



To be the visible resource for Harford County women in their endeavor for social, political and economic equality

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**COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
MINUTES**

Monday, March 28, 2022, 6:45 pm (Webex)

Call to Order: Chair Mary Hastler

Commissioners: *Present:* Mary Hastler, Chair; Jill Hamilton, Vice Chair; Joy Christmas; Kristi Halford; Bonnie Miranda; Alison Imhoff; Mary Teddy Wray; Stacey Rebbert; Roslyn Hannibal-Booker; Robin Tomechko; Cathy Ohler. *Absent:* Nancy Turner; Nafisabanu Multani

Guests: Col (R) Warline Bryant

Staff: Sylvia Bryant

Approval of Minutes: The Commissioners reviewed and approved the Minutes from the February 28, meeting with corrections. *Ohler/Miranda*

Chairwoman's Report: Chair Mary Hastler welcomed the Commissioners to the meeting. The Harford County Department of Community Services held a very successful collection of baby diapers and wipes during February and she thanked everyone who participated.

Coordinator's Report: Ms. Bryant provided an update on the upcoming Youth and Family Resource Festival planned for Saturday, April 9, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the APGFCU Arena. The event is free and open to the public. Volunteers are always welcome!

Committees Update

1. **Governance Committee** – Chair Cathy Ohler – Requested that copies of the most recent Bylaws be forwarded to commissioners for a periodic review of potential revisions. For example, if the Commission decides to move forward with the

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Benchmarking report suggestion to add a high school student to the Commission, would Bylaw or other legislative changes be needed.

2. **Membership Development Committee** – Chair Joy Christmas – Ms. Christmas continues with board recruitment and asks that potential new Commissioners be forwarded to her for follow up.
3. **Community Conversations** – Topics to be addressed:
 - a. Financial Literacy for Women – Tuesday, April 26, 6:30 p.m. Zoom. Ms. Hastler provided contact information on two potential speakers for the April 26th conversation to Ms. Hannibal-Booker for follow-up.
 - b. Words that Hurt – Wednesday, September 21, 2022 (planned for in person with Zoom reserved as backup). Ms. Rebbert provided several leads for potential speakers to Ms. Hannibal-Booker.
 - c. Human Trafficking – Body Parts – Date to be determined. Ms. Bryant noted that this will be a follow up conversation to one the Commission held a few years ago and focusing on body parts. Commissioner Imhoff noted that SARC has a staff member who provides training on human trafficking.
4. **Women of Tomorrow Awards** – Dr. Mary Teddy Wray, Chair, thanked everyone for the energy and hard work that went into planning the exceptional event. Attendance was excellent and feedback all positive. Thirty-two nominees were honored on March 24th and the winner in each group received a \$500 check and certificates. Many thanks for the swag provided by Harford Mutual Insurance and the show will be airing on Harford TV (Verizon/Fios channel 31; Comcast channels 21 and 1084; Armstrong channel 7). A press release and social media updates were posted by Friday morning.

The commissioners made a few suggestions for next year including:

- a. Provide an overview of the selection criteria during the presentation
- b. Introduce each Commissioner and have them stand and be acknowledged
- c. Provide proclamations for the Woman of the Past and the Women of the Present
- d. Include the keynote speech on the Commission website
- e. Determine if candidates may be nominated more than one time and also if eligible to win more than one time. Consider the tracking of nominees by the administrative staff and how structured or flexible do we think the award should be.

Maryland Commission for Women – Ms. Halford provided an update. The Maryland Commission report on Covid and the Impact of Women will be coming out soon. The Maryland Commission Policy & Legislative Committee is continuing to monitor and work on legislative issues and Ms. Halford provided a list of bills that the Maryland Commission for Women either supports or supports with conditions. These bills are HB 0153 & SB 0033; HB 0008 & SB 00275; HB 0296 & SB 280; HB0148 & SB 328; HB0454; HB0626;

and Abortion Care Access Act of 2022. Most bills made it out of committee and a few will be sent to study.

Old Business: Ms. Miranda distributed the Benchmarking Paper from 2020 to the Commission in February. Please review and begin thinking of priorities. Ms. Miranda will create a spreadsheet to assist with ranking priorities.

Ms. Ohler noted that the study discusses human trafficking in Harford and noted that several years ago, a group worked on purchasing a support facility and decided to sell it when the community expressed unhappiness with it being in their area. Ms. Imhoff added that SARC has brought on board a human trafficking manager and many victims of human trafficking reach out to SARC for assistance requiring a high level of care.

Another priority in the benchmarking study is leadership and mentoring for young women in high school. Ms. Bryant noted that the Department of Community Services has also noted this need and is considering establishing a roundtable to discuss. All the Commissioners volunteered to be on the Roundtable if established. Ms. Christmas noted that trust and a solid relationship between a mentor and student is critical to allow support space for opening up and discussing obstacles, etc.

Col. Bryant introduced herself and noted that she runs a leadership academy in Harford for young women and men, "Chosen." Several organizations are currently involved and this may be an opportunity for the Commission to explore.

Next Meeting: Monday, April 25, 2022, 6:45pm via WebEx

Adjourn: Motion was made to adjourn. *Christmas/Ohler*