

**Alexandria Commission for Women**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, December 12, 2023**

**7:00 pm**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Crystal Kramer (1 excused absence); Anuja Miner (1 excused absence); Elisabeth “PJ” Palmer Johnson; Maxanne “Maxie” Witkin; Lexi White; T. Nicole Hutchinson; Shelley Brown; Rachel Brill-Meckler (1 excused absence); Jennifer “Jen” Stowe; Yvette Jiang Matthew Worner (1 excused absence); Nia Miller (1 excused absence)

**MEMBERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY:** Emily Eckert; Jennifer Wetmore (1 excused absence)

**OTHER ATTENDEES:** Debra Evans, Domestic Violence Program/Sexual Assault Center (DVP/SAC), Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS), and LaTanya Chinagorom, DVP/SAC/DCHS

**1. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER/PUBLIC COMMENT**

The December 2023 meeting of the Alexandria Commission for Women (ACFW) was called to order by Chair Kramer at 7:07 p.m. This meeting did not have a quorum at the beginning. Later a quorum was established at 7:47 p.m. This meeting was held in person and virtually via Zoom and was made open to the public for comment.

**2. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 2023 MINUTES**

The November 2023 minutes review and approval was skipped this month and will be presented in the January 2024 meeting for all Commissioners to review. The Commission will review and approve during the January 2024 meeting.

**3. 50th Anniversary Planning Committee Updates and Next Steps**

*Update from Vice Mayor Amy Jackson:* Vice Mayor Jackson gave useful information on how the Commission at large can work publicly at a higher level. She will speak with the Commission in the new year. She discussed with Commissioner Wetmore the kinds of posts that the Commission should make on their social media accounts and suggested that they do a fundraiser with a theme such as “March Madness,” and that the Commission should partner with Historic Alexandria.

The 50th Anniversary is scheduled to be held September 24, 2024 (a City Council meeting will be held the same day). It was suggested to have the anniversary event on Wednesday, September 25, 2024. Vice Mayor Jackson will assist with the Commission for Women’s proclamation. **Action Item: Chair Kramer will ask Councilwoman Gaskins if they have any advice to the Commission.**

**Second Vice Chair Miner will ask a colleague to create a logo for the Commission. LaTanya Chinagorom will have the Mark Center Drive Conference Room reserved (if possible).**

The conversation about City Council's fundraising was tabled to be discussed during the Fundraising Subcommittee meeting.

The 50th Anniversary subcommittee members are as follows:

- Publicity – First Vice Chair Miner, Commissioners Palmer Johnson, Worner, White, Miller and Witkin
- Venue/Food – Commissioners Witkin; Brill-Meckler; Stowe and Wetmore, White, Witkin
- Fundraising – Commissioners Hutchinson; Eckert, Chair Kramer and Second Vice Chair Brown

*Volunteer for Co-chairs of the Planning Committee:* Volunteers to co-chair the subcommittee are Commissioner Stowe; Second Vice Chair Miner and Commissioner Hutchinson.

*Social Media:* Commissioners Worner and Eckert volunteered to cover a social media account. Commissioner Palmer Johnson will cover print. Commissioner Worner explained information on social media security. There was a post on the Facebook page which indicated that someone has access to the Commission's page. First Vice Chair Miner posted volunteer work from October 2023. There was also a surprise post that the Commission was not aware of. **Action Item: First Vice Chair Miner will contact Monica Chapman and Julie Harbour about social media access. Action Item: Commissioners Worner and Eckert will link the new Facebook page to the Instagram page.**

It was advised to keep the old account for historical purposes. Commissioners Worner and Eckert will work on the new account. City staff Debra Evans and LaTanya Chinagorom are required to have the password as well.

Subcommittees were asked to exchange contact information and to plan their first meeting. **Action Item: LaTanya Chinagorom will post meetings on the calendar when notified.**

#### **4. DISCUSSION OF UPCOMING EVENTS REQUIRING ACFW VOLUNTEERS/PARTICIPATION**

*The Domestic Violence Shelter Holiday Party* is scheduled on Thursday, December 14th. **Action Item: Debra Evans will check to see if Volunteer Alexandria is going to give donations.**

*Domestic Violence Bookmarks at Alexandria City Metro Stations* – Commissioners were asked to schedule the distribution of bookmarks for the last two weeks of January 2024. Commissioners will go to the Metro stations two at a time from 4:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. Commissioner Wetmore has the sign-up sheet. The Metro stations suggested were King Street, Braddock Road, Potomac Yard, Eisenhower Ave and Van Dorn Street. **Action Item: Chair Kramer will send out a doodle poll for people's availability. Debra Evans will order the bookmarks.**

## 5. GRAYSON COUNTY LETTER

The Grayson County public hearing takes place Thursday, December 14th at 6 p.m. **Action Item:**  
**Commissioner White will let Commissioners know if the hearing will be livestreamed.**

## 6. REPORT OUTS FROM SUBCOMMITTEES & COMMISSION LIAISONS

- *Affordable Housing & Transportation Subcommittee* – This subcommittee presented a webinar that was successful. The recording is on the Commission for Women website. There were many questions presented by the public. Kudos were extended for a great job.
- *DASH Representative Report Out* – None.
- *Survivor's Support Subcommittee*: The name Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault & Human Trafficking Subcommittee changed its name to Survivor's Support Subcommittee. The presentation on mentoring took place at the last meeting. They plan to continue the momentum that they started with the Human Trafficking Awareness month from 2023. They want to place signage at coffee shops with information on the month's topic. **Action Item: Chair Kramer will follow up about the proclamation for this month.**
- *Reproductive Rights* – Established their priorities for next year: 1) hosting another webinar, 2) developing a position statement on reproductive health (possibly in partnership with the other local commissions for women 3) amplifying/doing an event around Black Maternal Health week 4) creating reproductive freedom index and 5) updating our list of policy asks for city Council.
- *Commissioner/City Council Engagement*: City Councilman Kirk McPike is running for office. City Councilman McClellan is having a kickoff for Congressman 6 p.m. this Thursday.
- *Commission on Aging*: No report at this time, but the Commission will meet virtually on Thursday, December 14th.
- *Human Rights (HR) Commission* – Commissioner Palmer Johnson received an award on behalf of the Human Rights Commission. Twelve people showed up; six showed up at City Council with signs that read "Palestinians have rights too." They had a guest, Zena Azan, who writer, editor and community activist who is also a Poet Laureate in the City of Alexandria. Another visitor was Rose Easber, oral historian and international development professional. They both shared information about the history of Palestine and issues that are taking place. The Rainbow Crosswalk was voted on. A letter was drafted to City Council on asking for inclusion of Palestine Americans and condemning any phobias and anti-Semitic hate. City Council is working on the topics. The next Human Rights meeting will be virtual. The Executive Committee met December 11th. ARHA and the Alexandria Police

Department have issued a ski mask announcement that City residents can be arrested for wearing a ski mask. It is a felony with up to one year imprisonment and \$2,500 fine. Human Rights are following up with the Police Review Board in reference to this. Rabbi Spinrod will come to address the Commission. The Commission is communicating with the school system and other persons of interest to address issues on LGBTQ+ students. Commissioner Palmer Johnson will be doing an analysis on School Resource Officers. Thanks were extended to all who supported Commissioner Palmer Johnson on the fundraising event that took place in her home, November 27th for Women's Right to Choose. They raised almost \$200K. Guests included Governor of Maryland, Wes Moore, and former and current Commissioners attended as well.

- *HIV/AIDS Commission* – World AIDS Day, December 1st. Mayor Wilson was in attendance along with City Councilmembers. The event co-sponsored with the Alexandria Health Department. **Action Item: The Commission for Women will place the HIV/AIDS Commission events on the calendar.** Carpenter's Shelter needs volunteers, which requires an \$8 background check.
- *Survivor Support* - [https://www.target.com/gift-registry/gift-giver?registryId=6bcf0c70-bc6c-11eb-9092-54ed1d7afa55&lnk=registry\\_custom\\_url&type=CHARITY](https://www.target.com/gift-registry/gift-giver?registryId=6bcf0c70-bc6c-11eb-9092-54ed1d7afa55&lnk=registry_custom_url&type=CHARITY)  
*Afghan* professional women who have come to America do not have the clothing they need. All were asked to donate.

**Next Steps/Adjournment:** Chair Kramer adjourned the meeting at 8:36 p.m.