

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Meeting minutes: **Tuesday February 2, 2021, 5:45 PM**

Virtual meeting on Cisco WebEx

A video recording is posted on the city website <https://play.champds.com/worcesterma/event/651>

Members Present: Kayanna James, Ariel Lim, Coretta McCarter, Samantha Sendrowski, Casey Thomas, Tracey Whitney, Rubby Wuabu

Members Absent: Heather Borelli

Staff: Jayna Turcek

Call to order, introductions and instructions for virtual participation

The meeting was called to order at 5:48pm

Review and approval of January 5, 2021 meeting minutes

Committee agreed to review meeting minutes for January 5, 2021 meeting at the March 2, 2021 meeting.

Old Business:

Selection of 2021 Women of Consequence Awardees –

Committee members reviewed Women of Consequence nominations and Young Women of Consequence nominations and agreed on the winner for both. A runner up was also chosen for both in the case that the chosen winner is not available for the program.

During this discussion, committee members discussed the impressiveness of the young women who were nominated. Chairperson McCarter suggested inviting a youth member to the meeting to provide a youth's perspective. Committee members discussed inviting a representative from the Worcester Youth Council to also collaborate in future.

Updates on 2021 Women of Consequence Awards program taping and publicity –

Committee members confirmed the member speaking roles, guest speakers, and performances.

Updates on ACSW COVID family structure recommendations and next steps (Samantha Sendrowski) –

Guests were confirmed for April 6 meeting.

Committeewoman Sendrowski shared updated data with committee.

- Of the total positive COVID cases among women in Worcester, 15% are Black women
- Women have made up 54% of positive COVID cases since the beginning of the pandemic

- COVID cases are highest among the 30-19 age group

COVID cases continue to hit record highs and disproportionately impact people of color.

Committee to request additional follow up and ongoing statistics regarding factors that may influence the high occurrence among some groups. The committee discussed obtaining a

demographic breakdown of the city to compare to the percentages of cases by race/ethnicity.

Additional considerations were discussed regarding what types of people are getting tested versus those who do not have access to it, and how ongoing, regular testing on college campuses will impact the COVID case numbers.

Aspects of vaccination in the city were also discussed:

- Vaccine sites are being put in low income/racially diverse communities in hopes that people from those communities will have access to vaccinations, but people from outside those communities are travelling in and taking those vaccination spots.
- Requesting a breakdown of the race/ethnicity/gender of people receiving vaccinations. This may take time as the vaccine rollout is still underway to limited groups.
- Requesting information of what the city is doing to outreach to people who are eligible for vaccination.

Review request for proposals and timelines for 2021 programs, events, activities –

“We Are The Women of Worcester” campaign/calendar (Chairperson McCarter/Kayanna James)

- A calendar for the year 2022 representing women in different types of jobs
- RFP in process for submission

Mentor Program/day (Rubby Wuabu)

- Committeewoman Wuabu sent RFP to committee members, who will review and add questions for review
- Intended to be an in-person program, as there are challenges to networking over Zoom
- Committee agreed to push timeline from May to the beginning of school, which will allow youth to work with mentors through the college application process, be a recommender, etc.

Planning for virtual forum on “The Talk” - (Kayanna James) [SEP]

- RFP was submitted for review and approved by committee members

“Wonderwomen of Worcester” poster series

- Committee has done this project in the past, but has discussed the framework and topic for a second round (nonprofit leaders)
- To highlight women in Worcester that have made an impact. First round acknowledged

women who had broken the glass ceiling in the political sphere

- Need to develop a more streamlined process to make it quicker and easier, as well as adding criteria and formalizing the process. Women who are highlighted would be selected by the committee members.

Chairperson McCarter requested to revisit this in March and requested committee members to bring ideas for selection. Committeewoman Lim made a motion to table this until March. Vice Chairperson James seconded the motion. All agreed. Committeewoman Whitney to follow up with RFP for “Wonderwomen of Worcester” poster series.

New Business:

Black History Month Observance –

Committeewoman Whitney shared an invitation from the Massachusetts Commission of the Status of Women to a hearing they are holding about the experiences of women of color and the impact COVID has had on them. This hearing will be on Wednesday, February 24 from 6-8pm.

Review of homelessness data requested - (HUD preliminary Point in Time data) –

Committeewoman Sendrowki shared that women are often underrepresented with this type of data because when experiencing homelessness, they usually stay with family or friends, rather than go to shelters.

Director Turchek shared that the Human Rights Commission just received the annual report on homelessness, outreach, and housing first initiative, and encouraged committee members to review this meeting as it provided valuable information. Discussion included the ongoing difficulties women face with re-entry after prison.

Minutes: www.worcesterma.gov/agendas-minutes/boards-commissions/human-rights-commission/2021/20210201.pdf

Video: <https://play.champds.com/worcesterma/event/649>

Review City boards and commissions report on gender representation –

Data that the committee routinely requests. In the past, they have received a breakdown in gender, race, and leadership, as well as the breakdown at the type of board. Request will be made for the new Chief Diversity Officer, Stephanie Williams, to speak at the May meeting.

Suggestions for future agenda items –

No future agenda items were suggested

Next Meeting: March 2, 2021 at 5:45pm

Meeting adjourned at 7:25pm

*Committee members stayed after meeting to record message for Women of Consequence Award Program

“The moment anyone tries to demean or degrade you in any way, you have to know how great you are. Nobody would bother to beat you down if you were not