

**CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES COLLABORATIVE COMMISSION**  
**MEETING NOTES – APRIL 13, 2016**  
**CITY HALL, ROOM 2000**

**ATTENDANCE**

**Present**

Natnael Adere	Kate Garvey	Gwen Mullen
Gisselle Brown	Ramee Gentry	Brian Orrenmaa
Councilman Will Bailey	J. Glenn Hopkins	Sonia Price
Ronnie Campbell	Gwendolyn Lewis	Joyce Rawlings
Councilman John Chapman	Melissa Little	Michelle Smith-Howard
William Chesley	Mike Mackey	Michael Suppa
Julie Crawford	Gerald Mann	Kendallee Walker
Rose Dawson	Tammy Mann	Eric Williams

**Excused Absent**

Robin Blair

**Unexcused Absent**

Carlos Suber

**Staff**

Jacqueline Coachman	Barbara Farrington	Jonathan Leonburger
Carol Farrell	Ron Frazier	Deborah Warren

**Guests**

Terri Mozingo

**WELCOME**

Chair Tammy Mann opened the meeting with the introduction of two commission members. Julie Crawford was officially appointed to the seat vacated by Margee Walsh. Michelle Smith-Howard was appointed to the seat vacated by Stacey Joyner.

**REVIEW OF DRAFT MARCH MINUTES**

There being no changes, Glenn Hopkins moved to approve the meeting notes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Councilman Will Bailey and approved unanimously.

**DISCUSSION OF COMMISSION'S TWO PRIORITIES**

The priorities identified by CYFCC for the coming year are equity and affordable housing. Because a School Board meeting was at the same time as the March CYFCC meeting it precluded the participation of the ACPS members in last month's discussion of equity. Chair Mann began the discussion with an overview by Julie Crawford that included examples of the work of ACPS to foster cultural competency. Cheryl Robinson is the new ACPS Cultural Competency Coordinator and has spent considerable time engaged in groundwork that informs her of the dynamics of ACPS. She has conducted over four hundred equity walks in ACPS schools. In addition, Ms. Robinson has met with parents, staff and community groups as well as administrators and principals for 90-minute focus groups. She has observed in schools to gain of sense of the cultural climate in schools. An ACPS Equity Committee is being formed that includes staff at varying levels. This group will be trained as facilitators for such activities as leading courageous conversations with staff. Additionally, as result of the recent leadership summit led by the Superintendent's Student Leadership Committee, the students

are continuing the discussion about the International Academy. The work of ACPS with the use of restorative justice/restorative practices was also highlighted.

Gwen Lewis applauded the cultural competency initiatives of ACPS, but commented on the pace of CYMP implementation and CYFCC efforts targeted to middle schools. In response, Ms. Crawford explained the focus of the ACPS equity effort is PreK-12. Students have written action plans addressing equity, which were shared at the last meeting of the School Board. Ms. Lewis expressed an interest in seeing the action plans. Gwen Mullen stated she does not see the same type of energy being devoted to middle school as is the case with PreK. In addition, she recommended the focus on Early Care and Education be expanded to K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Brian Orrenmaa noted considerable effort has been invested in collaborating on the transition from elementary school to middle/high school.

Vice-Chair Eric Williams reported on the March 23 meeting of the Ad Hoc Housing Committee. A recommendation of the committee was to assure a voice at the table on affordable housing. One means of doing so is to nominate individuals who are staunch advocates for affordable housing as candidates for open seats on various advisory groups. The chairs of boards and commissions have already agreed to coalesce around affordable housing. Vice-Chair Williams also stressed the importance of keeping the conversation loud so everyone in the community understands the importance CYFCC attaches to affordable housing. For that reason, another recommendation of the Ad Hoc Housing Committee was frequent op ed pieces in support of affordable housing. The committee also stressed the importance of youth input. Ms. Crawford informed commissioners that Helen McIlvaine, Director of the Office of Housing, attended a meeting of elementary principals to discuss the City's housing initiatives. Chair Mann advised the Ad Hoc Housing committee to devote its next meeting to determining what is possible within given time constraints and assigning priorities.

Mr. Hopkins commented on the affordable housing efforts of Alexandria Council of Human Service Organizations (ACHSO) and noted differing opinions as to whether a regional approach is more effective than one that is local. Councilman John Chapman said there needs to be an understanding of what the overall conversation should be. Local jurisdictions in Virginia do not have the legal authority to mandate a percentage of affordable housing units in new developments. He advised lobbying the governor and legislature for that authority. In light of the gains achieved with regard to the City's housing goals, the question is whether those goals were set too low. Councilman Chapman said the current focus at 60% AMI should be broadened to 80% of AMI. Lastly, he spoke to the need for heightened attention to the link between redevelopment and displacement, specifically how tenants are treated as redevelopment occurs and whether displacement has to happen. Researchers say no, but the question is how that can be accomplished. He also mentioned conversations with legislators regarding the lack of availability of units with 3-bedrooms, which are desperately needed in the City. Councilman Bailey lifted up the dynamics known as NIMBYism and observed there is more community support for reducing density than augmenting the affordable housing stock, even though teachers, police officers and fire fighters cannot afford to live in Alexandria. A case in point is support for Ramsay Homes, which was essentially limited to developers. Joyce Rawlings stated housing impacts everything in the city and the dots are not being connected. One example is redistricting – how will neighborhood schools be accomplished? It is about more than having a place to live; it is about whether Alexandria wants to be a diverse city.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS/PLANS**

### **Membership & Outreach**

Co-Chair Rose Dawson welcomed the most recent CYFCC commissioners and noted there are only two vacancies on the commission – a youth and a young adult. Work is proceeding on the newsletter, which Ms. Dawson said now exceeds four pages due to the accomplishments of CYFCC. The other co-chair of the committee, Brian Orrenmaa, discussed the need of the Budget & Finance Committee for more members.

### **Implementation Monitoring**

Gwen Mullen, committee co-chair, referenced a handout regarding common themes that emerged during the goal group discussions.

### **Research & Data**

There was no report from the Research & Data Committee.

### **Advocacy**

While discussing the Advocacy Committee Report and Work Plan, Chair Glenn Hopkins called attention an RFP cited in the report. The Virginia Early Childhood Foundation will award six grants of approximately \$250,000 each to local communities. Successful grant recipients will field test replicable innovative strategies that support a public/private system of preschool delivery with a focus on expanding the number of children served in private settings and opportunities for private providers to participate. It is expected the competitive process will be repeated next year for six grants of approximately \$250,000 each. Letters of Interest are due April 26. Mr. Hopkins also discussed a meeting with representatives of Concerned Citizens Network. The organization agreed to identify legislative issues for Advocacy. The next committee meeting is May 10.

### **Budget & Finance**

At its last meeting, Budget & Finance finalized the statement CYFCC submitted for the budget public hearing.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chair Mann announced the Chamber of Commerce *Alexandria 40 under 40* Awards. She urged commissioners to consider nominating someone from the service sector. It was also announced that Chair Mann is being honored by the Zetas on April 23. Kate Garvey urged commissioners to participate in the strategic planning process. Ms. Dawson announced the Alexandria Reads selection, *The Astronaut Wives Club*.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.