

City of Fairfax
Commission for Women
Meeting Minutes for May 19, 2020

This meeting was conducted via virtual meeting with Go to Meeting.

Present: Pat Addison, Mary Baker, Stacey Hardy-Chandler, Brenda Kuhlman, Huilan Larson, Lara Nayar, Teresa Presson, Roxann Rowley, Lisa Whetzel and staff support Lesley Abashian.

I Welcome. Pat warmly welcomed members.

II. Around Table Sharing: Members shared experiences related to working from home; being quarantined with relatives; managing on fewer resources; studying for exams; cancelled graduation plans; and the anticipation of cancelled vacations and indefinitely postponed trips overseas. On the positive side... members voiced a sense of gratitude for good health, increased time with children and pets; becoming proficient at bread baking; and striving for balance and boundaries in the process. Stacey shared that the City of Alexandria hosted a Resilience Week. Lesley reported she has witnessed numerous instances of neighbors helping neighbors during the COVID crisis. The City participated in the “Stuff the Bus” Food Drive, donating 2 1/2 tons of food.

III. Approval of the Minutes: The minutes from the April 21 meeting were approved with minor grammatical changes.

IV. Discussion: *Alternative Ways to Celebrate Suffrage.*

- a. Lesley announced the Starship Company agreed to allow CFW to place static stickers with suffrage related information on their food delivery robots. She also mentioned the idea of developing a trivia contest that links with the information on the robots.
- b. Hosting a drive-in movie that celebrates women.
- c. Posting a suffrage anniversary banner on Old Town Square in August.
- d. Hosting an outdoor speaker or reenactor in August at the Splash Park.
- e. Schedule a concert by an existing City of Fairfax based teachers’ musical group.

- f. Decorate brightly colored rocks with “girl-power” or suffrage-related messages and place throughout the City. (Teresa)

Members noted that many of the above events would require City approval based on COVID restrictions this summer.

V. Update: *Student Representative* for School Year 2020-21.

Lesley reported that she received two eligible applications for the student rep position. Two additional applicants applied but were not City residents. The deadline is tomorrow. Virtual interview will be set up for next week with the nominating committee of Teresa, Mary and Lara.

VI. Update: *NACW Conference*. Lesley and Pat reported that the National Commission hosted a conference call on April 23. It was reported that the July 2020 NACW conference is cancelled. NACW members and Loudoun CFW are planning for July 2021 with a possible change of venue. Loudoun County VA will continue to be the Conference venue with Loudoun CFW taking a lead in planning efforts.

VII. Update: *City of Fairfax Historic Resources’* summer schedule was altered, but they report the travelling suffrage banner exhibit is still planned for July 4 – August 15. Lesley reported a suffrage speaker is scheduled for July 23 at the Occoquan site. Lesley pointed out that August is actual anniversary month for suffrage.

VIII. Update: *July 4*. Lesley announced that the City’s Annual Fourth of July parade is cancelled due to the COVID-19 virus. The City is facilitating discussions of alternative ways to celebrate Independence Day.

IX. Human Services Updates

a. *Budget*: Lesley reported that the City anticipates a budget shortfall due to lower revenue linked to COVID. The amended FY 21 budget was recently approved by City Council, which includes changes to the CFW FY 21 budget. Currently, \$1425 in the CFW FY 21 budget for events was placed in reserve and could be released if additional funding becomes available to the City.

b. *COVID-19: Impacts on City residents*. Lesley reports that the collaboration between the City and nonprofits has made an immense difference to residents.

Lisa explained that Neighborhood and Community Services established working committees that includes nonprofits, faith-based organizations, County agencies and public schools to coordinate community efforts to provide for residents' basic needs for food, rent assistance and utilities assistance. Assistance efforts include daily food distribution of "grab and go" meals for school-age children and their families distributed by Fairfax County Public School staff. Lisa reported that Britepaths decided to close their food closet due to COVID-19 distancing guidance, but donated their existing food supplies to larger food banks.

The County's FASTRAN buses were repurposed to assist with senior food delivery in coordination with an expanded County Meals on Wheels program. This is one example of the human services continuum's response to increase resident needs linked to the COVID crisis.

Residents can contact Coordinated Services Planning at 703 222-0880 to request basic assistance.

Upcoming Dates of Note:

- Child Care Providers' Appreciation Month: Pat will sign thank you notes and enclose a COVID-19 resource list. (May)
- National Mental Health Month (June)

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Kuhlman

The next meeting will be June 16, 2020.

Congratulations to our graduates! We are proud of our own Lara Nayar on her future at William & Mary College, but she will be missed!