

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMISSION FOR WOMEN**  
**111 N.W. 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Suite 1034, Miami, FL 33128**  
**Minutes of Meeting of July 30, 2014**

**Present:** Leah Blumenfeld, Monica Interian, Viviana Jordan, Noreen Lagault Mendoza, Beverly Nixon, Eveline Pierre, Linda Robinson, Phyllis Sloan-Simpkins, Marie Woodson, Mara Zapata, and Dona Zemo

**Excused:** Nordis Alvarez, Marie Eloi, Sharon Kendrick Johnson, Michelle Dunaj Lucking, Francesca Menes, Kit Rafferty, and Rhonda Wimberly

**Staff:** Laura Morilla

**Guests:** Sherry Thompson Giordano from PACE Miami

Chair Mara Zapata commenced the meeting at 5:40 p.m. and welcomed everyone. Everyone introduced themselves.

First there was a presentation and short video by Sherry Thompson Giordano, Executive Director of the PACE Center for Girls of Miami. PACE is a day treatment center and intensive program for at risk girls supported by the Florida Dept. of Juvenile Justice and Florida Dept. of Education. Right now there are 44 girls at PACE out of a capacity of 50; 28 girls have already transitioned out. PACE is a Miami-Dade Public School, grades 6-12, with a mix of academia and counseling. It is a volunteer program and the girls are referred by judges, police, schools, counselors, etc. The girls can also self-refer themselves.

Sherry explained that the girls typically stay from 9 months to 15-18 months and then they go back to their regular school, but some do stay and graduate from PACE. Each girl at PACE gets an individualized needs analysis and transition plan. Staff at PACE also do home visits and when a girl leaves PACE, they still work with her for 3 years after that. Ninety percent of the girls who are a year out have not gotten into trouble again. Sherry is working on creating a group of PACE alumni students. For 2015-2016, PACE will have 60 girls. Sherry wants to focus on three things in the near future: 1. STEAM education, including the arts; 2. Health and Wellness, including putting a health center on site; and 3. Social enterprise to have the girls start a company.

Sherry answered questions from the CFW members and invited the CFW to have a meeting and a tour of PACE.

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

Leah moved to approve the minutes of the CFW meeting of 06/25/14 and Viviana seconded the motion. Several corrections to the minutes were made, including a correction of who was present and excused at the meeting of 06/25/14. The amended motion passed and the **minutes were approved as amended.**

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

Viviana reviewed the written report of the Events and Fundraising Committee and explained that the Committee is making progress towards the October 1<sup>st</sup> event at the Young Women's Preparatory Academy. Viviana has prepared the draft flyer and a preliminary agenda for the day. The Committee plans to provide the girls with tote bags and small gifts for the girls. Chairwoman Sosa may be donating the tote bags and some items. Mara is following up on the catering for the lunch. The next Committee meeting is on August 5<sup>th</sup>.

Mara said that the Human Trafficking Committee is meeting on August 6. She reported that the CFW is now part of the Miami-Dade County Human Trafficking Coalition.

For the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Issue Committee report, Monica explained that she is trying to reschedule the CFW's visit to the Coordinated Victims Assistant Center (CVAC). Laura sent out an email and so far the date that is best for most CFW members is September 9<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 p.m. The CFW agreed to go with that date. Mara reported that Commissioner Sally Heyman is going to sponsor the amendment to the ordinance governing the Commission on Human Rights to expand its jurisdiction to include domestic violence status.

**Under Old Business,** Mara reminded everyone about the event that will be held at the Women's Park on August 16<sup>th</sup> to commemorate Women's Equality Day. The CFW is a co-host, along with the League of Women Voters and the Women's Park. She also explained that the CFW Executive Committee voted to reimburse Laura up to \$50 to purchase refreshments for the event.

Mara talked about the NACW conference last week that she, Linda and Laura attended. Mara said that she talked to a lot of the women who were from local commissions to see what they were doing, and that she got some good ideas. She explained that the Miami Gardens CFW got an achievement award from NACW for its annual breast cancer and health expo, and that she would like to see the CFW do a project that can win an achievement award too.

As a result of what Mara shared about the NACW conference at the Executive Committee meeting, the Executive Committee is planning to have a retreat/planning session to do some strategic planning for future CFW issues and events and come up with an implementation plan. Mara would like to have input from the CFW members, and an email will be sent to the CFW members before the retreat asking CFW members to list the two issues/causes that they think that the CFW should be addressing. Marie Woodson agreed that the CFW should focus on 2 to 3 causes and have follow through to make a difference. Eveline agreed that the CFW needs to have attainable goals, that the CFW should be out there getting our hands dirty, and that the CFW should be flexible in accepting suggestions from CFW members.

Mara reported that planning is underway for the 2015 In the Company of Women awards. The CFW is always a co-sponsor of the event; this year the CFW donated \$1000. The event will be held March 5, 2015 at the Coral Gables Country Club. The nomination period will be from September 1 to October 10. The next planning meeting is August 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Under New Business,** Mara explained the request from Lorna Owens that the CFW support the showing of the documentary called "Brave Miss World" in November at FIU. Mara stated that the Executive Committee discussed this and wanted to be cautious about monetary obligations as part of the support and co-sponsorship. Noreen mentioned that she had seen the movie and that it was very good and relevant to what the CFW stands for. Viviana moved that the CFW add its name in support of the screening but without any monetary support or expenditures by the CFW. Marie Woodson seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

The CFW next discussed having another "on the road" meeting. The CFW reviewed the list of past on the road meeting locations and also the offer by Sherry Thompson Giordano to host the CFW at PACE. Marie Woodson moved that the CFW have its September 17<sup>th</sup> meeting at PACE. Linda seconded the motion, and the motion passed. Beverly then asked if the CFW can invite the public and have the public forum that the CFW usually has at the beginning of the on the road meetings. There may be a concern at PACE because of security, etc. Beverly raises a good point and Laura will ask Sherry if that is o.k.

Under **Attendance at Community Events**, Mara thanked Marie Woodson for attending several of the Working Women's Town Hall meetings that Kit has been organizing around the County. Marie is attending another one tomorrow night in Miami Gardens.

Viviana reported that she attended the recent Amelia Earhart event at Miami International Airport.

Mara reported that she, Laura, Leah, Marie Eloi and Kit attended the July 2<sup>nd</sup> Civil Rights Act commemoration reception.

Under **Announcements**, Noreen thanked everyone for their support and prayers for her and her husband during this time while he is in the hospital recovering from a stroke.

Noreen explained that she is organizing an event at FIU on September 27<sup>th</sup> called "Geekiwood" that focuses on the real science that you see in Hollywood movies- zombies, bionic arms, animation, special effects, etc. She is getting help from the FIU Women's Studies Program and Microsoft is one of the sponsors, and \$100 would pay for the admission fee for 10 girls. Noreen said that she would like to have the CFW be a co-sponsor and that there would be no money involved. Marie Woodson asked if CFW members could give individual contributions and then the CFW had brief discussion about making a donation. Laura said that there was \$9400 in the Friends account. Linda moved that the CFW co-sponsor the event and donate \$100 from Friends of the DCCFW. Viviana seconded the motion, and the motion passed. Laura will send Noreen the CFW logo and Noreen will send Laura an invoice.

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Laura Morilla

Recorder