

Virginia Council on Women

Minutes

January 10, 2019 Meeting

Library of Virginia, 800 E. Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23219

Members Present: Carol Rick Gibbons (Chair); Katy Sawyer (Vice-Chair); Ikeita Cantú Hinojosa (Secretary); Kelly Thomasson, Secretary of the Commonwealth ; Ex-Officio Council Member); Amy Bridge; Margie Del Castillo; Caryn Foster Durham; Jill Gaitens; Diana Gates; Aisha Johnson; Chrystal Neal; Ashley Reynolds Marshall; Holly Seibold; Michelle Strucke.

Staff Present: Kelly Thomasson, Secretary of the Commonwealth; Traci J. DeShazor, Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth (Staff Liaison); Gena Berger, Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Resources; Max Cook, Student Intern.

Call to Order

Chair Carol Rick Gibbons called the meeting to order at 1:23pm.

Welcome and Introductions

Carol Rick Gibbons welcomed everyone in attendance. Carol thanked Amy Bridge for arranging for the Council to receive a tour of the Library of Virginia's Special Collections Room prior to the meeting. Council Members agreed that the lecture and historical items were fascinating and educational.

Agenda, Minutes, and Membership Directory

The agenda for the January 10, 2019, meeting was adopted unanimously on a motion by Caryn Foster Durham, seconded by Katy Sawyer. The minutes of the October 11, 2018, meeting were adopted unanimously on a motion by Amy Bridge, seconded by Ashley Reynolds Marshall.

Council Members received the 2018-2019 Virginia Council on Women Membership Directory in order to review it and provide staff with corrections.

OLD BUSINESS

Carol stated that she spent time visiting each subcommittee meeting, and she is excited about each group's activities. She requested that Council Members focus their subcommittee reports on action items needed from their fellow Council Members and make sure that their work is aligned with the Council's 2019 priorities.

- Women's Healthcare Initiative Subcommittee Report and Update: Katy Sawyer, Women's Healthcare Initiative Co-Chair, reported the following:
 - The subcommittee looks forward to receiving an updated charge from Governor Northam prior to the next Council meeting.
 - The subcommittee reviewed the Council website's content and made recommendations for improvement, which the subcommittee will communicate to staff.
 - Subcommittee Co-Chairs Katy Sawyer and Ikeita Cantú Hinojosa will join Secretary of State Kelly Thomasson and Deputy Secretary of State Traci DeShazor in meeting with the Girl Scouts after today's Council meeting to discuss the Girl Scouts and the Council partnering with Governor Northam and First Lady Northam in two ways: (1) the April 2019 Women & Girls Wellness Month – a Richmond proclamation signing by Governor Northam and an event with First Lady Northam in the garden of the Governor's Mansion where Daisies and Brownies could earn a Healthy Living Girl Scout badge, and leave

with their own seedlings in a pot; and (2) a summer 2019 or 2020 “Mini Medical School/Mini Grand Rounds” event with Governor Northam – event at other 2 Girl Scout Council in Eastern and/or Western Virginia areas where Juniors and Cadettes could earn credit toward a STEM or service badge. The subcommittee is interested in highlighting food insecurity, food deserts, economic insecurity, and poverty issues in this year’s health and wellness work. Given her medical expertise, Dr. Katie Tyson – who could not attend today’s Council meeting – may be willing to lead the mini medical school, or the event may fit nicely with an upcoming women’s summit or an existing girls’ camp in either 2019 or 2020. Katy said that the subcommittee will seek input from the Girl Scouts regarding spring break timing and other logistics, and she and Ikeita welcomed all Council members to attend the April Women and Girls Wellness Month events. Traci noted that the schedules for the Governor and the First Lady are not calendared until approximately 45 days in advance, so we will not know the dates for the Women and Girls Wellness Month events in April until later, but Council Members will be invited once activities are finalized.

- Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Subcommittee Report and Update: Jill Gaitens, STEM Subcommittee Co-Chair for Sponsorships, reported the following:
 - STEM essay applications are accepted from January 4-February 22. Although many individuals send applications toward the end, the subcommittee has already received 60 applications.
 - The scholarship reception will be held in the Governor’s Mansion again this year.
 - Council Members received two handouts to help spread the word: “Virginia Council on Women STEM Essay Contest” and “Virginia Council on Women 8th Annual STEM Essay Contest Sponsorship Packet.” Council Members were told that the documents are available on the Council website in PDF format and that jpg and png versions of the documents will be shared with them shortly.
 - Council Members were asked to think about their ideas for sponsors so that the sponsor outreach list can be finalized and distributed as soon as possible. The subcommittee is working from last year’s list. If a Council Member is conflicted out from contacting certain companies due to their work, please tell the subcommittee, and the subcommittee will handle the outreach.
 - Traci provided Council Members with an update on the Math Science Innovation Center (MSiC) Foundation, which serves as the fiscal agent for the Virginia Council on Women STEM Essay Contest. MSiC has a new Certified Public Accountant for the Center and a new financial officer for the Center, but the Foundation currently has no treasurer and no officers at all. The MSiC Center does not manage MSiC Foundation accounts, but the Center states that it can give the Council a monthly report and then a weekly report. The Council will stay with MSiC for now. The goal is to set up an in-person meeting with MSiC soon and figure out if it makes sense to immediately switch gears or finish this season and then decide the right agent for the long-term. Council Members expressed hesitation in remaining with a fiscal agent with no officers and no actual capacity to handle monetary contributions. Kelly Thomasson provided historical background that the Council transitioned to MSiC as a fiscal agent because the Science Museum Foundation collected fees higher than 7%. Council Members agreed that a fee could be worth paying, so “free” would not be the determining factor. Amy Bridge offered to ask the Library of Virginia’s finance committee whether it could serve as a fiscal agent. Council Members were also willing to consider a return to the Science Museum Foundation or applications from other willing entities. Kelly noted that Council Members provided the subcommittee members with ample feedback, so the Council could vote to empower the subcommittee to move forward. Katy Sawyer made the following motion: “I move for the Council Members of the Virginia Council on Women to empower the Members of the STEM Subcommittee to make a decision regarding which entity should serve as the fiscal agent for this year’s STEM Essay Contest.” Michelle Strucke seconded, and the motion was adopted unanimously.
 - The Judgify software system is open, and the system allows for more up-front data collection application management. Judgify costs \$500.
 - Holly Seibold is in charge of marketing and promotion. Holly said that the subcommittee is working to reach out in new and innovative ways. The retweeting of Governor Northam’s press release has been helpful.

- Holly raised the idea that since the sponsorship packet provides different sponsorship levels (Diamond: \$25,000; Platinum: \$10,000; Gold: \$5,000; Silver: \$2,500; Bronze: \$1,000), it makes sense to provide different levels of recognition. Ashley Reynolds Marshall said that it is normal for organizations to build tiers of sponsorship with benefits based on tiers. Council Members discussed numerous recognition possibilities involving the program, website, press release listing, bigger font, larger logos, logo placement, more social media “shout outs,” social media profiles, additional reception guests, a special award from the Council, special photos, VIP special guests/celebrities, special communication from and/or time with the scholarship winner, etc. for the sponsors to help incentivize higher giving. Jill thanked Council Members for providing the subcommittee with direction and said that their team had enough guidance to move forward.
 - Jill said that the subcommittee received 500 essays last year, and each judge read 14-20 applications. Several Council Members who judged essays in previous years expressed their enthusiasm for the experience, and Michelle Strucke said that it is one of the best things she has ever done. A sign-up sheet was circulated for interested Council Members to sign up for judging this year’s essays. Caryn Foster Durham asked about the date for the scholarship reception, noting that some individuals are incentivized to judge the scholarship essays because judges are invited to the Governor’s Mansion for the reception and/or they could receive an excused absence from work. Traci said that the date is to be determined, but the Virginia General Assembly’s Reconvened Session is April 3rd. Last year, three former Council Members who now serve in the General Assembly recognized the young women scholarship recipients on the Assembly floor, which is the advantage of timing the event in conjunction with the reconvened session. For now, it is best to use the handout materials to communicate to potential judges. Jill said that Chrystal Neal, STEM Subcommittee Co-Chair for Judging, is not at today’s meeting but that Council Members should follow up with her for judging-related matters.
- Women’s Summit Subcommittee Report and Update: Caryn Foster Durham, Women’s Summit Subcommittee Co-Chair, reported the following:
 - The subcommittee will organize mini summits in 2019 with an “Engage. Equip. Empower.” theme.
 - The first mini-summit will take place in May 2019 in conjunction with the official opening of the play “Tenacity: Women in Jamestown and Early Virginia,” an original play written by regional Emmy-award winning playwright Abigail Schumann about a Powhatan Indian woman, an African woman, and an English woman whose lives and cultures intersect. The play is part of “American Evolution: Virginia to America: 1619-2019.” The mini-summit will involve a curated tour of the Jamestown exhibit and a post-show discussion of the play, possibly with the playwright. The theatre seats 100, and the Council may be able to secure discounted play tickets for summit participants. Diana Gates noted that the event will benefit from the Council’s drawability. Council Members agreed that they might be willing to make the drive to Jamestown and stay overnight for a unique experience.
 - The second mini-summit will take place outside of Richmond in the summer of 2019. A non-August summer month is preferred. Possible partners include Hollins University, Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine and Research Institute, or Sweet Briar College. The subcommittee envisions a mini-summit that is inclusive across the age, socio-economic, and professional spectrums. Ideas for topics include: aging issues – from adulting to elder care; financial planning for your future; financial planning for retirement; career-climbing in small communities; and women and volunteerism/civic participation/community involvement. Aisha Johnson from the Summit Subcommittee will partner with Katie Tyson from the Healthcare Initiative Subcommittee to coordinate the Council’s summer activities.
 - The third mini-summit is October 14-15, 2019, and it is in conjunction with two “American Evolution: Virginia to America: 1619-2019” events: the “Voices From the Garden” Women’s Monument Dedication Event on October 14th (Columbus Day) and the “Women’s Achieve Summit” on October 14-15. Council Members were informed that the Library of Virginia has an immigration event for Evolution 2019, as well.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Gena Berger, Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Resources, reported the following:

- This week marked the first week of the legislative session.
- The Maternal Mortality Review Team shared a summary of its interesting data and research findings. Maternal mortality is on the rise. We are on par with sub-Saharan Africa and Afghanistan, so it is clear that we need to prioritize this issue. Maternal mortality disproportionately affects African American women. Areas related to maternal mortality that we must address include: chronic disease management; health care access; obesity; use of c-sections; women having children older; trauma, especially childhood trauma with effects experienced throughout life; opioids; and overdoses. The team will release its official report in February to see if Virginia can get maternal mortality trends in the right direction. Michelle Strucke said that the Maternal Mortality Review Team work sounds really exciting, and she asked if Virginia plans to publish data on c-section rates on its government website as it did before. Michelle said that the hospital where she gave birth over a year ago did not know their c-section rates and actually asked her if she was a reporter when she requested the information. Gena said that she did not know about c-section rate data or publishing plans but will check.
- Women comprise 50% of Virginia's Medicaid expansion population, and the expansion has made a big difference in the lives of Virginia women. Over 200,000 Virginians enrolled in Medicaid on January 1, 2019. A work requirement is part of the Medicaid program. Pregnant and post-partum women and those who are primary caretakers would be exempt in Virginia's work requirement if our submitted application to CMS is approved. Other states that have tried to enact work requirements are caught up in court challenges arguing that such requirements are not legal. Diana Gates asked whether child care benefits or subsidies accompany Medicaid work requirements. Gena responded that it is illegal to use Medicaid funds for child care, but Virginia did successfully secure additional funding for child care to help families stay stable and advance. Gena said that domestic violence victims are exempted and that education was necessary because some legislators pushed back on a domestic violence exemption. The Action Alliance has been active on the domestic violence education front. Gena told Council Members that Virginia is still in negotiations with CMS, so the waiver is not final, but it is a public document and interested individuals can see what Virginia has proposed.
- There are reproductive health bills this session that would: (1) codify Roe v. Wade in Virginia; and (2) remedy barriers to reproductive health care access, including neonatal and postpartum care initiatives.
- Governor Northam issued a new state parental paid leave policy to help recruit and retain talented workers in state government.
- Governor Northam issued a very progressive workplace civility policy.

NEW BUSINESS

- Discussion of 2019 Council Priorities:
 - Carol Rick Gibbons said that she wanted to make sure that the Council's 2019 plans are aligned.
 - Traci DeShazor reminded Council Members that the Council has no money, so Council Members may want to consider such information in moving forward and plan accordingly.
 - Kelly Thomasson said that the STEM effort requires all hands on deck, and as many Council Members as possible are appreciated for the Council's other planned initiatives.
 - Kelly said that Council meetings are quarterly: October; January; April; and August. She proposed co-locating the August meeting with this summer's non-Richmond mini-summit – which could happen in June or July, and Council Members agreed. The Council's October 2019 meeting will take place during the October 14-15 Evolution 2019 and fall Council mini-summit events.
 - Traci said that the 1-page proposal developed by the Healthcare Initiative Subcommittee describing their "mini medical school" idea is fantastic because it is a concise document that contains the necessary

information that allows her to partner with the Administration and key partners. She encouraged Council Members to create 1-pagers for their proposed projects.

- Policy and Initiative Report – Traci DeShazor, Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth
 - On January 9, 2019, Governor Northam delivered the annual State of the Commonwealth Address. He reflected on the progress made during his first year in office. The report is available online, and visitors can hover over a photo and learn about the accomplishment on topics ranging from health care to rural communities to the Children’s Cabinet.
 - Governor Northam issued an executive order establishing the Virginia Complete Count Commission for the 2020 Census to improve the participation and representation of all Virginians in the 2020 Census. Council Members Caryn Foster Durham and Ashley Reynolds Marshall are members of the new advisory group.
 - The Governor’s Office of Constituent Services is being revamped. Moving forward, Gena Berger will be the point person for women’s issues.

Announcements

Kelly Thomasson reminded Council Members that all state board appointees, as well as staff and elected officials, are legally required to file a financial disclosure statement on an annual basis. February 1st is the deadline for filing 2019 disclosures.

Next Meeting

The next Council meeting is scheduled from 12:30-3:00pm on Wednesday, April 3, 2019, in order to align with the date of the Virginia General Assembly’s Reconvened Session.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:36pm on a motion by Ashley Reynolds Marshall, seconded by Margie Del Castillo, with unanimous approval.

Respectfully submitted,

Ikeita Cantú Hinojosa, Secretary