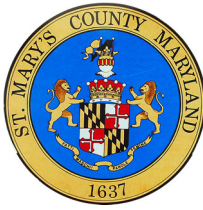


St. Mary's County Commission for Women

Erin Walker, Chair
Mary Ludwig, Vice-Chair
Katie Werner, Secretary



St. Mary's County Commissioners

James R. Guy, President
Eric Colvin, Commissioner
Michael L. Hewitt, Commissioner
Todd B. Morgan, Commissioner
John E. O'Connor, Commissioner

29 January 2020

Subject: St. Mary's County Commission for Women Annual Report for 2019

Background: The St. Mary's County Commission for Women (CFW) was established in July 1976 as a result of legislation passed by the Maryland General Assembly to address matters of specific concern to women. Members are appointed by the St. Mary's County Commissioners.

Purpose: To provide the Board of County Commissioners with advice and assistance concerning issues affecting women such as employment, education, health, public office and legal rights.

Meetings and Membership: Meetings are held on the third Monday of each month at 5:30 pm in room 14 of the Potomac Building, Leonardtown, MD. Changes in the schedule are sometimes made for public holidays and to accommodate the needs of the group and its activities.

Elected officers from July 2019-June 2020:

- Erin Walker, Chair
- Mary Ludwig, Vice-Chair (replaced Rose Frederick in October 2019)
- Katie Werner, Secretary

Member roster during 2019:

- | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| • Joanna Colvin | • Erin Walker | • Catherine Stewart |
| • Mary Ludwig | • Juanita Nether | • Katherine Stone |
| • Jennifer Brown | • Taylor Spencer | • Rose Frederick |
| • Marta Kelsey | • Kathleen Werner | • Norma Pipkin |

Overview of activities

The members of the CFW are a dedicated and active group of volunteers, working hard to raise awareness about issues impacting women locally and more broadly. The CFW serves St. Mary's County through a variety of means including:

- sponsoring official proclamations such those encouraging equality and condemning domestic violence;
- attending roundtable discussions focused on issues relevant to women;
- serving on the Family Violence Coordinating Council;
- partnering with St. Mary's County Public Schools to deliver healthy relationship programs in middle and high schools; and
- hosting an annual Women's History Month Banquet, which recognizes women who have made significant contributions to our community through volunteer work, while raising funds for the Jane Hale Sypher Scholarship Fund.

In addition, we have a presence at CFW informal outreach events including participating in health fairs, attending elementary schools to discuss women's rights, honoring women veterans, and contributing to the Department of Aging and Human Services guardianship program at Christmas.

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The following list includes some of the activities that CFW members participated in *over and above* the regularly scheduled meetings and planning meetings throughout 2019.

January

- Meeting with College of Southern Maryland to confirm endowment of Jane Hale Sypher scholarship fund: January 9

February:

- Dating Violence Prevention Proclamation: February 5
- One Love dating violence presentations at St. Mary's Country public high schools: February 12, 13, & 14
- Wellness Fair: February 23

March

- Presentation at Green Holly Elementary (4th grade) on the history of women's rights: March 8
- Annual Women's History Month Banquet: March 14
- Women's History Month Roundtable and Listening Session with Congressman Hoyer: March 15

April

- Equal Pay Day Proclamation: April 2

May

- Guest speaker Sharon Ferris presentation on amended reporting requirements for Commissions: May 20
- Check presentation to College of Southern Maryland for Jane Hale Sypher Scholarship fund (\$4,450): May 21

June

- Guest speaker Chelsea Brown, College of Southern Maryland, provides an update on the scholarship fund: June 17

July

- Annual retreat to plan priorities for 2019-2020 year and election of officers: July 20

August

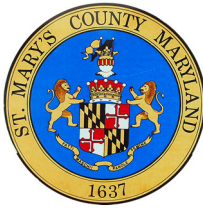
- NAACP Backpack event: August 11
- Equality Day Proclamation: August 27
- Health relationships information distribution for high school open houses.

September

- Guest speaker ALisa Casas presentation on the role of the public information office supporting Commissions: September 16
- Participation in Voices of Women in America Survey

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- Unveiling of the "Margaret Brent Pilgrimage" highway marker: September 28

October

- Domestic Violence Awareness Proclamation: October 8

November

- Ice cream social for women veterans and spouses at Charlotte Hall Veterans' Home, with participation from local girl scout troop: November 9
- Scholarship luncheon reception: November 22
- Maryland Commission for Women Roundtable in Brooklyn Park, MD: November 23

December

- Christmas gifts delivery to the Department of Aging and Human Services guardianship program: December 16

Highlights

In our 2018 annual report, we identified the inefficient payment method for banquet tickets as a significant challenge. Members of the public who wished to buy tickets needed to pay in person at the office, or send a check via mail. We are pleased to report that as of December 2019, Human Services can now accept credit card and online payments. We wish to express our gratitude to Human Service's hard work implementing the online payment system, and the support of Commissioner Colvin advocating for the new system.

In addition, we introduced online nomination forms for our Woman of the Year and Tomorrow's Woman awards, in addition to hard copy forms, making the nomination process more accessible.

The CFW is proud of the Jane Hale Sypher Scholarship fund's impact in St. Mary's County. The 2019 Women's History Month banquet was a particularly successful fundraiser. For the first time, the banquet was completely sold out, enabling the CFW to raise \$4,450 for the scholarship fund. The College of Southern Maryland has advised that, since the fund was established in 2010, there have been 24 recipients of scholarships.

Challenges

The CFW continues to work with the St. Mary's County Public Schools to deliver a program to middle school and high school students across the county that provides strategies to develop healthy relationships and identify unhealthy relationships, as well as issues of respect and bullying.

Our feeling is that having an event once a year for some of the school population is not enough. The message needs to be addressed every year that students are in school to reinforce the message. The CFW does not believe the current program delivered in the 9th grade is sufficient, or that the program is adequately tailored to the needs of the local schools.

More needs to be done to deliver a comprehensive program that is both relevant and engaging for the young adults in our community in both middle school and high school.

Looking forward

In 2020, the CFW will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th amendment granting American women the right to vote. There will be numerous activities across Maryland, and the CFW is working on several activities to mark the anniversary. The CFW welcomes the support of the Department of Aging and Human

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Services, as well as the Commissioners, in bringing attention to this important occasion.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Erin Walker", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Erin Walker
Chair, St. Mary's County Commission for Women