

**ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION FOR WOMEN**  
**MINUTES**  
**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2026**  
**VIRTUAL**

**7 PM**

**ATTENDANCE:** Jennifer Beatty; Yvette Jiang; Vanita Datta; Annette Maldonado; Caroline Schofield; Eva Bastianon; T. Nicole Hutchinson; Kafi Joseph; Krystle Bransky, and Necola Yvonne Shaw

**EXCUSED ABSENCE:** Dr. Elisabeth Palmer Johnson; Rev. Dr. Shelley Brown; Giovanna Rogow, and Hope Nelson

**STAFF**

Debra Evans  
LaTanya Chinagorom

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

None.

**WELCOME NEW COMMISSIONERS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Chair Bastianon welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. to include welcoming the Commission's newest member Lexi White.

**APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 2026 MINUTES**

The January 2026 meeting minutes were approved as presented.

**WEBSITE BIO REMINDER**

Commissioners were reminded to send their bios to Ms. Chinagorom or Ms. Evans. **Action Item: Commissioner Shaw stated that she would send a shortened version of her bio to Ms. Evans.**

**HEALTH COALITION EVENTS**

Commissioner Maldonado reported two groups are concentrating on Alexandria mental health and improvement in health in the Landmark/Van Dorn area. They created their mission and vision. The coalitions will take a holistic approach to what the community needs and will discuss their mission and vision during the next meeting. **Action Item: Commissioner Maldonado will share the website information for the health coalition events. All were asked to let her know if they desire to attend.**

**CONGRESSMAN DON BEYER'S ANNUAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE – JANUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>**

Commissioner Datta shared that the conference was held at George Mason University and was well attended. First Vice Chair Jiang attended as well. Congressman Byer will look into several

issues for women (women being fired from Federal service and veterans who were fired, ICE and other issues). Commissioner Dr. Palmer Johnson attended the event as well. Many high school teachers and administrators were there as well as a USAID guest speaker. Commissioner Jiang invited them to attend some Commission meetings.

### **LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY DAY (SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE)- FEBRUARY 5TH (DISCUSSION)**

The City's legislative director attended Advocacy Day in Richmond, VA.

### **FAIRFAX CFW BIENNIAL REPORT/BREAKFAST – MARCH 27<sup>TH</sup>**

Commissioner Datta shared that the Fairfax Commission for Women invited one person, but she asked for another seat for First Vice Chair Jiang. Commissioner Datta will not be available to attend but can give her seat to anyone who is interested. **Action Item: Commissioner Datta will send the agenda to Ms. Chinagorom and Ms. Evans to email to the Commission. Commissioner Joseph stated interest in attending.**

### **CARPENTER SHELTER ALTERNATIVE DATES**

Volunteering opportunities were shared by Chair Bastianon.

Ashley Johnson, the Deputy Division Chief of Aging and Adult Services, spoke with Chair Bastianon. Ms. Johnson expressed that they would work with the Commission for Women. Commission for Economic Opportunities Aging and Adult Services is seeking volunteers primarily for, specific tasks, which requires background checks.

### **COMMUNITY EVENTS**

Second Vice Chair Beatty reported the President's Day Parade is no longer an activity that the Commission can attend. The Irish Parade fee is \$150 to walk-in. **Action Item: Second Vice Chair Beatty will follow up to get the fee waived.**

Advocacy Reproductive Rights Advocacy Day, February 24<sup>th</sup>, 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. Virginia Reproductive Freedom Advocates and ReproRising are taking the lead on this event. **Action Item: Chair Bastianon expressed interest.**

**Action Item: All were asked if they are interested in pride event outreach to contact Commissioner White.**

Commissioner Datta shared that Congressmen Senator Warren's office wants to do volunteer training on disaster assistance (FEMA) for the community. **Action Item: Commissioner Datta will share more information on when the training will happen.**

### **BYLAWS UPDATE/NEXT STEPS**

*Volunteer tracking* – The Commission previously used a volunteer log where they would log their volunteer location and hours. The requirement for Commissioners to volunteer outside the Commission is eight hours monthly. Commissioner Hutchinson suggested putting wording for flexibility for volunteer hours and extending the volunteer hours to go throughout the year. Volunteer time is either in the ordinance or bylaws.

Commissioner Joseph sent a document to Commissioners requesting review or comment due to the challenge that the Commission had where there was no one sitting as Chair of the Commission for Women. The First Vice Chair did not want to step into the role, the Second Vice Chair had to step away, and there were gaps. The bylaws need to be updated; Commissioners reviewed the items for discussion. **Action Item: Commissioner Joseph will prepare a document for the Commission to vote on. The recommendations for this document are accessible through the Google Drive link provided by Commissioner Joseph.**

### **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

The Alexandria Fund for Human Services is seeking reviewers to review and score assigned grant proposals, which take an estimated hour of time to review each. The orientation will be pre-recorded. Active review period runs March 2 – April 10, 2026. Commitment is 16 – 20 hours over 6-weeks. **Action Item: All were asked to reach out to Federico Gutierrez, DCHS Deputy Director. 703.746.3604. Background checks need to be done by Wednesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>.**

### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION PROJECT DISCUSSION**

Chair Bastianon shared with Commissioners the “ACFW Concept, Proposal: English Acquisition Accessibility Project,” a proposal to change English Acquisition Accessibility. Currently, the City offers in person classes/meetings that may unintentionally present barriers for many adult students (work scheduling conflicts, childcare obligations, costs of the classes, and transportation.) The goal is to work with existing programs with current modules to create language learning models for students (City residents) and ask instructors to expand their lectures by adding a Blackboard online to their already established lectures (the lecture will be recorded.) They will be able to receive, check and grade work. If the proposal is supported, next steps are:

- To seek approval from DCHS
- Approach leaders, instructors, address barriers
- Engage interest in willingness to collaborate
- Seek feedback

There were concerns that English language classes are offered in church basements, which may cause conflicts depending on the student’s personal beliefs. It was suggested to compile a list of all the classes available from the City and non-profit groups, using social media efforts.

Commissioner Joseph motioned to use the Status of Women Report to investigate the access of English language, bringing attention to learning for women in the City of Alexandria. The motion was seconded by Chair Bastianon. All were in favor.

### **WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH PROCLAMATION WRITE-UP**

Second Vice Chair Jiang prepared a draft proclamation for Women’s History Month. Commissioner Hutchinson suggested adding the Alexandria Domestic Violence Shelter; aiming for March 10<sup>th</sup> to submit the draft. Commissioner White recommended adding Virginians for Reproductive Freedom and Virginia Reproductive Equity Alliance and local clinic advocacy. **Action Item: Commissioners were asked to submit their changes and suggestions to First**

**Vice Chair Jiang by Wednesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>. Only two people are allowed to represent the Commission on the day of the proclamation due to space.**

### **WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH EVENTS**

March 2026 will be Women's History Month. Chair Bastianon checked for events, found none.

**Action Item: Commissioner Bransky will check to see if the American Legion 24 will have a Women's Day event.**

Commissioner Maldonado suggested to have small business workshops for women presented by the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership. Commissioner Maldonado requested permission to reach out to the organization. The goal is to discuss a small business workshop for women in the month of March. No curriculum is available. **Action Item: Commissioner Maldonado will discuss the topic with Economic Development. She will also send an email with their information to the Commission. It was suggested to give the Partnership more time to prepare and that the event doesn't have to be in March. Commissioner Joseph noted that there are 15 volunteers to be able to assist with activities.**

### **CARPOOLING PAIR UPS**

Commissioner Hutchinson noted that the room change from 4850 Mark Center Drive to the Charles Houston Recreation Center, 901 Wythe Street for February 10, 2026, Commission meeting was not changed according to Robert's Rules nor discussed amongst the Commission Members. Chair Bastianon responded that she believed there was a discussion at the previous meeting when the Commission talked about alternative sites where the Lee Center was also suggested. Commissioner White suggested making the in-person meetings be held alternating locations (4850 and Charles Houston).

Chair Bastianon suggested doing carpool pair-ups so that they could carpool to the Mark Center so that transportation is covered for all commissioners.

Commissioner Datta stated that there was some drop in communication (not intentionally done) and the suggestion is now to alternate.

Commissioner Bransky mentioned there will be 3 meetings at Mark Center and 3 at Charles Houston and to ensure that everyone is covered to get to the Mark Center. The next meeting for March will be at the Mark Center due to the proclamation.

The Commission voted to alternate the venue between the Mark Center and Charles Houston; all were in favor.

### **SUBCOMMITTEE BREAKOUTS**

Subcommittee breakouts took place from 8:39 p. m. – 8:55 p.m.

### **NEXT MEETING**

The Proclamation will be read at the City Council Meeting at 4850 Mark Center Drive, Rm. 1305, 7 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. **The next meeting is scheduled to be held at 4850 Mark Center Drive, Rm. 9208, 7:30 p.m.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.