

MEETING MINUTES
ST. MARY'S COUNTY COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
SATURDAY – AUGUST 9, 2014
LEXINGTON PARK LIBRARY * LEXINGTON PARK, MARYLAND

CALL TO ORDER – The meeting was called to order at 9:42 a.m. (This is not a recorded meeting.)

ROLL CALL – Members present were Mary Ludwig, Marta Kelsey, Norma Pipkin, Elizabeth Servello, Makeba Atkins, Joanna Colvin, Stephanie Figeroux, and Katie Werner. Elisa Height, Karen Ann Talbott, Kyle Bishop, and Terry Hall were excused. Department of Aging and Human Services staff member present was Amber Hebert – Human Services Office Manager.

SUMMARY OF MEETING & RETREAT –

First, we took the time to get to know each other – what background experience the members bring to the Commission as well as personal experiences. We've got an awesome group. And, of course, we welcomed Ms. Colvin officially to the Commission.

Ms. Pipkin gave a brief overview of what the Commission for Women is all about, i.e., focusing on Employment, Health, Family Rights, Education, Public Office, and Legal Rights. Our goals, as stated in our By Laws are:

- Create greater public awareness of the role and function of women in our community
- Consult and cooperate with other commissions, public and private agencies and organizations on matters relevant to St. Mary's County women.
- Recommend procedures , programs and legislation to promote and ensure equal rights and opportunities for all women
- Demonstrate support for concerns of women and families by providing a forum in which special interests can be discussed
- Act as a clearing house for information on activities of interest to women and aid in improving communication among St. Mary's County women

Ms. Pipkin then brought up an important point covered in the By Laws: attendance. If a person misses three consecutive regular meetings or 50% of the regular meetings, the Chair person is to notify the County Administrator. Attendance is important so that the Commission is able to conduct business; without a quorum we can't vote on anything. And we have a lot planned for the year with only 11 meetings to accomplish these plans. Obviously things come up but please keep in mind to, if at all possible, come to the meetings.

Ms. Pipkin also pointed out one of the Ethics ordinances we should all be aware of. We cannot use our appointment to the Commission to further our own personal gain. And we cannot vote on any issue that would impact our personal gain and cannot allow others to influence our decisions/vote to improve their gain.

Elections were held:

Officers for the 2014-2015 year are:

- Chair – Marta Kelsey
- Vice-Chair – Elizabeth Servello
- Secretary – Kathleen Werner

We reviewed our activities during the past year; the Commission was certainly busy. We discussed the Banquet in some depth – looking at what worked and what needs help going forward. Ms. Pipkin has agreed to oversee the project. Ms. Figeroux will work on public relations for the event. Ms. Servello will handle nominations and judging for the Woman of Tomorrow; Ms. Atkins will do the same for the Woman of the Year. Ms. Pipkin will call as soon as school opens to firm up a date at the Forrest Career and Technology Center. Suggestions for guest speaker will be most welcome. At the September meeting, we should review the checklist, assign dates, and further responsibilities.

The commission members discussed potential candidates for the Lifetime Achievement Award for the 2015 banquet and members were at a consensus. Ms. Ludwig made a motion to select the Lifetime Achievement Award recipient and Ms. Figeroux seconded, the motion passed. The commission discussed the potential dates of the 2015 banquet as March 19th and as an alternate date March 12th. Ms. Kelsey made a motion to select March 19th as the banquet date and an alternate date of March 12th and Ms. Ludwig seconded, the motion passed.

During lunch we watched a short video: Women 2.0 Project at <http://www.womensequalitydayevansville.com/videos.html>.

We then discussed the various projects proposed by members of the Commission.

Ms. Ludwig suggested a Career Enhancement Workshop which everyone thought was a great idea. Ms. Ludwig will investigate dates for various job fairs scheduled with a view to either tying in with them or to at least to time ours so that it helps women prepare for a job fair. Ms. Atkins knows of an upcoming fair and will forward that information to Ms. Ludwig.

Ms. Hall suggested we distribute the shoe cards to St. Mary's Hospital and to shelters in the area. The suggestion was made to make sure the sheriff's office had a supply as well. We agreed that this was a definite yes.

Ms. Hall also suggested that we supply victims of domestic violence with emergency toiletries through donations from dentists, Target, Walmart and various drug stores and deliver them in crocheted baskets. The consensus was that this too was a great idea except that to protect an individual's privacy that the items be placed in a small bag. Ms. Servello suggested that we collect the materials and then fill bags at one of our regular meetings.

Ms. Kelsey suggested we develop a Public Relations Calendar to share information regarding women's issues with the public. Ms. Figeroux, Ms. Werner, and Ms. Colvin agreed to work on this. The idea is that they won't do all these things themselves but will call on appropriate members of the Commission.

Ms. Kelsey also suggested developing a women's resource directory to go on our Facebook page. It was felt that since the Department of Aging and Human Services is currently working on resource directories that we should put this on hold until their research is completed.

CALENDAR/ANNOUNCEMENTS –

- Women's Equality Day proclamation – August 26, 2014.

NEXT MEETING – September 8, 2014 in room 14 of the Potomac Building at 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT –

- The meeting and retreat adjourned at 2:30 p.m.