COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 8, 2024
VIA TELECONFERENCE

ATTENDANCE: Claudia Conner; Chair, Shannon O'Toole-Giandurco; Vice Chair, Sharon Baanante, Ivonne Zucco, Jessica Edwards,

STAFF: Michelle Woods Matthews

OTHER: Melissa Murray; District C Common Council Member,

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Conners called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a. March 11, 2024

Ms. Conner noted that her name had been misspelled.

**** MS. BAANANTE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED.**
**** MS. GIANDURCO SECONDED THE MOTION.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH THREE AYES AND TWO ABSTENTIONS (MS. ZUCCO AND MS. EDWARDS)**

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

No one from the public was in attendance.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

a. The Commission on the Status of Women welcomes Melissa Murray, District C Common Council Member and Robert Stowers, Director of Recreation and Parks. They will speak about the Women's Sports Expo idea.

Ms. Murray recounted some of the histories that led up to the concept of the Women's Sports Expo. She stated this idea came from the fact that men's sports are allotted more money. She felt something was needed to create opportunities in women's sports to improve gender equity. Ms. Murray explained that using models from Seattle and Oregon the idea for a Woman's Sports Expo was created. As of yet, there is no name. She stated the goal was to create an association and assemble a steering committee. This would be done to create a showcase for women's sports opportunities. Ms. Murray outlined who would participate, what would be presented, and what they hoped to achieve at the expo. She indicated that she would like the input of the CSW. She said they were looking for a target date in May 2025 at Vet's Park.

Ms. Baanante wanted to know how the association would be handled. Ms. Murray stated the Parks Foundation was assembling a steering committee to make those decisions. She explained it had to go through legal and money raised would go to the city.

Ms. Giandurco indicated a willingness to work with the Parks Foundation to have achievable goals. Ms. Murray credited Ms. Giandurco's work and research for being the inspiration that started the conversation. Ms. Giandurco commented that much of the research came from parents. She stated many of those parents would be happy to give their support.

Ms. Murray discussed her hopes for the event. She mentioned that Mr. Stower's from Recreation and Parks offered free security services for the first year. She indicated that Ms. Young, the chair was also on board.

Ms. Murray asked how she could work with the CSW. She was looking for all interested parties to attend a meeting in mid-May. Ms. Conner said once the meeting date was sent they could make sure there was representation from the commission. She stated that during the June meeting, they could figure out the degree of representation.

b. Next steps for proposed name change of the Commission on the Status of Women
   - Review the Ordinance Committee's proposed changes for Commission on the Status of Women. Return updated draft of the proposed changes to the Ordinance Committee by the end of day on 4/10/2024 to ensure the proposal makes it into the next Ordinance Committee agenda for the Committee's review.

Ms. Conner stated she reached out to the Ordinance Committee about the proposed name change of the commission to The Commission on Gender Equity. Ms. Conner said that the Ordinance Committee agreed with the decision. Ms. Murray stated she went back to the charter, removed the old language, and dropped in the new language. She said equity had been changed to equality and it needed to be changed back. She explained they had to do a short preamble covering the history and future goals of the commission. Ms. Shanahan reviewed the document and suggested certain changes. Ms. Murray stated they could go over the document and make the suggested changes. Once corrected she could get it on the agenda for the April 11th committee meeting. Ms. Conner asked if someone from the commission would need to be present. Ms. Murray said she could give the narrative. She added a member of the commission could do a better job of educating the council members. Ms. Giandurco felt that they needed more time to go over the document before presenting it to the council. Ms. Conner went over the document and discussed the various review methods to be taken. Ms. Baanante inquired about changing the member's terms, which she felt were wonky. Ms.Giandurco indicated no matter what this process would take another two or three months. She stated it was better to go over the document offline make any necessary adjustments and come back in May. Ms. Zocco agreed. Ms. Conner listed all the adjustments she would make. She said she would send it around to all the Commissioners with a deadline to get their input.

c. Community Outreach and Civic Engagement Committee

- Feedback on the Commission on the Status of Women's ImpACT Awardee ceremony.

Ms. Conners acknowledged the event was well attended and recognized the members of the Community. She thanked Ms. Woods-Matthews for pulling it all together. Ms. Conners said the experience was positive and uplifting. She also gave Kudos to Ms. Testa-Buzzee for her contribution to the event. Ms. Conners listed various items they needed to work on for next year. She stated they could do that at the next Outreach Committee and then bring the recommendations to the commission. Ms. Giandurco mentioned the effect the event had on their social metrics.

d. Diversification of Boards and Commissions Committee

There was no new business to discuss.

V. OLD BUSINESS

a. Community Outreach and Civic Engagement Committee

Ms. Zocco stated they had five issues they brought to the public attention. The respondents were asked which ones they would like to focus on.

1. Childcare
2. LGBTQ class rights
3. Pay equity
4. Reproductive rights
5. Violence against women

Ms. Zocco explained that they surveyed a total Number of 387 respondents. they were asked to self-identify as either a woman/girl., a marginalized gender, or a man. She also indicated they wanted to know if they were Norwalk residents or not.

Ms. Zuucco presented the results saying, that for Norwalk residents who identify as women/girls and those of marginalized identity the list of importance was as follows:

1. Violence against women
2. Reproductive rights
3. Childcare

For residents of Norwalk who identified as male the list of importance was as follows:

1. Reproductive rights
2. Violence against women
3. Childcare

For non-residents who identify as women/girls and those of marginalized identity, the list of importance was as follows:

1. Reproductive rights
2. LGBTQ class rights
3. Violence against women

For non-residents who identified as male the list of importance was as follows:

1. Reproductive rights
2. Violence against Women
3. LGBTQ class rights

The final score for the importance of the issues was as follows:

1. Reproductive rights
2. Violence against women
3. Childcare

Ms. Zucco stated she brought the results to the commission to see what they could do with the results. She also questioned whether the commission should participate in tabling events this year. Ms. Baanante suggested waiting until they vote for a new chair to move forward. Ms. Conners suggested a possible plan for handling tabling events. She stated she would be sending out an email. it would include encouraging as many people as possible to attend the main meeting to focus on planning. Ms. Zucco said the main advantages of tabling were visibility and a chance for the community to learn about the commission. Ms. Giandurco suggested having a presence at the June 8th Pride in the Park event. Ms. Zocco suggested the May 4th, Mental Health Walk.

Ms. Baanante discussed the idea of the Commission asking for a budget to cover the work they do. Ms. Conner suggested getting to discuss what would be needed for tabling and coming up with a potential budget. Woods Matthews outlined the likely process involved in acquiring a working budget.

Under old business, Ms. Baanante remarked they had three projects to finish up from their original proposal. They are as follows:

- Onboarding and dock to be piloted with the next new member.
- Having the city compile the yearly data on gender and race on boards and commissions

- Establishing DNI training for the commissions and the boards.

Is. Woods Mathews didn't have an update on when the position vacated by Ms. Fernandez would be filled. She stated that they were in a hiring freeze. She continued by saying all positions, quote unquote have been frozen. She said she had no updates on the legal issues about the city collecting various boards' gender and racial status data.

b. Diversification of Boards and Commissions Committee

- Monthly Board and Commission vacancy announcement reminder

Ms. Baanante stated they had two openings on the Commission on the Status of Women. She hoped they could get more representation from the LGBTQ community. She suggested having a man on the commission.

Ms. Baanante also highlighted a vacancy on the Police Commission that to date has only one female member.

Ms. Conner suggested a collaboration with the engagement committee. She felt tabling was a way to introduce people to the commission, discuss open positions, and discuss what the position entails.

c. Vote for new Chair.

Lacking a quorum the vote was postponed until the May meeting.

VI. MOTION TO ADJOURN

**** MS. GIANDURCO MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**
**** MS ZUCCO SECONDED THE MOTION**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting ended at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
China Mayhew
Telesco Secretarial Services