

Alexandria Commission for Women

Virtual Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 10, 2023

7:00 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Maxanne “Maxie” Witkin (1 excused absence); Shelley Brown; Crystal Kramer; Jennifer Stowe (2 excused absences); Emily Eckert; Sarah Porter (1 excused absence); Anuja Miner (1 excused absence); Yvette Jiang; Matthew Worner; Sarah Holley (3 excused absences); Charlotte Scherer (1 unexcused absence/1 excused absence); T. Nicole Hutchinson (1 excused absence/1 unexcused); Elisabeth Palmer Johnson (3 excused absences); Lexi White (1 excused absence); Lee Taylor-Penn (2 excused absences);

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Jennifer Wetmore (3 excused absences)

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

1. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER/PUBLIC COMMENT

The virtual meeting of the Alexandria Commission for Women (ACFW) was called to order by Chair Kramer at 6:03 p.m. This meeting was via Zoom and was made open to the public. The electronic disclaimer notice was read. The floor was opened for public comment.

2. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 2023 MINUTES

The January 2023 minutes were shared to Commissioners for review before the meeting. A motion was made by Commissioner Stowe to approve the minutes; seconded by Commissioner Witkin. The minutes were unanimously accepted. None opposed.

3. ELECTIONS COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

The Commission for Women elections take place yearly in May. First Vice Chair Miner shared what the roles and responsibilities are for elections. Nominations must be made by April 2023. The Commission may be held by voice vote or ballot at the meeting. Nominations are open for Commissioners to self-nominate or they can nominate another Commissioner. Commissioner Palmer Johnson agreed to continue in the role of chair for the elections committee. **Action Item: A memo will be sent to Commissioners along with a description of the bylaws. Notify Commissioner Palmer Johnson if interested in serving as the Commission’s Chair, First Vice Chair, or Second Vice Chair.**

4. NATIONAL DAY OF ABORTION PROVIDER APPRECIATION PROCLAMATION

Councilwoman Sarah Bagley is looking into the proclamation as well. The Commission will support the National Day of Abortion Provider Appreciation. The topic will be kept on the agenda. The resolution is recognition of a providers' loss of life and supports some physicians and clinic staff who have been victims of violent crime because of their profession. Comments were taken from Commissioners. The proclamation was pulled from the docket last year.

Commissioner Eckert spoke on behalf of the Reproductive Rights Subcommittee. The National Day of Abortion Provider Appreciation proclamation was retracted from the docket last year because of an article in the [Washington Post](#) that eluded to a high level of push back from the religious community and the lack of the Commissions involvement. Commissioners were reminded that the Commission for Women is not partisan. Chair Kramer made a motion to vote on whether the Commission agrees with the concept of National Provider Day; Second Vice Chair Brown seconded. All were in favor. Commissioners voted Eleven (11) Yea (Y) – Three (3) Abstained (A). The motion passed. Votes are as follows:

Chair Crystal Kramer -Y

Commissioner Maxie Witkin - Y

Commissioner Jenn Stowe - Abstain

Commissioner Emily Eckert - Y

First Vice Chair Anuja Miner – Y

Commissioner Charlotte Scherer – Y

Commissioner Matthew Worner – Y

Commissioner Sarah Porter – Y

Commissioner Lee Taylor-Penn – Y

Commissioner Yvette Jiang – Y

Commissioner T. Nicole Hutchinson– Y (via chat box)

Commissioner Sarah Holley – A

Commissioner Elisabeth Palmer Johnson – A

Second Vice Chair Shelley Brown – Y

Action Item: The Commission will prepare a draft proclamation and submit it to Council.

Action Item: Information on the vote and discussion will be provided to Vice Mayor Jackson by Chair Kramer. It will be shared that those who abstained were not part of the “Yea” vote. Action Item: Chair Kramer will send information to Commissioners to determine if there will be an emergency meeting on the

topic after speaking with Vice Mayor Jackson. **Action Item: The Commission will provide a draft proclamation. The emergency meeting date and time will be posted publicly three days prior.**

5. REPORT OUTS FROM SUBCOMMITTEES & COMMISSION LIAISONS

- The Commission's Executive Board will be reaching out to each Commissioner to discuss one-on-one conversations as a check-in point since the retreat and to get feedback.
- Affordable Housing & Transportation – Commissioner Jiang reported Josh Baker, General Manager of DASH Bus, has reached out to the Commission to speak at a future meeting in reference to service updates and budget implications (may opt for April 2023). The Commission will prepare to advocate for their budget for FY24 in a future meeting.
- Reproductive Rights – Second Vice Chair Brown re-sent Commissioner Worner's Doodle Poll for a possible meeting. They are developing a virtual state-of-affairs workshop, June 8. **Action Item: The subcommittee will determine whether their meeting will be virtual or in-person.**
- DASH Representative Report Out – DASH's stroller policy has changed. Double strollers can be used in the ADA access area. The subcommittee came across a draft of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments for Regional Fair Housing Plan. They plan to read through the draft and attend some listening sessions and report back.
- Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault & Human Trafficking: Thanks were extended for Commissioners assistance in making the Human Trafficking event a success. The attendees were engaged. All were asked to consider a request for funding from the state and to decide what can be done as a Commission to provide resources to the people who need them. **Action Item: The subcommittee will discuss next steps and requests for funding.**
- Commissioner/City Council Engagement: Chair Kramer spoke with Vice Mayor Jackson who extended her thanks to be given to the Commission for Women as she and the City Council have noticed the change in the Commission and the hard work. The City Mayor has noticed the work happening as well. Commissioner Palmer Johnson speaks with Councilman Kirk McPike several times per month. **Action Item: All were requested to ask Commissioner Palmer Johnson on pairing up with Councilmembers. Commissioner Eckert will meet with Councilwoman Bagley.**
- Human Rights (HR) Commission: Met with Councilman McPike to discuss the Rainbow Crosswalk and is expected to be a pride-plus project. The Human Rights Commission will include additional members to represent Alexandria's diverse community. The next meeting will be February 21s at the

Black History Museum. The museum has a new exhibit. The director, Audrey Davis, give a presentation on the Freedom House. All were encouraged to attend.

- *Aging Commission* – The Aging Commission met February 9 at DASH headquarters and received a presentation from Josh Baker. Gaynell Diaz, Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority shared information on their renovating many buildings in the City and will have to re-home senior residents. There were questions of how the residents will cope. They will be out of their homes for one year. The Senior Citizens of Alexandria had their Annual Valentine Luncheon for the seniors. In attendance were the City Mayor, Fire Chief, Sheriff, Alexandria Police Chief. **Action Item: All were offered to volunteer with the seniors in the City.**
- *HIV/AIDS Commission*: No report at this time.
- *DVP/SAC Wishlist* - https://www.target.com/gift-registry/gift-giver?registryId=6bcf0c70-bc6c-11eb-9092-54ed1d7afa55&lnk=registry_custom_url&type=CHARITY
- *50th Anniversary Subcommittee*: The subcommittee would like to have subgroups and a chair for the subcommittee. Discussions also included the *50 over 50* and *50 under 50* or to do a Salute to Women event. They also discussed honoring former Councilwoman Dell Pepper. It was shared that Julie Carrie offered to emcee. It was recommended to do a hybrid event and have a memorial to recognize the women who paved the way for the Commission. There will be a subcategory for partners who have been men. Chair Kramer motioned to table discussions on the event until the next meeting; Commissioner Stowe seconded. All were in favor.

Next Steps/Adjournment

Chair Kramer requested a motion to adjourn the meeting all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m. The 50th Anniversary Subcommittee meeting was held afterward. Discussions for the subcommittee ended at 7:18 p.m.

Important Dates / Reminders / Announcements

- ✓ **Black History Month / Teen Dating Awareness Month (February)**
- ✓ **Women's History (February)**
- ✓ **Sexual Assault Awareness Month (April)**
- ✓ **Children's Mental Health Awareness Month (May)**