



COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

January 11, 2007 – 6:00 PM

Permit and Resource Management Department

2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa CA 95403

MINUTES

Commissioners Present: Chris Allen, Patricia Boyd, Jennifer Blackwood, Robyn Bramhall, Karen Famini, Ginny Helm, Carol McHale, Roxanne Meuse, Tiffany Renée, Donna Roper

Commissioners Absent: Rebecca Hollingsworth (On Commission Business)

Community Members: Denise Hunt

Staff Present: Dawn Matheny, Maggie Martin

I. Call to Order - Introduction of Commissioners and Staff: Bramhall called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

II. Consent Items:

Approval of Agenda: The Agenda was reviewed and approved.

Approval of December 14, 2006 Commission Minutes. The Minutes were reviewed, revised and approved.

III. Public Comment:

- Denise Hunt, a resident of Healdsburg, has applied to be appointed as a Commissioner representing the 4th District.

IV. Commission Update:

Swearing in of New Commissioner Roper (5th District): Roper took the oath of office.

Report on appointments and openings on Commission:

- McHale returned from her leave of absence.
- Matheny reported that 3 people, including Hunt, have applied for the 2 openings in the 4th District. (Update subsequent to meeting: 2 people have applied for the 4th District, and one has applied for the 3rd District.)
- The Commission has openings in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Districts.

V. Supervisor Communication Updates: None.

VI. Staff Report:



Organizational Change: Matheny announced that she will retire in June to take a position with a nonprofit organization. She will be working through April and will be available to return as “extra-help” to lead the Commission’s strategic planning session in June. She is out of the office on Fridays for the remainder of her time with the County.

The Human Resources Department is also reorganizing, and under the new structure the Commission (along with the Commission on Human Rights) will be incorporated into the Division, that administers the County’s programs for the Equal Employment Opportunity/Americans’ with Disability Act. This structure is used by a number of counties, including Marin. The Commission’s level of staff support and location will remain the same.

A brief discussion ensued in which Commissioners expressed their appreciation for Matheny and their concerns over losing her support for the Commission’s work. Matheny confirmed that the organizational change does not require the Board’s approval. It was agreed that Commissioners will send Martin any thoughts, comments and questions related to this change so that she can summarize this information for the Officers. Hollingsworth and Bramhall will request a meeting with Ann Goodrich (Director of Human Resources) to share the Commission’s collective concerns.

Matheny also mentioned that now is the time to request additional program funds to help cover the costs of the Commission’s activities. Based on short-fall this year, the Commission needs funds to cover sending Commissioners to ACCW meetings. The Juniors Project has relied on the left over WIN funds and should be included along with a request for annual event “seed money.”

Bylaw Approval Process: Matheny reported that the Board of Supervisors are being asked to formally approve the Bylaws at their January 23rd meeting. If it does not make in onto the Agenda for that meeting, the matter will be postponed until January 30th. Since this matter will appear on the consent calendar, only staff needs to attend the meeting in the event there are questions from Supervisors.

Attendance Report & Commissioner Guidelines: Martin distributed copies of the updated Commissioner Guidelines, the Courtesy Pledge, and the attendance report. She reminded Commissioners that:

- The new Bylaws strengthen the requirements for Commissioner to attend Commission meetings at least 2/3 of the meetings, which means that Commissioners should have no more than 4 absences per year.
- Commissioners are still supposed to give the Office advance notice if they will miss a meeting, and that no more than 3 absences without notice are allowed.
- Staff will report on attendance quarterly, and Officers will contact Commissioners who are “at risk” for not meeting the attendance requirement.
- Commissioners are supposed to work on at least one additional committee or take on at least one appointed position in addition to attending Commission meetings.

Other: Matheny reported that she had received a call from a Michelle Jolly, an SSU professor, who had received a grant from the California Endowment for the Arts to compile an oral history of the Women’s Movement in Sonoma County. Jolly and her students will be reviewing CSW’s records and are interested in using our Women’s History quilts as decorations for their announcement event. Matheny encouraged

Commissioners to share contact information for any women who might be good interview candidates for this project.

VII. Reports on Activities and Events: None.

VIII. Ad Hoc Committee Reports:

Childcare Healthcare & Housing: Meuse reported that she had completed her meetings. However there have been a number of recent developments related to these topic areas. First, with the closing of Sutter Hospital, the community will suffer from a further reduction in service providers. One particular area of concern is elective abortions. Since Memorial is related to the Catholic Church, that facility does not provide this service. So, we should monitor how this will be handled.

Another healthcare-related development is Governor Schwarzenegger has announced his policy drive to provide coverage for all Californians.

Finally, the Rose, a homeless shelter for women in children is being closed “temporarily” for lack of funding. Meuse plans to look into why this shelter is being closed rather than a shelter serving men.

Junior Commissioners: The Junior Commissioners attending were Isabel Hales and Michelle Atallah. They reported that the Juniors are starting to conduct their focus groups. They will compile and discuss their findings at the February meeting. Hales is researching how her peers feel about such issues as safety, equality, and drug abuse. Atallah, a student at the Math and Science High School, will look into how teenage girls feel about careers in that area.

Report Card Steering Committee: Helm reported that the Committee will meet on Thursday, January 18th from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm to discuss committees’ findings, the progress on developing the Report and develop a timeline and strategy for announcing the Report once it is completed. Martin explained that a formal notice will be sent for this meeting.

Criminal Justice and Personal Safety: Matheny reported for Hollingsworth. The Committee’s next meeting will be on Wednesday, January 17th at 9:30 am.

Employment, Education & Training: Allen reported on her meeting with Shirlee Zane, Chief Executive Officer for the Council on Aging – Sonoma County. That discussion highlighted the need for educational programs to teach elderly women about how to manage money (and avoid identity theft) and to develop professional caregivers for the elderly.

Representation and Access: Reneé reported that she has been focusing on the statistical review group.

ACCW: Boyd expressed her concern about the fact that the program fund budget is not sufficient to cover the costs for her to travel to the upcoming quarterly meeting in San Diego (date to be determined). After a brief discussion, it was agreed that no formal Commission approval is required to have another Commissioner represent CSW at these meetings. The role of the ACCW Liaison is to coordinate communication between CSW and ACCW and to coordinate CSW representation at ACCW meetings. Therefore, once the next regional meeting date has been sent, we will explore having Hollingsworth attend as our representative, because she can do this at no personal or Commission cost.

Women's Organizations: Reneé reported that she is scheduled to attend a forum that AAUW is sponsoring about sustainability in the North Bay. She also plans to contact the League of Women Voters to explore partnership opportunities with that organization. She also agreed to look into whether the local chapter of NOW is still active.

Development: No report.

Speakers: Famini reported that Hollingsworth is speaking at the Windsor chapter of the Soroptimists this evening. She confirmed the hers is a coordination role. Therefore, when CSW is asked to provide a speaker, she will contact the Commissioner who would be best able to address that group and/or concern.

Family Violence Prevention Council: Blackwood plans to attend the next meeting of this group.

Boyd had been attending regularly. She explained that the Council has broken down in to specific subgroups focused on a particular topic. She has been serving on the group assigned to outreach to high school youth. She plans to hold focus groups to learn more about how to best communicate with and support young women on issues related to domestic and family violence.

IX. Old Business:

WIN Scholarship Funds: Martin reported that after meeting with Human Resources' liaison with the County Administrator's Office. After that meeting, we understand that these are the alternatives to be explored for transitioning the funds out of the YWCA:

- Formal approval by the Board of Supervisors to accept the funds and " earmark " them to fund the Juniors Project until the balance is depleted.
- Find an acceptable interim "holding account" for the funds so that CSW can relieve the YWCA of administering the funds and, later, transfer them to a non-profit for management. This alternative requires that we determine whether the County can hold these funds on a short-to-intermediate term basis and/or whether CSW can legally open a separate account at a bank for this purpose.
- Identifying non-profit that will either a) act as funding agent for the scholarship program as designed, or b) accept the funds for a program aligned with the purpose for which the funds were raised (i.e., leadership development for young women and supporting young women's studies in the areas of math and science).

Women's History Month (WHM):

- Bramhall reported that the new Maestro of the Santa Rosa Symphony will be in the area soon. She will present a letter asking the Symphony to consider introducing a program of women composers in honor of Women's History Month in 2008.
- Martin reported that she and Hollingsworth had meet with Dr. Wong to request that SCOE cover the printing cost for the packet as they have done in the past. He agreed to get back to Hollingsworth on this, but we have not heard anything yet. The alternative is for CSW to make the packet available on-line and send a letter to schools announcing that this resource is available.

X. New Business:

Commission Calendar: Matheny informed Commissioners of the following events that will have to be scheduled for 2007:

- Report Card Announcement Event: The Report Card Steering Committee will discuss what type of event we should hold to announce the Report Card and possible dates for that.
- Strategic Planning Conference: The Commission needs to hold a strategic planning conference to establish goals and activities that will form be basis for the 2007-8 Work Plan.
- The Commissions regularly scheduled meeting date in September (the 13th) falls on Rosh Hashanah. The Commission should consider rescheduling that meeting in observance of this holiday.

The Commission will take formal action on these matters at the February meeting.

Expanding Your Horizons (EYH): Bramhall reminded Commissioners of this annual event designed to encourage young women (7th and 8th grades) to consider studying and pursuing non-traditional careers in math and science. She asked volunteers to help coordinate this event. Junior Commissioner Atallah volunteered to coordinate the Juniors' involvement.

XI. Commissioner Announcements:

- Matheny announced that the County is holding 2007 State of the County breakfast at the Doubletree Hotel in Rohnert on Wednesday, January 24th. Bramhall will be CSW “formal” representative for this event. However, others are welcome to attend.

XII. Next Meeting: The next meeting will be on Thursday, February 8, 2007 at 6:00 PM.

XIII. Adjournment: Bramhall adjourned the meeting at 7:35 PM.