

**CITY OF NORWALK
COMMISSION ON GENDER EQUITY
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2025
VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

ATTENDANCE: Kristina Testa-Buzzee; Chair, Shanon O'Toole-Giandurco, Emma Dignoti, Joy Futaba-DeJaegar, Ivonne Zucco, Jasmine R. Prezzie, Sarah Rendon-Garcia, Chantal Coffy (7:06 p.m.)

STAFF: Esther Murillo; Assistant City Clark

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Testa-Buzzee called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

The roll was called as reflected above.

III. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting: February 10, 2025

**** MS. PREZZIE MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES FROM THE
FEBRUARY 10, 2025 MEETING.
** MS. FUTABA-DEJAEGER SECONDED THE MOTION.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

It was noted that the minutes for the January 2025 meeting were moved and seconded but there was no vote to accept them.

B. Regular Meeting: January, 13, 2025

**** MS. RENDON-GARCIA MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE
FROM THE JANUARY 13, 2025 MEETING AS AMENDED.
** MS. DIGNOTI SECONDED THE MOTION.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. O'Toole-Giandurco was concerned about proper public access to the agendas and minutes. She made the point that everything needs to be made available online properly. Ms. Testa-Buzzee explained at the moment they were dealing with two websites, and one picks up where the other leaves off. She stated that as a matter of record, the issue needs to be dealt with. She mentioned she had spoken with Ms. Murillo about the problem. Ms. Murillo explained the situation and stated they were working to rectify it.

Ms. Coffy joined the meeting at 7:06 p.m..

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no one present from the public.

Ms. Testa-Buzzee asked Ms. Murillo if there was a way to advertise upcoming meetings to encourage public participation. Ms. Murillo said she could pass the information along to the social media person. Ms. Prezzie thought it would be a good idea to reintroduce themselves and familiarize the public with their new name and mission. Ms. Prezzie volunteered to follow up with Ms. Murillo to arrange something to that end.

Ms. Testa-Buzzi took the time to point out that the change of name and the normalization of language put them in a place where they could represent issues related to gender and marginalized populations..

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Committee Updates

1. Community Outreach

Ms. Testa-Buzzee discussed the conversation around time, commitments, and their ability to plan large-scale events. He said she wanted to hear the members thoughts on the subject and stated there was no downside to saying right now they should limit themselves to smaller items and activities like promoting on social media.

Ms. Rendon Garcia discussed the various difficulties that arise when planning events. She made several suggestions but noted there was no single individual who could take on the logistics of such events. She suggested revisiting the Impact Awards and recommending that to the larger committee for next year. She also noted that they wanted to post to the larger committee potentially partnering with community organizations and various city commissions who are in line with their mission. She asked if anyone in the group had any existing connections with groups that might be interested in partnerships. She pointed out partnerships could help divide the workload. She added these groups and commissions may have events on their schedules that can be piggybacked on. Ms. Futaba-De Jaeger discussed her membership in The Haven, a women's entrepreneurial group that encompasses Fairfield County. She explained they already have scheduled events that are in line with the commission's mission. She mentioned she had approached the group owner about the possibility of partnering. She also noted the group owner was amenable to helping the commission get things going. Ms. O'Toole-Giandurco enquired about any rules the city may have about partnering with community organizations and businesses.

Ms. Coffy suggested contacting Fran Pastore of the WBDC, saying it would be a great organization to partner with. Ms. Testa-Buzzee wanted everyone to be mindful when partnering that their focus should be on Norwalk. She stated she would follow up to determine what rules and regulations might be in place. Ms. Rendon-Garcia offered the Triand Community Center as another possible option. Ms. O'Toole Giandurco indicated she had a couple of local groups that were looking to collaborate. Ms. Rednon-Garcia discussed what information should be made available when tabling at an event. Ms. O'Toole Giandurco noted the Girl's wrestling team had just won the state championship. She added that they should do something at the next meeting to honor them similar to what was done for the girl's softball team.

Within the next one or two meetings, Ms. Testa-Buzzee requested the commission members come up with a proposed timeline for the Impact Awards. Ms. O'Toole-Giandurco said they already had a schedule based on the previous event. It was agreed they should start everything a month earlier.

2. Policy Advocacy

Ms. Dignoti outlined the update on policy advocacy. She noted the committee met after the last meeting. She stated they discussed their priorities, where they were going, and who they would be contacting and hopefully working with. She noted they invited Melvetta Hill, Executive Director of the Connecticut Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity, and Opportunity to speak at the April Commission meeting. She also listed the priorities they identified. They are as follows.:

- Immigration
- LGBTQ +
- Health care

- Domestic violence,
- Sexual abuse
- Childcare.

She went on to list several organizations and agencies they have identified that work in those areas. She said they are reaching out to partner with these organizations..

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Rendon-Garcia enquired about succession planning. She pointed out that multiple commission member's terms end in September of 2025. Ms. Testa-Buzzee said she, Ms. O'toole-Giandurco and. Ms. Zucco would address the subject logistics on the next executive call. Ms. Testa-Buzzee indicated there are two vacancies on the commission. She stated there was a resume under revue in the Mayor's office., She continued by asking the members to think of ways to grow and represent the diverse population of the city of Norwalk.

VII. DISCUSSION

There was no further discussion.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting ended at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
 China Mayhew
 Telesco Secretarial Services