

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
111 N.W. 1st Street, Suite 1034, Miami, FL 33128
Minutes of Meeting of February 24, 2016

Present: Clora Adkins, Odalys Dipp, Marie Eloi, Monica Interian, Sharon Kendrick-Johnson, Belinda Leon, Tara Leighton, Linda Robinson, Raisa Sequeira, Phyllis Sloan-Simpkins, Marie Woodson, Mara Zapata, and Dona Zemo

Excused: Darna Aybar-Guardia, Leah Blumenfeld, Viviana Jordan, Noreen Lagault Mendoza, Francesca Menes, Beverly Nixon, and Maria Santamaria

Guests: LaSonya Rodgers

Staff: Laura Morilla

Chairwoman Mara Zapata commenced the meeting at 5:35 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

First there was a **Presentation** by LaSonya Rodgers, the Director of the Economic Empowerment Program at the YWCA. The YWCA's economic empowerment program helps to financially empower low income women by helping them build a savings account, buy a home or a car, start a business, etc. The program provides financial literacy for these women. She is currently working with women in the Agape Substance Abuse Program to help them with banking, credit, and entrepreneurship. LaSonya would also like to add a job placement component to the program. LaSonya mentioned several statistics – 51% of children living in poverty in Miami-Dade live in a female headed household and 71% of financial decisions made in households are made by women.

The CFW can help by helping by finding financial partners for the program or help expand the program. Odalys asked whether the women in the program would be interested in education and non-traditional jobs and LaSonya said yes, that the YWCA has space for classes. LaSonya's economic empowerment program targets women who already have a connection with the YWCA, such as women who have their kids in childcare/after school care at the YWCA. But they are trying to get grants from different banks to open the program to more women. Mara mentioned that mentoring these women is also important.

At this point there was a quorum so Marie Woodson moved to approve the agenda and Monica seconded the motion. The motion passed and **the agenda was approved.**

Sharon moved to approve the minutes of the CFW meeting of 01/20/16 and Phyllis seconded the motion. The motion passed and the **minutes were approved.**

The **Committee Reports** were then presented.

Events and Fundraising Committee. Sharon reviewed the written report, which contained several fundraising ideas. The CFW members then discussed these fundraising ideas and added other ideas. Odalys said that the Woman's Club of Hialeah has a hat fashion show at the end of April. Dona said that a new flea market/bazaar is starting up at Miami Beach Senior High to raise money for the school's Academy of Hospitality and Tourism. Interested persons pay a \$30 fee and get two tables to sell whatever and keep the sale proceeds. The next one is this Saturday. Dona said that she would contribute the \$30 for the CFW tables at this flea market and will find out the March date. Phyllis mentioned that Miami Gardens Councilwoman Lisa Davis recently had a bachelor auction as a fundraiser and suggested that the CFW do something similar. Phyllis said that she would spearhead organizing the event. Marie Woodson suggested that every CFW member contribute \$50. The next Events Committee meeting is on March 16th and everyone is invited to attend or email ideas to Laura for the meeting.

Legislative Committee. The CFW reviewed Leah's written report. Mara also reported that the National Statuary Hall bill passed the Florida House this afternoon. Laura explained that the Florida House passed the Senate's version of the bill, which directs the Great Floridians Committee to recommend three names to replace Florida's statue of Confederate General Edmund Kirby Smith. Then the Legislature reviews the three names and decides on the replacement statue. So the next step is to advocate for Marjory Stoneman Douglas with the Great Floridians Committee.

Old Business. Mara reminded everyone that the photographic exhibit "Women of a New Tribe" is now up in the lobby of the Stephen P. Clark Center for Black History Month and Women's History Month. CFW members Beverly Nixon and Marie Woodson are featured in the display. Mara also reported that the CFW's lobby display for Women's History Month is going up on March 1st.

The next CFW meeting is an on the road meeting on March 23rd at 6 p.m. at the Miami Beach Women's Club. Laura has reserved 24 parking spaces at the Hebrew Academy across the street so that CFW members will have parking. The total cost of the reserved parking spaces is \$217 for four hours, including the security guard. Laura offered to pay for the parking but Mara called for the CFW to pay the parking expense. Phyllis moved that the CFW pay the \$217 for parking and Tara seconded the motion. **The motion passed.**

The CFW members then reviewed the YWCA's proposal to partner on a series of film screenings and panel discussions for 2016. The first event of these events is tomorrow. The CFW would be expected to make a monetary contribution to help pay for the expenses. Raisa suggested focusing on the last two events in August and October after the CFW awards the scholarships to see how much money is left. Maybe the CFW can team up on one of the events as the 45th anniversary event. The CFW will discuss this further in March when the CFW members have had a chance to review the proposal further.

New Business. Mara advised that the CFW's annual renewal membership dues for the National Association of Commissions for Women (NACW) is due by March 31st. The amount of the renewal dues is \$275. Tara moved that the CFW pay the \$275 renewal dues and Linda seconded the motion. **The motion passed.**

Attendance at Community Events. Phyllis reported that she is expanding her youth arts and cultural program called "Majestic Youth & Arts Academy." It's an after school program where kids get tutoring and it turns into a summer program with lunch, snack and dinner. Sharon said that her organization is hosting a health fair for indigent women in South Miami and would like to see the CFW support the event in an amount of \$150. Several CFW members suggested that Sharon contact Farm Share for donations of food.

Linda stated that the CFW send a letter to the County Commissioners offering to help them set up presentations on human trafficking in their districts. Laura will send a copy of those letters to the CFW members. Linda has also made a couple of presentations herself and she attended the Malone Awards presentation at Camillus House. Marie Eloi said that she is willing to partner with the Haitian American Nurses Association and Chairman Monestime to make a human trafficking presentation, perhaps at the end of March. Marie Eloi will be added to the Human Trafficking Committee and Marie and Linda will work on something together.

Announcements. Mara announced that Marie Woodson was a finalist for the position of North Miami City Manager. Marie was the only woman of the 10 finalists. Mara announced that Raisa was the new Program Professional for the Institute of Civic Engagement and Democracy at Miami-Dade College. Raisa reported that she attended a couple of human trafficking conferences and presentations recently.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

