

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
111 N.W. 1st Street, Suite 1034, Miami, FL 33128
Minutes of Meeting of January 28, 2015

Present: Clora Adkins, Nordis Alvarez, Leah Blumenfeld, Monica Interian, Sharon Kendrick-Johnson, Kit Rafferty, Linda Robinson, Raisa Sequeira, Phyllis Sloan-Simpkins, Marie Woodson, Mara Zapata, and Dona Zemo

Excused: Marie Eloi, Viviana Jordan, Michelle Dunaj Lucking, Noreen Lagault Mendoza, Francesca Menes, Beverly Nixon, and Eveline Pierre

Staff: Laura Morilla

Chair Mara Zapata commenced the meeting at 5:35 p.m. and welcomed everyone, especially our new member, Clora Adkins. Everyone introduced themselves.

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

Legislative Committee. Leah reviewed the written report of the committee meeting of January 12. The Florida COSW is having a Women's Day at the Capitol in Tallahassee on March 24th concluding with the Women's Hall of Fame induction ceremony in the evening, some CFW members have expressed an interest in attending. That would conflict with the CFW meeting on March 25th so there was discussion of possibly changing the March CFW meeting date. Monica said that she was thinking of going to Tallahassee for the event and Mara said that she will see if she can go with some students from Miami-Dade College. This issue will be on the agenda for the February meeting.

The four bills that the Committee recommended that the CFW support were: ERA ratification bill; minimum wage bill; Helen Gordon Davis Fair Pay Protection Act; and Florida Competitive Workforce Act to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation. Nordis moved to approve the Legislative Committee's report. Linda seconded the motion, and the motion passed. Leah also reported that this past Monday she gave the CFW's presentation at the public hearing of the Miami-Dade Legislative Delegation.

Events and Fundraising Committee. Sharon reviewed the written committee report. The CFW will put up a display in the lobby of the Stephen P. Clark Center in March for Women's History Month. We will reuse many of our poster boards from past years. We are waiting to hear back from the YWPA to see if the students want to do poster boards for the display.

Regarding the proposed CFW scholarship with the YWPA, the Committee recommends possibly awarding two scholarships totaling \$2500- one for \$1500 and one for \$1000. The Committee is waiting to hear back from the YWPA principal to meet with her, brainstorm, and get her approval for the proposal.

Kit said with regard to the scholarship criteria, that the essay should be weighted more and that the applicants can talk about their life struggles; students with a high GPA are probably going to get scholarships from other sources. Mara said that it was important to see the student's conviction about going to college, etc. and that she can share a sample scholarship application form. Phyllis said that asking for documents is important- letter from the admitting college, letter from the community, etc. Kit said that the applicant should also be asked for her transcripts and her college admission letter. Monica suggested that the minimum GPA be 2.5. Mara suggested that in the essay the applicant should be asked why it is important to give back to the community and that the essay should be broken down into sections/questions. Phyllis also said that the applicant should answer specific questions.

Sharon continued the Committee's report and said that the Committee talked about doing fundraisers such as wine tastings. Phyllis said that the CFW should reach out to prominent people in the community such as Monty Trainor to collaborate on fundraisers.

Back to the discussion of the scholarship, it would be better to give the scholarship money directly to the student, as opposed to directly to the college. Kit said that the CFW could also give a laptop. Phyllis said that the money should go directly to the student but the student should show that she already registered with the college.

At this point there was a quorum.

Sharon moved to approve the agenda and Phyllis seconded the motion. The motion passed and **the agenda was approved.**

Phyllis moved to approve the minutes of the CFW meeting of 11/19/14 and Linda seconded the motion. The motion passed and the **minutes were approved.**

Communications Committee. Mara asked everyone to review the written report. Viviana will be asked to elaborate on the report at the next meeting.

Mara mentioned that Miami-Dade College has a lot of events in March for Women's History Month and asked CFW members to consider speaking at some of the events. Mara will email Laura with more information.

Old Business. The CFW discussed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Mara explained that this matter was first raised by Commissioner Daniella Levine Cava at the CFW meeting in November. Mara said that she believes that the CFW needs to better understand what are the expectations of the CFW because in San Francisco, where a local CEDAW has been implemented, the CFW there has 5 or 6 staff people. After some discussion, it was suggested that the CFW Executive Committee meet with Commissioner Levine Cava to further discuss her proposal and elaborate, especially about the role of the CFW in implementing a local CEDAW. The Executive Committee will request a meeting with the Commissioner and all CFW members will be notified and invited. Mara further stated the CFW members have to be totally committed if the CFW is to pursue this matter.

Laura gave a quick update on "The Envelope Please" Initiative that the CFW is supporting. Laura reported that the Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Greater Miami and the Beaches Hotel Association have both sent an email to their member hotels urging the hotels to join the Initiative. The CFW has also asked the Doral CFW to reach out to the Trump Doral Resort.

Mara encouraged everyone to attend the In the Company of Women awards reception on March 5. The CFW is a co-sponsor of the event.

Mara mentioned that Marie Woodson was recently interviewed by one of the local television stations on the issue of paid family/sick leave. Kit explained that this is part of a larger story that is coming out and that Marie also prepared a letter about the issue for the advocacy group that Kit works for.

New Business. Mara explained that Casa Valentina is asking for support from the various women's organizations for its "Reach Out" event on April 30 at the Olympia Theater. The support does not cost money and Casa Valentina would include the organization's logo and a description of the organization in the event program. Nordis moved that the CFW support the event. Marie Woodson seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Attendance at Community Events. Linda said that there were a lot of human trafficking events this month and that she attended several of them. She reported that authorities are making progress in the area and more people are being prosecuted. Linda will call a meeting of the Human Trafficking Committee in February.

Clora explained that her organization is a provider for victims. She said that awareness of human trafficking has grown and that this is a problem that is happening in schools and foster care homes. Clora would like to be added to the Human Trafficking Committee. Mara said that what has also changed is the way that girls are viewed; not as criminals but as victims who need help. Police have also received sensitivity training. Linda said that the judicial system now realizes that these girls should not be punished, but helped instead, and that there is also a need for homes for these girls. Sharon said that Lotus House provides housing for these girls.

Announcements. Phyllis announced that she is going to be a grandmother of a 7th grandchild on Friday.

The CFW members then signed the sympathy card for Noreen.

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Laura Morilla
Recorder