

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
111 N.W. 1st Street, Suite 1034, Miami, FL 33128
Minutes of Meeting of June 25, 2014

Present: Marie Eloi, Monica Interian, Sharon Kendrick-Johnson, Beverly Nixon, Eveline Pierre, Kit Rafferty, Linda Robinson, Marie Woodson, Mara Zapata, and Dona Zemo

Excused: Nordis Alvarez, Leah Blumenfeld, Viviana Jordan, Michelle Dunaj Lucking, Noreen Lagault Mendoza, and Rhonda P. Wimberly

Staff: Laura Morilla

Guests: Somy Ali from the No More Tears organization and Phoebe Zemo

Chair Mara Zapata commenced the meeting at 5:45 p.m. and welcomed everyone. Everyone introduced themselves.

Mara asked Monica to introduce the guest speaker, Somy Ali, who is the founder and president of the No More Tears organization, and then Somy made a presentation about No More Tears. Somy first talked about her personal upbringing. Somy started No More Tears in 2008 and No More Tears assists victims of trafficking and domestic violence. She wanted No More Tears to provide immediate services such as: legal assistance, driving lessons, therapy, help paying for rent or schooling, etc. No More Tears does not have a shelter for victims, but works with hotels. She works a lot with immigrant women who are brought over from other countries.

Somy takes no salary and the staff is made up of volunteers. She is based in Broward County but helps victims in Miami and other states and is planning to move to Miami. The service providers are paid discounted rates. No More Tears partners with police departments in Miami and Broward. She distributes information in ethnic restaurants, houses of worship, etc. She has survivors who are willing to tell their stories. About 60% of the women she helps are Hispanic; some Russian mail order brides, Muslim women, etc.

Her request to the CFW is to help raise awareness about No More Tears. She also needs some of the following items: gift cards from places such as Target; clothes; sponsor a GED class; sponsor a driving lesson; or sponsor a movie nights for the kids. The kids are ages 3-16.

At the end of Somy's presentation, Monica gave a generous \$1000 donation to No More Tears.

At this point there was a quorum. Linda moved to approve the Agenda and Viviana seconded the motion. The motion passed and the **Agenda was approved.**

Leah moved to approve the minutes of the CFW meeting of 05/28/14 and Sharon seconded the motion. The motion passed and the **minutes were approved.**

Next, the **Committee Reports** were presented.

For the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Issue Committee report, Monica explained that the CFW was supposed to tour the Coordinated Victims Assistance Center (CVAC) but that Ivon Mesa was ill so that the tour was canceled. Monica sent a follow up email to Ivon to reschedule and is waiting to hear back.

Mara asked Michelle to explain the request from the Miami-Dade County Commission on Human Rights (CHR) regarding domestic violence and the County's anti-discrimination ordinance. Michelle distributed copies of the CHR resolution and of testimony at a County Commission meeting from the UM Law School Human Rights Clinic. Michelle explained that the CHR is trying to address the issue of domestic violence victims and problems in public housing. The CHR is also asking for support for its resolution to amend the County antidiscrimination ordinance to include protections for domestic violence victims. Specifically, the resolution asks to extend protections from discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations to victims of domestic violence, dating violence and stalking. The two requests from the CHR are that the CFW participate in a working group to address the issue and that the CFW support the CHR's resolution on expanded protections for domestic violence victims. Michelle moved that the CFW support the two requests from the CHR. Viviana seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Mara gave the report of the Human Trafficking Committee. Mara stated that she attended a recent human trafficking symposium and that she would like for the CFW to be a part of the Miami-Dade County Human Trafficking Coalition. Mara will be the CFW's liaison to the Coalition and attend the meetings, and Sharon, Linda and Monica will be the back-up representatives in case Mara cannot attend a meeting. Mara will be attending the July 10th meeting on behalf of the CFW.

Sharon reviewed the written report of the Events and Fundraising Committee. The name of the event on October 1 at the Young Women's Preparatory Academy (YWPA) is "CFW Young Women's Success Summit 2014: Providing Inspiration to Future Leaders." As far as the speakers go, Sharon explained that the YWPA principal expressed an interest in having community leaders address the students. Mara added that academic leaders were also desired. Michelle will work with Laura to contact potential speakers. Viviana and Michelle will work on the promotional materials. Mara contacted her friend who is a caterer and asked for an estimate on lunch prices and is waiting to hear back. Linda suggested that Ana Garcia, the City Manager for North Miami Beach, would be a good speaker.

For the Legislative Committee, Kit reported on the Working Women Town Hall meeting held last night and the recent White House Summit on Working Families.

Under Old Business, Mara reminded everyone about the July 2 event to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and handed out copies of the program for the evening reception. The CFW is a co-host and co-sponsor of the event. Mara also explained that an opinion piece by her and Laura about the Civil Rights Act and the inclusion of women will be printed in *The Miami Herald* on July 2.

Mara encouraged everyone to attend the NACW conference in July in Sarasota. Mara, Laura and Linda will be going to the conference.

Mara reported that an event is being planned at the Women's Park on August 16th to commemorate Women's Equality Day.

Under New Business, Mara explained that the proposed amendments to the CFW ordinance were passed on first reading by the County Commission. The public hearing will be held at the time that the County Commission committee of jurisdiction has its meeting. The two clarifications that the CFW will ask for is the make clear that the CFW can award scholarships and to have the November election of officers start in November 2015.

Mara reported that planning for the 2015 In the Company of Women awards has already started. The CFW is always a co-sponsor of the event.

Under **Attendance at Community Events**, Kit thanked Marie Woodson for speaking at the Working Women's Town Hall meeting last night. Leah reported that about three CFW members attended the Roxcy Bolton event at the Women's Park on June 3rd. Mara complimented Marie Woodson for her daughter's lovely singing at the event.

Under **Announcements**, Laura reported that Judge Jose Rodriguez had made a generous donation of \$5000 to the Friends of the DCCFW.

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Laura Morilla

Recorder