

City of Worcester
Advisory Committee on the Status of Women
Meeting Summary
Date: November 4, 2014
Worcester City Hall, 4th Floor

Members Present: Chantel Bethea, Robin Currie, Kathleen Linton, Heidi Sue LeBoeuf, Karen Pelletier, Elizabeth Tomaszewski, Athena Haddon, Jennifer Madson

Members Absent: Sarah Gruhin

Guests: Khryстина Snell

Staff: Catherine Nash, Human Rights Specialist, Office of Human Rights and Disabilities

1. Call to Order:

There being a quorum the Chair called the meeting to order at 5:36pm.

2. Welcome and Introduction:

3. Approval of the October Minutes:

A motion was made by Ms. Pelletier to accept the Minutes and was seconded by Ms. Linton.

4. Guest Speaker- Marianne Sarkis of Clark University:

Ms. Sarkis was unable to make it to the meeting, and will be added when she reaches out for future date.

5. Debriefing of Public Hearing on Pay Equity:

In debriefing, committee members noted that the event was not a true public hearing, but more of a round table. While no community members gave actual testimony, the audience spoke and shared more informally. Members expressed disappointment that those they had invited did not attend, and regretted the low attendance. Members agreed that different venues, such as a university campus or a mixed-income housing residence, could attract more community members and that this might develop into a series of round table discussions. Ms. Pelletier noted that low attendance may be due to the public being unfamiliar with ACSW thus reluctant to share their stories in such a open forum. Ms. LeBoeuf suggested that future forums be open to public requests for topics. It was stated that the Worcester County Commission on the Status of Women supported the ACSW's hearing on pay equity. The Chair noted that Rep. Mary Keefe's remarks helped participants understand the pay equity topic and the ongoing legislation. The data collected will be used to guide policy recommendations and will be shared at the December ACSW meeting as well as included in the annual report.

6. Voting on final 2014 updated ACSW brochure:

Committee members made recommendations for updating the ACSW brochure. The Liaison stated that the brochure could include major updates noting that the final review would ensure that all City Hall requirements were met. Ms. LeBoeuf and Ms. Madson will revise the brochure for the next meeting.

7. Voting on final 2014 Young/Women of Consequence (Y/WoC) documents:

The committee reviewed, deliberated and accepted the final Y/WoC Guidelines for future use. Ms. Linton made a motion to accept the guidelines which was seconded by Ms. LeBoeuf and the motion was unanimously approved.

8. Planning for budget request or fundraising guidelines:

The Chair and Liaison reported back that the city ordinance does not give the authority nor does the mission include direct fundraising for the ACSW. It was noted that the budget from the Office of Human Rights and Disabilities covers events for all three of the OHRD committees, and while a more lengthy written appeal process to change its authority does exist, Ms. LeBoeuf suggested that the ACSW include a detailed budget proposal along with the annual report outlining future events and expenses.

9. Permanent committee member to take minutes:

The Chair proposed a permanent note taker along with the staff liaison. Ms. Madson offered to take minutes for the next few months.

10. Commission member input for the next Agenda items:

Ms. Bethea requested that discussion of a sub-committee regarding strategic planning be added to the December ACSW agenda. Ms. Madson requested adding discussion regarding an updated Women's Needs Assessment survey. Ms. LeBoeuf suggested discussion on prospective round tables. Ms. Haddon mentioned follow up discussion on the End Demand event which was supported by the group, and as a possible roundtable topic. Ms. Manson suggested drafting a recommendation based on End Demand's concerns, and the Chair volunteered to attend the next meeting. Based on the City Manager's recommendation to review top concerns of the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) plan, the Vice Chair underlined the high infant mortality rate and high teen STD rate as issues for the next Agenda.

11. Announcements to share concerning community and educational events that may be of interest and help inform and educate the women of Worcester:

There is an End Demand meeting on November 20th at 5:30pm at the Main South CDC. The Chamber Women's Leadership Conference has sent out a Request for Proposals for speakers and facilitators for the conference in June 2015. Simmons College and the Girls Scouts of Eastern MA are holding a Dreaming Big Conference on November 14th from 8:00am-3:30pm at Simmons College. Two part time Spectrum outreach workers have been hired to act as resources in the city and will begin doing outreach on the streets providing information and referrals.

12. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30pm.