

**City of Fairfax**  
**Commission for Women**  
**November 19, 2019**

Minutes

**Present:** *Pat Addison, Stacey Hardy-Chandler, Brenda Kuhlman, Lara Nayar, Teresa Presson, Roxann Rowley, Lisa Whetzel, Beth Young, and Staff Lesley Abashian.* **Not present:** *Huilan Larson*

I. **Welcome:** Pat and Lesley welcomed the Commission and Susan Gray, acting Director of Historical Resources.

II. **Minutes:** The October minutes were approved as written.

III. **Status Report: Women’s Suffrage Celebration 2020**

- a) *Collaboration with the Office of Historical Resources:* Susan Gray shared a variety of exciting area events associated with the Suffrage Centennial. At the Fairfax Museum, the Second Sunday program on 2/9/20 will feature a film highlighting the life of Mary Church Terrell, an African American leader in the Women’s Suffrage Movement and co-founder of the NAACP. This is in addition to the summer’s travelling exhibit called “*We Demand: Women’s Suffrage in Virginia,*” on view at the Fairfax Museum from 7/4/20 to 8/15/20. Susan suggested that Alice Reagan may be available to give a presentation on the cruel treatment of suffrage supporters at the Occoquan Work House called “*The Night of Terror*”.

Other possible centennial activities: a trip to the Belmont-Paul House with Pam Harrington or a National Park Ranger; trip to the Occoquan Workhouse and Suffrage Museum; trip to LeDroit Park, the home of Mary Church Terrell and Ida B. Wells. Local connections: Susan spoke to local author Winifred Conkling about her book about suffrage which is aimed at

young readers. Another book has been published on the life of Dr. Kate Waller Barrett, a leader in the progressive movement, and *“The Moore Sisters: Leading the Way for Suffrage in Fairfax County”* by Cami St. Germain. Jenny and Helene Moore were the first women in Fairfax to register to vote and are related to Senator Chap Peterson.

b) The Women’s History Month event co-sponsored by our commission and the Office of History Resources is scheduled for Sunday, March 8, 2020 at City Hall. Members agreed to pursue a living history re-enactor focused on the suffrage movement for the event. Susan will research the availability of local re-enactors.

It was announced that Reading Across America will donate books to two elementary schools this spring. The commission members discussed the possibility to make available young adult literature related to suffrage. Lara plans to design a display in the City Library and work on a voter’s registration drive for seniors at the Fairfax High School website.

The City’s Women-Owned Business Luncheon co-sponsored by the Commission for Women and the City’s Economic Development Authority is scheduled for March 18<sup>th</sup> at the Sherwood Center. The commission is considering additional suffrage-related activities including participating City’s 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade.

Members thanked Susan for the previous successes and continued strong collaboration of the Office of Historical Resources and the Commission for Women. We are all looking forward to a great centennial celebration!

c) Arts Commission: Roxann announced that for the Centennial, her dance organization was awarded a grant from the City Arts Commission that will support a “pop up” dance event in the City to commemorate the Suffrage movement. The anticipated date for this event is March 7, 2020.

#### **IV. Update: Joint meeting with Fairfax County Commission for Women**

Pat recently attended a Fairfax County’s CFW Meeting. Lisa Sales, the new chair extended the invitation. A special guest at the meeting was Phyllis Gordon, Director of the National Association of Commissions for Women (NACW). In July, the NACW will host their annual conference in Loudoun County from July 19 through July 23. The NACW is seeking representatives from Northern Virginia women’s commissions to assist with the conference.

**V. Discussion: Recognition of Women and Girls Making a Difference in Fairfax.**

Pat requested assistance drafting an award process to recognize women and girls making a difference in the City of Fairfax. The award would be for City of Fairfax residents and chosen by the commission. Roxann volunteered to assist with developing the award process. The goal is to make the award in March during Women's History Month.

VI: **Update:** Craft Show: Items were collected for BRAWS at the Holiday Craft Show. While it was featured on the websites, many people did not know about the collection. Two bins of donations were collected on Saturday but none on Sunday, as the entry desk did not put out the bins. We will consider this for next year. Additionally, items were very specific for BRAWS for this event (pads and bras), so we might discuss this for next time. Brenda reported that craft show attendees were very enthusiastic, however, and some offered cash.

VII. **Women-Owned Business Luncheon:** March 18, 2020 at the Sherwood Center until 2:30 pm (the room will be needed for another event after that). There are now three other sponsors: The Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Bank, and the GMU Women in Business Initiative. Beth discussed the option of one speaker as in the past, or the panel presentation. Lunch will be provided by Coyote Café (wraps this time). There were 100 attendees last year. A "Save the Date" e-mail will be sent after the holidays.

VIII. **Decision: CFW Areas of Focus (2020-2022)** Pat had invited members to examine current areas of focus after the last meeting. Stacey proposed a change in the wording for area #10 which currently reads: *"The CFW activities will promote an including community accounting for the needs of women and girls of all backgrounds..."* The revision would read *"Promote an inclusive, diverse and equitable community in which women and girls of all backgrounds thrive."* Members agreed to revise the statement. Members also discussed tweaking #8, but we will continue to examine the draft at the next meeting.

**IX. Upcoming Dates of Note**

a) World AIDS Day (December 1)

b) Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service (January 20, 2020) Teresa will contact Danielle of GIRLS (Girls Inspired and Ready to Learn) to reconnect and determine

if there are future activities the CFW could support. We previously co-sponsored a Day of Service event at City Hall.

X. **Human Service Director Updates**: Lesley shared that she has a new administrative support specialist named Nancy Tingen. She also reported that the currently, the CFW has \$2062.58 in the budget. A letter has been sent to the Fairfax City Council stating the Commission's support of the ERA amendment in Virginia and encouraging the council to proceed with legislative action.

For our December meeting, we will meet at Ornerly Grill and have fun with a white elephant gift exchange. As in past years, a cash donation from members will be made to a local nonprofit for the holidays.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Kuhlman

Secretary

See you December 17: Ornerly Grill Holiday Gathering