

**COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2024
VIA TELECONFERENCE**

ATTENDANCE: Kristina Testa-Buzzee; Chair, Ivonne Zucco, Co-Vice Chair, Shannon O'Toole-Giandurco; Co-Vice Chair, Claudia Connor, Joy DeJaeger, Emma Dignoti, Sarah Rendon-Garcia

STAFF: Michelle Woods Matthew

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Testa-Buzzee called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a. July 8, 2024

**** MS. CONNOR MOVED TO DISCUSS THE MINUTES.
** MS. DEYAEGAR SECONDED THE MOTION.**

There was discussion about repetitive items that should be removed from the minutes. It was also noted that Ms. Connor's last name was misspelled. Ms. Rendon-Garcia RE- joined the meeting at 7:08

**** MS. O'TOOLE-GIANDURCO MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS
AMENDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY .**

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no one present for public Comment

IV. NEW BUSINESS

a. Welcome new Commissioners: Emma Dignoti and Joy Futaba DeJaeger

Ms. Testa Buzzee welcomed Ms. Dignoti and Ms. Dejaeger to the board. Ms. Testa-Buzzee noted that Ms. Dignoti would not officially join the board until September 10th. Ms. Dignoti introduced herself to the board and listed her various qualifications. Ms. DeJaeger spoke about her hopes of getting the story of the Japanese internment included in the curriculum.

b. Mentors for the new Commissioners

Ms. Testa-Buzzee discussed finding mentors for the new members. She also noted that Ms. Baanante was trying to create an onboarding process that included mentors to be used by all of the commissions.

c. Vote to modify the bylaws to add a provision that includes a reference to attendance.

Ms. Testa-Buzzee discussed a provision in the bylaws about accountability and attendance to the board members are nominated to. They discussed the minimum number of scheduled meetings a member must attend to remain in good standing. The wording was established as follows:

For an appointed commissioner to remain in good standing they need to attend a minimum of 60% of all scheduled meetings throughout the year.

**** MS. ZUCCO MOVED TO VOTE ON THE MODIFICATION OF THE BYLAWS AS READ.**

**** MS. CONNOR SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

d. Vote to modify the bylaws to make a change that our meetings are the second Monday of the month, excluding August and December.

**** MS. TESTA-BUZZEE MOVED TO MODIFY THE BYLAWS TO TO CHANGE MEETINGS TO THE SENCOND MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH EXCLUDING AUGUST AND DECEMBER.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

e. Identifying 2024-2025 priorities.

- Review survey that Commissioners filled out ahead of the September meeting to discuss potential priorities items for the Commission.

- Ms. Zucco gave a PowerPoint presentation on having a focused agenda. She discussed what the commission wanted to focus on. She noted the areas chosen to focus on were: Violence against women.
- Reproductive rights

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- Child care
- Women's sports equity.
- Focusing on women and other marginalized gender identities to pursue positions in sports and on commissions.
- Voting awareness.

Ms. Zucco noted that after a vote the issues were put in order of importance. She presented a slide showing how the issues were prioritized. She also commented that another area they could look at was women in the workplace. Ms. Zucco also stressed looking at all the elements that can be included under the umbrella of violence against women.

Ms. Zucco presented another slide showing other activities the commission should engage in. These included:

- Attending and representing the commission at community events.
- Implementing a social media marketing plan.
- Advocating for policies that address key issues.
- Organizing and managing awards programs.

There was discussion about whether various categories could be combined. Ms. Connor pointed out that tabling shouldn't be ruled out.

- committees the commission should have. Diversification of Boards and Commissions Committee
- Committee Outreach
- Civic Engagement Committee
- Policy Advocacy
- Governance

Ms. Renden– Garcia discussed the need to decide which programs they were currently involved with should move forward and those that need closure. Ms. Testa-Buzzee explained that would fall under advocacy and outreach. She also stated she wanted to make certain that the committees reflected their priorities. Ms. Connor agreed the menstrual initiative would fall within the category of advocacy. Ms. Zucco went back over the priorities. Ms. Testa-Buzzie wants to clarify that when necessary, ad hoc committees wouldn't be ruled out. She also suggested further discussion at the next meeting

f. Vote to move the October scheduled meeting from October 14, a state holiday, to Monday, October 21st

**** MS. DEJAEGER MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MOTION.**
**** MS. GIANDURCO-O'TOOLE SECONDED THE MOTION.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

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- g. Vote to move the November scheduled meeting from November 11th, a state holiday, to Monday, November 18th

**** MS. GIANDURCO–O’TOOLE MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MOTION.
** MS. CONNOR SECONDED THE MOTION.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

V. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Testa-Buzzee noted though not on the agenda, that She and Ms. Woods Matthews were going to communicate on the commission's name change to The Commission for Gender Equality. She stated it had to go to the Common Council Ordinance Committee.

a. Will Schwartzstein, the Athletic Supervisor, Department of Recreation and Parks to come to our next meeting to present on increasing female participation in Norwalk sports programs. He would like help with hosting a ‘Girls Sports Day’, where girls can be introduced to different sports.

Ms. Testa-Buzzee suggested that they should come up with items the commission would want him to think about in advance of the meeting. She stated it would be good to know what the data landscape is. Ms. Matthews indicated she had much of that material and would pass it on. It was also requested to include the plan for out-of-commission fields and the growth of girls' sports programs. Ms. Zucco had questions about equity in boys' and girls' sports. Ms. Woods Matthews said to email any questions to her to pass on.

Ms. Testa Buzzee noted it was Ms. Connor’s final meeting. Ms. Connor cited family issues that prevented her from committing to another three years but offered to help if needed.

VI. MOTION TO ADJOURN

**** MS. O’TOOLE-GIANDURCO MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.
** MS. DEJAEGER SECONDED THE MOTION.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

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China Mayhew
Telesco Secretarial Services

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