

Alexandria Commission for Women

Virtual Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 8, 2022

7:00 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rochelle Hall; Maxanne "Maxie" Witkin; Sarah Porter; Shelley Brown; Yvette Jiang; Jennifer Wetmore; Crystal Kramer; Emily Eckert; Ann Harbour (1 absence); Elizabeth "PJ" Palmer Johnson; Jennifer Stowe; Sarah Holley; T. Nicole Hutchinson, and Charlotte Scherer

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Anuja Miner (1 absence)

OTHER ATTENDEES: Debra Evans, Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS), Domestic Violence Program/Sexual Assault Center (DV/SA); LaTanya Chinagorom, DCHS, DV/SA

1. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Alexandria Commission for Women (ACFW) was called to order by Chair Harbour at 7:23 p.m. The notice for the City of Alexandria virtual requirements were read. The floor was opened for public comment. No public comments were made.

It was noted that Commissioner Hall wrote an article on the Edmonson Sisters in the Zebra Press. Thanks and kudos were extended.

2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 2022 MINUTES

Review of the minutes for February 2022 took place. Commissioner Palmer Johnson moved to approve the minutes with the edits; Commissioner Scherer seconded. All were in favor.

3. DISCUSSION ON FUTURE ABORTION DAY AND PROCLAMATION

Chair Harbour shared was a proclamation request for recognizing abortion providers for the service they provide to the City of Alexandria. The Executive Committee determined not to support for year 2021. The opportunity for the Commission to weigh in on the subject was noted. The floor was open to the Commission to discuss whether to politely decline or if the body supports the proclamation. The Commission has not previously weighed in on the Abortion Services Provider Appreciation Day proclamation. It was suggested that the Commission discuss this issue at a retreat and to use Press kits. Commissioner Scherer motioned to vote and endorse/support immediately to support proclamation on the Abortion Services Provider Appreciation Day 2022. Commissioner Hall seconded.

Commissioner Eckert motioned to put the topic on the agenda for the retreat and allow the proclamation to be a topic of discussion once the Commission has a copy of the proclamation. First Vice Chair Kramer seconded.

Chair Harbour made the decision that since the full Commission has not reviewed the proclamation that is being considered by Council on March 10, 2022, in its entirety, the Commission will fail to vote on the motion given that the full Commission has not had an opportunity to weigh in on the merits and substance of the March 10th proclamation for Abortion Provider Appreciation Day. After that, the topic of Abortion Provider Appreciation Day and the Commissions overall stance on wholistic women's health will be a topic for the August retreat. **Action Item: Commissioner Eckert offered to answer questions in women's health due to her background in that area. Action Item: Topic will be discussed at the August 2022 Commission for Women Retreat.**

4. PREPARATION DISCUSSION FOR MEETING WITH COUNCIL MEMBERS

The Commission has discussed plans to meet with Council on policy issues and mission and reflect on talking points and strategies. The Commission wants to present the one-pagers by May 2022. The Commission hopes to get feedback from City Council during the session. It will also give Council direction as to how to use the talent of the Commission and its expertise in the identified policy areas. **Action Item: A Doodle Poll will be sent out to Commissioners for an alternate date to meet with City Council (to present the one-pagers). Commissioner Wetmore would like to assist the Affordable Housing and Domestic Violence Subcommittees with the one-pagers. Commissioner Scherer will be a part of the Domestic Violence Subcommittee.**

5. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT/AFFORDABLE HOUSING REPORT OUT

Commissioner Stowe reported that the Domestic Violence Subcommittee edited their one-pager. The one-pagers will be ready to present to City Council once the Affordable Housing Subcommittee has their one-pager and the graphics are the same. It was discussed that they will put together talking points and get contexts on the asks and to share resources that were not on the talking points page to include providing the *Report on the Status of Women and Girls in the City of Alexandria*. The one-pagers can be included in the State packages.

The Affordable Housing Subcommittee will take their data/findings and place into a one-pager and will discuss within a week. Their meeting date/time will be posted on the public calendar.

City Council voted on Parkview Apartments, located on the West End, which is 370 units of affordable housing and will be a state-of-the-art facility that will have a day care on site and a DASH bus stop and broadband connections immediately. There are four affordable housing committees/commissions in

Alexandria. It was suggested to meet with those entities. It was noted that the AMI percentage and median income should be discussed. **Action Item: This topic will be discussed during the Affordable Housing meeting. Action Items: Commissioner Wetmore will email her findings on affordable housing to First Vice Chair Kramer.**

6. NEW AND ONGOING BUSINESS

- Commission on Human Rights: Commissioner Palmer Johnson could not attend the Commission on Human Rights meeting due to their date change.
- Commission on Aging: Commissioner Stowe reported on the Commission on Aging (COA) meeting that took place Thursday, March 10, 2022, 4:00 p.m. "Following are bullet points summarizing the content of the meeting of the Alexandria Commission on Aging."
 - Detective Torrance with APD provided an update on romance scams (i.e., The Tinder Swindler for seniors)
 - Presentation: Zhang Zhang- Cherry Blossom PACE
 - Program for All Inclusive Care (PACE) Average age 77 This is new to AVA - opened in January 2022 Allows members to age at home Facility on Beauregard includes: Club, therapy, day center space. Feels like home, not a center.
 - Provide service in home or at center -all-inclusive health care they are the health plan and the health provider.
 - Serves City of Alexandria, parts of FFX and Arlington. Participants are engaging body and mind.
 - Who's eligible and how do participant enroll. 55+, live in approved service area, able to live in their home/community safely, referrals from organizations already working with seniors, financial need.
 - Action Items: Transportation Committee - vision zero and complete Streets to avoid deaths and serious injuries. Asked City to strengthen program and have additional staff. Budget provisions from City Council. Letter to offer COA support. COA voted to send to full Council.

COVID Update

Vaccinated numbers

Test availability

CDC guidance changed classification system AVA low risk due to high vaccination rate and low hospitalizations/deaths

- Liaison reports (23) Not all 23 reported.
- Committee Updates - All committees provided brief updates. The following are committees under COA: Housing, Outreach, Transportation, Economic Development, Strategic Planning, Health/Dementia Friendly, By-Laws, and Advocacy.
- Adjourned at 5:33 p.m.
- Next Meeting: Thursday, April 14, 2022, at 4:00 p.m.”

Commission on HIV/AIDS: Commission Hutchinson reported that the Commission on HIV/AIDS has not met.

7. ELECTION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

The Commission encourages that members step up to serve in leadership roles. Elections are in May 2022.

8. ONGOING BUSINESS

Zebra Articles – Need more members of the Commission to volunteer. Chair Harbour had previously volunteered to write an article for March 2022. All were asked to take other topics to write on for the remainder of the year. It was suggested to focus on military families to write on November 2022’s Veteran’s and Military Families. The count for the maximum number of words for each article are 500. **Action Item: Commissioner Holley offered to lend her voice and provide resources and contacts for an article on military food insecurity for the November 2022 Zebra Press article. Commissioner Hall will write an article on mental health for May 2022. Commissioner Palmer Johnson will write on women’s suffrage.**

In-person Meetings - The Commission will most likely return to in person meetings in April 2022, unless any member has a serious concern about returning to physical meetings. Zoom attendance does not count towards quorum; Commissioners will get credit for attendance and cannot vote. It was discussed that the Commission prefers to meet virtually. It was noted that the Commission has the option to discuss safety and submit a letter to the City Attorney.

Parental leave – The Commission has not discussed this. **Action Item: Chair Harbour will send a formal request to the City Clerk and City Attorney about parental leave.**

Adjournment

Chair Harbour motioned to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Palmer Johnson so moved; Commissioner Eckert seconded. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Important Dates / Reminders / Announcements

- ✓ **SAAM Events (April)**
- ✓ **Women's History Walk (May)**
- ✓ **Domestic Violence Awareness Month (October)**
- ✓ **Breast Cancer Awareness Month (October)**

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