

Edward M. Augustus, Jr.
City Manager



CITY OF WORCESTER
Advisory Committee on the Status of Women

Heather Borelli
Deborah Hall
Ariel Lim, Vice Chairperson
Coretta McCarter, Chairperson
Casey Thomas
Tracey Whitney

Tuesday August 4, 2020, 5:45 PM
Virtual meeting Cisco WebEx

Members Present: Heather Borelli, Deborah Hall, Ariel Lim, Coretta McCarter, Tracey Whitney

Member Absent: Casey Thomas

Staff: Jayna Turchek, Che Anderson (Cultural Office)

Guests: Marelyn Collazo and Patti McKone

1. Call to Order at 5:48pm and Introductions

2. Review and approval of July 7, 2020 meeting minutes

Committeewoman Borelli motioned to approve the minutes as written and Committeewoman Lim seconded and all approved.

3. Old Business

A. Discussion on Committee statement supporting black lives

Some language was received. Chairperson McCarter requested extension of time to allow all to submit language so that all feedback and participation can be incorporated. Committeewoman Borelli seconded and all agreed to table until future meeting.

B. Discussion: How is Covid-19 affecting the family structure?

Chairperson McCarter shared concerns of how Covid-19 is affecting the family structure. Director Turchek shared positive case count in Worcester and surrounding towns from the July 30th City of Worcester press release. Director Turchek also shared the Covid-19 Equities Taskforce had submitted a report to city council at their last meeting and it was scheduled to be further reviewed and discussed at the August 5th Public Health and Human Services Standing Committee of the City Council. Members and public were encouraged to read report and participate in public meeting if able. Additionally, the Worcester Public Schools announced a public meeting for families to discuss the return to school year plan. The meeting will be Thursday August 6th at 5:30pm and information is posted on the Worcester Public School website. Committee woman are encouraged to share information from these and other meetings.

C. Planning the virtual forum on “The Talk: preparing children for police encounters”

- What does “the talk” regarding police safety look like for different families?
- Resources to help families navigate topic

Chairperson McCarter re-introduced the topic that the Committee will work with families to set up a discussion forum to engage in the talk about police safety and what it means to different families. She

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identified numerous resources on the topic ranging from how to be sensitive to trauma, current events, what the talk looks like now in contrast to what that looked like during the civil rights movement of the 1960s. She also has a list of books and video references. All can be shared as resources to help families navigate this topic.

All agreed to wait until the events planned for the end of this month are over and more is known about the return to school plan before setting a date for the first virtual forum.

D. Update on planning for virtual program of 2020 Women of Consequence Awards to be aired Thursday August 27, 2020

Recording of the program is underway with assistance of the City of Worcester cable services department. There is an event page now live on the City of Worcester Facebook page, please share. The program will be a shortened version of the live program previously scheduled for March 2020.

E. Planning for virtual presentation of Wonder Women posters

The posters will be unveiled in the pre-taped Women of Consequence Awards ceremony program. The Director of the City's Cable services department will use the PDFs of the posters along with the poster introductory language prepared by Committeewoman Gregoire.

Committeewoman Hall expressed desire to ensure women who are honored in the posters are properly acknowledged and also wants to work with the Historical Museum to display the posters. She also would like to be part of the final review of the poster piece for the program and will be connected with cable services staff.

Committeewoman Whitney inquired if the Historical Museum could use their Instagram account in some of their media blasts to showcase the posters. She also suggested the Worcester Arts Council could do the same.

All agreed that more visibility and sharing of the posters was desired. Chairperson McCarter agreed that Committee will work on how to get this out and will take suggestions into account.

F. Update on Abby Kelly Foster statue (Che Anderson, Cultural Office)

Mr. Anderson last presented to Committee in the Fall and shared that the plan was to post a request for proposal (RFP) in March and have construction complete by August 2020. The Covid-19 epidemic and resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement gave cause for a pause in this work and upon reflection the Cultural Office is considering whether to expand the scope of the work beyond just Abby Kelly. Mr. Anderson shared that when the project was in the hands of community members there was some push back because of the lack of representation of women of color. He gave a shout out to Committeewoman Hall, Gloria Hall, Chantel Bethea, and others who were part of this earlier conversation.

The City of Boston released a request for qualifications (RFQ) process for their Dr. King project. With this process the public art committee was able to review all and select three artists to continue to develop project. The difference between the City of Worcester statue project and that of Boston's is that Boston's project was done with a private funder. Public art and the RFQ process is under discussion at the state level and the Cultural Office is working with the City's Law Department to see if we could pursue the RFQ process using city funds.

The RFP process has time limits set and not a lot of wiggle room. A committee would have to select from complete applications only. The RFQ process, on the other hand, allows you to see and narrow down list and work with artists on their ideas. There may be something someone would have in mind but it doesn't fit into an RFP.

The Cultural Office is working with the idea to expand beyond Abby Kelly Foster and incorporate women of color. The City of Worcester is still committed and has funding for the statue. The City Manager is 100% committed to this and more projects to come. They want the best representatives of our community. It will be a statue and the location was moved 100 feet down Main St. closer to the parking lot across the street from Mechanics Hall to allow for additional space. They hope to be able to announce which direction they will go during the Equality week later this month.

Outside of the Athena Nike statue on top of the Soldier's Memorial in the Commons there are no other statues with female representation as public art in the city. The Committee all agreed that they want to see more public art of and by diverse women. The Committee thanked Mr. Anderson for his update and will look forward to hearing future updates.

4. New Business:

A. Presentation of update to Women's Resources brochure (Marelyn Collazo)

Patti McKone, former member and Chairperson of ACSW (2004-2009) and mentor to Ms. Collazo, introduced Ms. Collazo and her project to update the ACSW online Women's Resources brochure.

Ms. Collazo is a soon to be graduate of Bay Path University and worked on updating the Resources brochure as part of her senior project in leadership in practice. She used a powerpoint presentation to illustrate her process, updates, and shared the old and updated versions.

She also developed a google map which located the 51 resources and they were organized by categories. The map will be a great addition to the brochure and provides a clear visual of the distribution of these services and the need to address gaps based on geography.

When asked how both can be updated, Ms. Collazo responded that she researched other cities who also included an online form on the website with a few basic fields: name of organization, description of organization, and contact. The bulk of the updates could be done by the organizations themselves and because the brochure has an active link to their websites the brochure will be updated as soon as the organization updates its own website information.

All agreed that Ms. Collazo did a fantastic job and that she will be credited with the updates. Once it is published online all Committeewomen are encouraged to share with other Committees and organizations.

5. Suggestions for future agenda items

Committeewoman Hall provided brief follow up on the domestic violence focus groups that were introduced earlier in the year. An update on the impact of Covid-19 on domestic violence is needed. She will plan to present a proposal to the Committee next month. She agreed that the Committee can build out the "Talks" programming to host talks on a number of subjects throughout the year.

6. Adjournment: Chairperson McCarter shared a quote to close the meeting:

"I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples"
– Mother Teresa

Meeting adjourned at 7:02pm.