

**CITY OF NORWALK
COMMISSION ON STATUS OF WOMEN
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 10, 2023**

ATTENDANCE: Claudia Werman Conner, Chair; Sharon Baanante; Jasmine Prezzie;
Sarah Rendon Garcia; Kristina Testa Buzzee; Ivonne Zucco, Ashley Gulyas

STAFF: Michelle Woods Matthews, City of Norwalk Director of Communications

OTHER: Barbara Kaputnsynski, Norwalk Actions for Reproductive Justice

Call to Order

Ms. Conner called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and acknowledged those in attendance as noted above.

She welcomed Ashley Gulyas as a new member and gave an brief introduction of her background.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Baarante requested corrections on the spelling of names: Laoise King and Connor should be Conner throughout; Page 2 diversified should be diversification. Ms. Garcia should be Ms. Rendon Garcia. She noted that the ‘Matthews ambassadors’ was vague and didn’t understand the context usage of this term.

**** MS. BAANANTE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE MEETING
OF MARCH 13, 2023 AS CORRECTED WITH CHANGES NOTED.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Public Comment - none

New Business

Norwalk Actions for Reproductive Justice will present to the Commission and
Discuss upcoming events

Ms. Barbara Kaputnsynski thanked the Commission for the opportunity to attend the meeting and complimented the members on the efforts involved with bringing this important topic to Norwalk.

NARJ Presentation -- continued

Ms. Kaputsnyski presented slides for an overview of the mission of Norwalk Actions for Reproductive Justice (NARJ) and outlined upcoming events that may fit with others in this initiative.

She fielded questions and comments on opportunities to partner with the Commission.

Advocacy efforts to support legislation this session.

Ms. Kaputsnyski explained that there is a website that posts events and updates on legislative efforts, and provides resources and support to those in need. She outlined informative sessions about the ins-and-outs of writing testimony to support Reproductive Health Bills in Connecticut. Testimony templates are provided along with Q&A's to answer questions about the process and letters to support Connecticut's Reproductive Justice Heroes volunteers and legislative champions.

There was discussion on events that would be appropriate for collaborative partnering without over-saturating or competing efforts with other agencies or resources.

Ms. Conner commented on the website and the video that is very effective to provide services and outreach partners.

Age Limits to Marrying

Ms. Conner, provided an update on age limits to marrying – 18 or 16 with parent permission. She highlighted developments on issues to address the Bill to Ban Child Marriage in CT. She has reached out to legislatures for an opinion essay to support the bill and noted there are challenges, but efforts are moving forward. The gender equality issues with no exceptions is another challenge to address. The sub-committee will meet tomorrow to come up with strategies to address this and other issues.

Community Outreach and Civic Engagement work

Upcoming events that are in development state include Mission for Women, June Teenth at Ryan Park, SoNo Arts Festival, Oyster Festival Nice Festival.

Vendor applications are being evaluated to determine the cost and the committee is working with Latoya of City 101 to determine how to best partner with local resources. There will be a calendar with dates for events to promote on the City's website and inclusion with local organizations:

Ms. Prezzie suggested partnering with NCC that has events for women that would be worth collaborating on this initiative.

There was discussion on outreach efforts that would be appropriate for collaborative partnering without over-saturating or competing efforts with other agencies or resources. The sub-committee is working on the following; and updates will be provided after their next committee meeting.

Collaboration with Stepping Stones Museum for Children
Meeting with Jen Barahona, the CEO of Norwalk ACTS

Research Committee:

Ivonne Zucco presented an overview of events where the Commission can collaborate with appropriate initiatives that fit within the mission of the Commission.

- Girl's Softball field – There was no discussion on this item.

Diversification of Boards of Commissions Committee

Ms. Baanante shared her screen to show the City's website where vacancies are listed and how one can apply to join a Board or Commission. She is looking into how to get the word out to the general public how these openings can be announced and possibly the creation of an QR code to apply with a simple click. She added that the committee is reviewing the application process for transparency. She noted that they need to approach the Common Council to advocate for this diversification. There was discussion on inclusion and representation of the transgender community to have unified boards and commissions.

Ms. Gulyas asked to be included on committees that need members and she is available to serve where needed.

Ms. Conner applauded the members for all the hard work and noted the next meeting is scheduled for May 8, 2023.

ADJOURNMENT

** MS. ZUCCO MOVED TO ADJOURN.

** MS. TESTA BUZZEE SECONDED THE MOTION.

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

M. Knox

City Of Norwalk

Commission- Status of Women

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