlo	A
Brenda Kuhlman	X
Huilan Larson	A
Roxann Rowley	X
Lisa Whetzel	X
Simmy King	X
Lesley Abashian	X

Meeting Facilitator: Pat Addison, Chair

The meeting was called to order at 7:08.

I. **Roll call** - Pat

II. **Inspirational Quote**

(This item was moved to later in the agenda.) Laila will be leading the tradition of sharing Commissioners' favorite quotes at the beginning of future meetings.

"The body says what the words cannot." - Martha Graham

This quote was suggested by Roxann who shared its meaning for her and her respect for expression through dance and movement.

III. **Approval of December Meeting Minutes**

The minutes from the December meeting were approved with no changes.

IV. **Open Topics**

a) **CEDAW Working Group**

Lesley sent the draft of the resolution for one last document review (Appendix B). The mayor is aware this item is coming for the City's March meeting. Lesley does not anticipate

any additional steps with City Council members will be needed, but urged the Commission to consider that this resolution will require the Commission's active support moving forward.

Pat requested clarification regarding the phrasing referencing the Virginia House of Delegates. Simmy provided additional information based on actions taken by the legislature in 2021. Pat added that we may want to be open to language modifications depending on any questions that come from the mayor. Pat thanked Simmy and Teresa for their work on the document.

b) Village Steering Committee- update

Lesley reported that the part-time coordinator (Jason Scadron) has started working in this role. Lesley is helping him with onboarding into the responsibilities of this position. The by-laws for the Advisory Board are being finalized and the group will transition from their status as a "steering committee" to a more formal Advisory Board in the coming months. The Advisory Board will have slots slated for Commission for Women members. The next meeting is scheduled for 1/19/2022.

c) NACW Update

Roxann reported that the next NACW meeting will be held next week. There was not a December meeting, so there are no updates to report. NACW members have been sent a list of committees to sign up for and Roxann is considering which national committee she will join.

d) Women of Influence Planning Committee - Update

1. WOI Planning/Selection Committee

To date, approximately 4-5 nominations have been submitted. The due date is 2/11/2022, so Lesley will be sending out additional social media blasts beginning at the end of the week. Another version of the flyer is planned for sharing.

Lisa invited other Commissioners to participate in the selection process; Brenda, Pat and Simmy will join her, and Lesley will continue to provide logistical support for the process.

Lesley reminded Commissioners that when more than two people meet, even for a sub-committee, there needs to notice posted to the public. All commission meetings of three or more persons are subject to FOIA. For the selection process, there can be "closed sessions" to maintain the integrity of the selection process. This applies to all commission meetings. Lisa suggested general advocacy for some

portion of virtual and/or hybrid meetings as options moving forward since technology affords some members greater access.

2. WOI Award Ceremony

Pat requested additional thoughts on the Ceremony venue. The Commission had previously voted on an outdoor setting. Lisa noted that the City Hall location provided some overhead coverage for weather protection. Other benefits were access by City officials, and the more formal backdrop of the City Hall building. Also being considered is outdoor space adjacent to the Stacy Sherwood Center. March and April dates are being considered for this event.

V. New business

1. Women's History Month 2022 Planning

***"Promoting Healing, Promoting Hope" (theme)

There was an exploratory meeting on 1/11/2022 attended by Pat, Lesley, Stacey and Mathew Kaiser (Communications Director). There, it was discussed how the focus could be on video and public messaging tied to a Commission hosted service project. Commissioners' comments/contributions would center around service supporting the Women's History Month theme. Considering the commission's capacity efforts would be made to build synergy with other existing service efforts or community events – for example, leveraging the *Women in Business* event to collect materials for Afghan families and raise public awareness.

Lesley reported on what she has found out about Afghan resettlement efforts in our area. Essentially, most grassroots organizations are taking action, but not in a way that is coordinated community-wide. Lisa shared that she is part of the Fairfax Alliance for Human Service. She reported that there was a recent presentation by Nova RAFT where the needs for these families included: English-speaking skills, internet access, laptops, and ride sharing gift cards. Lisa will also follow up to confirm which needs the Commission could practically assist with and what steps we could take in sync with what other organizations are doing. If there are materials to share with the community, Lesley can get them translated.

2. Community Service Activity

The Alliance for Human Services committed to giving \$1000 to help offset the cost of the classes and work with the Lions club. Stacey suggested using the Women Business Owner event to collect ride sharing gift cards. Simmy suggested a plan using multiple events throughout the month to have community members sponsor certain needs such as

subsidizing classes, etc. Lisa shared that Britepaths could serve as a pass-through entity, but for full transparency, accountability and tracking purposes, contributions should be in gift cards (versus cash). Simmy further emphasized tying this effort to the CEDAW resolution and being able to tell the story of the meaning of our service activity a local way of forwarding equitable justice and as a means of empowering women’s access to community supports.

Are any of the Afghan families resettled in Fairfax City proper? Exact numbers and locations are unclear, but there are mechanisms for getting resources to them via Nova RAFT.

3. Women Business Owner Coffee (March 25)

This may be a virtual event and the jumping off point for the service project as described above. The commission will communicate with the event organizers for opportunities to collaborate on the service project.

4. Video

Past videos produced with Commissioners were successful public service tools. A video for the service project (when selected) would further highlight Women’s History Month, Commission for Women’s charge, and the CEDAW resolution.

VI. **Human Services Director’s Report**

Lesley

1. Meetings: Virtual or In Person?

As mentioned earlier there may be direction outside of our control that will impact the meeting format in the future. For now, members are in favor of continuing with virtual meetings through February. This will be regularly revisited based on any directives, the Omicron surge and other factors.

2. ARPA Update

Lesley invited Commissioner input and reminded members that there was a portal for citizen input. As funding allocations are being decided, she plans to add hours to the Village project. She welcomes additional input.

3. Dates of Note:

a. February:

- i. American Heart Month – “wear red for Women’s heart health”
- ii. Eating Disorders Awareness and Screening Week- **February 21-27**

Stacey shared that today (1/18/2022) was the 6th annual *National Day of Racial healing*. Resources connected to this event include the following:

National event program video:

<https://healourcommunities.org/watch/>

Related resources and information

<https://healourcommunities.org/day-of-racial-healing/> (scroll down to access toolkit and other information)

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/diversity/libraries-respond/dayofhealing>

Brenda volunteered to put together information for social media sharing about adult congenital heart disease. Simmy shared additional resources on the topic.

Laila volunteered to taking putting together social media information on eating disorder awareness.

4. Agenda Items for February's meeting were discussed.

VII. **Around the Table Sharing**

Commissioners shared news and thoughts. Congratulations to those sharing major positive life changes, and encouragement for those navigating challenges.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:49.