



Minutes  
July 26, 2016

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) convened for its regular monthly meeting at 6:00 p.m. on the above date in Room 203 at the Greensboro Cultural Center, with Chair Deborah Goddard presiding.

Present: Commissioners Goddard, White, Jimerson, Lowe, Jasper-Morant, Hughes, Foster, Fuller

Council Liaison:

Human Relations Department Staff: Jodie Stanley, Love Crossling

Visitor: Deidra Bynum, Marsha Hill, Diane Price

Absent: Commissioners Yongue, Nicholson

I. Call to Order

Chair Goddard called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

II. Moment of Silent Meditation

Chair Goddard called for a moment of silent meditation.

III. Committee Reports

Chair Report

Chair Goddard started by asking all commissioners to review the orientation manual, which was in the process of being updated. She noted that membership had changed from 15 to 9 members and made other observations, then asked Jodie Stanley to give a brief overview of the new attendance policy created by council in February 2016, which Stanley provided.

Goddard shared that Commissioner Yongue sent a message a few weeks earlier clarifying that she was not interested in being reappointed at the end of her term in August. Goddard noted that the Commission opted to simply wait out the end of her term, but wondered if there was a way to expedite a replacement in the future in order to ensure that the position was filled with an active member. Love Crossling advised that it was a question for Betsey Richardson and staff would follow up, but she did not see a reason why it could not be expedited if documentation was provided.

Commissioner Jimerson commented that Channel 13 was still showing that CSW commission meetings take place at 1pm. Staff members advised that they were unaware that the meeting times were being televised, and promised to follow up. Love Crossling thanked Commissioner Jimerson for bringing it to their attention.

Bringing the conversation back to the attendance policy, Chair Goddard asked if the same expedited process would also apply when people miss three meetings, per the attendance policy. Love Crossling advised that staff would follow up with Betsey about that. Goddard expressed compassion and understanding for people that were experiencing emergencies and have life events and emphasized her desire to simply fill open positions with willing and able volunteers. She applauded the efforts of all existing committees, adding that it would perhaps be appropriate to reduce the number of committees, or combine, for example, the Health and Wellness and Service to the Aging committees. She clarified that she felt that Education and Equality could potentially stand on their own. She asked for commissioner's feedback, especially because some of the committee chairs would be rolling off the Commission. She stated her preference that committee chairs be passionate about the topic of their committee, not just placed in that role.

Love added that the question of who should be on a committee was coming up across both commissions. She stated that the original design of any subcommittee is that it include community members who are actively working to accomplish a task. She offered the help of staff in finding a diverse group of community members for each subcommittee.

Goddard expressed agreement.

Foster stated that she was still new to everything and announced that her committee planned to meet the following night for the first time. She asked staff to indicate if her committee was getting too big.

Crossling reassured her that there was no such thing as too big; the more people around the table, the better the process. She restated that with other programming, staff helped get those 25 community members around the table that really cared about a particular issue and asked commissioners to notify staff well in advance to give them time to put the message out. She reminded commissioners that this topic would be covered during the annual retreat on August 13.

Commissioners expressed general agreement around the conversation. Commissioner Jimerson encouraged commissioners to accomplish the tasks at hand, and reconvene in January to develop an annual plan and goals. Chair Goddard added that commissioners should not be intimidated, that even if they didn't have a background in that area, you can still pull people and experts together to help you craft a program.

Goddard then directed their attention to the printed material in folders, entitled "The 17 Essential Qualities of a Team Player." She reminded commissioners that they were truly a work group, together for the purpose of volunteering. She shared her hope that all would treat this like a job and gave the example of getting along with coworkers or a boss that they may not like, bringing that same attitude in to their work with the commission.

Goddard continued to encourage the commissioners, sharing that she had recently heard comments that the commission was not thriving like it used to. In contrast, she looked at where the commission was last

year, compared to the same place this year – even during the most tumultuous moments of transition in the previous year, they completed seven useful community programs. If they could do seven programs in the midst of change, she asked them to consider the possibilities now that things were more stable. She applauded the group’s camaraderie and team attitude.

#### Domestic Violence Committee

Commissioner Foster reported that the committee would meet the following night. Their initial goal was to plan a womens’ event for the end of October until they realized that was the date of the A&T homecoming. Her initial plan was to create a forum with a speaker that could focus on specific aspects of domestic violence. She encouraged commissioners to share thoughts and ideas.

She added that she spoke to Odell Cleveland the week before. He seemed amenable to help and asked Foster to touch base with him, mentioned that Mt Zion might be able to help with this program. Foster said she was scheduled to meet with Cleveland the next week.

Commissioner Lowe asked if there were plans to do the Purple Tree Lighting again this year. Crossling clarified that the Commission sponsored the purple tree lighting event last year; it would need to be crafted by the DV committee should they choose to do it again. Stanley shared details from the year before, and Crossling added that the event was supposed to be outside but had to be held inside because of rain. Crossling asked to go on record as apologizing for jumping in and interrupting the conversation.

Foster agreed to move ahead with plans for the second annual Purple Tree Lighting, adding that she was not aware that the commission sponsored it.

Foster continued, sharing that her committee members suggested doing something each week during the month of October to recognize Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Lowe suggested that commissioners could also be involved in and support other community events, adding that perhaps the commission could host one large event and simply support other initiatives throughout the month. White expressed some agreement, saying that the Family Justice Center and other agencies would certainly be active during that time. Fuller added that Portia Shipman frequently had events going on that they could support.

#### Education Committee

Commissioner Nicholson was not in attendance, no report given.

#### Women and Equality Committee

Goddard announced that over 90 reservations were made for the annual Equality Day Breakfast. She expressed excitement and her opinion that they would sell out again. Invitations were mailed.

She then directed their attention to the panel questions, printed in their folders. She asked if they felt that these questions reflected the theme of Building Lives Piece by Piece: Making the Right Connections? Women left the breakfast last year feeling inspired. She stated that she wanted to make sure that these questions really got to the heart of what they wanted to know. Commissioner expressed general agreement about the questions.

Chair Goddard then asked if everyone was ok with the assignments for the breakfast, and reminded everyone that they had two minutes to speak. She praised the two new commissioners for volunteering to handle registration.

Goddard then broached the question of having volunteers, and how to handle their involvement since their tickets would come out of our budget. She asked Commissioner Lowe how it was handled the previous year. Lowe stated that they were able to get sponsors to cover the volunteers' tickets. She expressed that she had tried to make connections and thought it was important to ensure that others, those who were not able to afford it, were able to come. She stated that even if she needed to pay for their tickets, she wanted to find a way to get the young women to come. They were young women that would one day be our leaders and it would behoove us to prepare and encourage them. Lowe added that several homeless women were able to attend the breakfast in 2015.

Goddard asked commissioners how they felt about seating commissioners, elected officials and other dignitaries around the room, not at elite tables but throughout the crowd. She added that this would fit their theme of building connections, as well as making things more equitable.

White, Foster, Fuller and Jimerson immediately agreed. Lowe expressed that while it was fine with her, there may be some elected officials that may not prefer the seating. Crossling added that actually, a similar conversation came up with the MLK Breakfast and council members were asking to be spread out. She offered that they could communicate the intent to council and ask that if they had an objection to it, they could share that. Certainly staff and commissioners wanted to be mindful of council members' unique needs, sometimes they had to leave an event early and that would merit placement near the exit. Consideration would be given to all who expressed concern.

Lowe asked if commissioners were tasked with selling a certain number of tickets this year. Goddard said that the decision had not been made, but all commissioners were encouraged to sell tickets. Crossling clarified that the 90 reserved tickets were not necessarily paid for and strongly encouraged commissioners to continue to market and sell tickets. She reminded them of the ability to expand the entire space and use both levels of the Terrace, with the potential to take the number from 200 to 400.

Goddard thanked Jimerson for handling decorations and asked if they still planned to have a photographer. Crossling confirmed, stating she was not aware of any change in plans.

### Health Committee

Commissioner Fuller stated her intent to roll off the commission the next month, but was still planning to be active and was still bent on creating a Hispanic fit to a T event, primarily marketed to the Latino/Hispanic community and hosted at St. Mary. She mentioned again the possibility of a blood drive, reminding commissioners that the NCAW was having one in September. She also commented on the need to have a Hispanic representative on the commission, stating that she was talking to several community members trying to recruit from Hispanic communities.

Goddard mentioned that she saw Addy Jeffrey, who said that she wanted to revitalize the Breast Density program. She expressed her opinion that the commission should certainly follow up on that. Fuller added that the Breast Density program came up as something out of the Health Committee supporting Jeffrey in her push to raise awareness about breast density, adding that in prior years much work was done to raise

awareness about breast health and that sometimes, the commission did not receive all of the credit it was due.

### Services to the Aging

Commissioner Hughes mentioned that she had a lot of material left from 50+ that she was able to distribute to attendees; hopefully it was shared with others. She mentioned that giveaways were often offered at the Women's Equality Day Breakfast and asked if that was the plan again this year. She also stated that they should do a Call to Vote at the Breakfast. Fuller agreed, saying that she had already reserved the table for the League of Women Voters and that they were always supportive. She reiterated Hughes' suggestion to do the Call to Vote.

### Leadership Through Service Committee

Goddard asked if everyone received the save the date flyer for the Higher Opportunities for Women program, an event that would take place on September 17 and 21. The September 17 date would include four workshops including resume building, branding, the use of social media, even a fashion show, while the September 21 event would be the career fair at NC Works Career Center. She applauded her committee and planning team, who seemed to have meshed, and were working hard and getting much work accomplished. She mentioned that NC Works had been an outstanding partner, bringing key collaborators to the table to help with different components. She stated her desire to track the number of women that got hired. Even small numbers would show progress and the number of women that we've helped. This event was a longtime passion for Chair Goddard and she stated her gratitude for finally seeing it take off. White agreed that NC Works had been extremely helpful in helping get the program going. She expressed hope that this would result in some women gaining employment.

## IV. Staff Report

Crossling asked commissioners to turn their attention to the second category on the printed staff report, the reminder about the importance of process with communication. She stated her intention to make the same announcement across commissions. She started by saying that as commissioners became more active, it was important to remember who they were speaking on behalf of. Sometimes they would be speaking on behalf of the commission. Other times, they might be called upon to speak about a religious topic, or perhaps something political. She encouraged them that this body was tasked with representing diversity and neutrality. In the event that they were called upon to speak on behalf of a controversial topic, she asked them to please be mindful and speak as individuals, not on behalf of the commission.

She also encouraged them to keep their chair informed about their actions and intent to speak, adding that they didn't want their leadership to be blindsided by anything they said publicly. Crossling reminded them of Council's awareness of their activity, and that if there was ever a question, Council would look to the chair to answer for the commissioners, and explain why commissioners spoke the way they did. This was not in any way about censoring. Crossling stated that they were respected individuals entitled to their opinions and beliefs. She simply encouraged them to exercise thoughtful judgment and to make staff and the chair aware that they were planning to speak on behalf of the commission. She offered that staff was always available for consultation should there ever be a question.

Lowe asked about the commission's stance on LGBT issues, adding that she had been approached by members of the LGBT community who were asking how diverse the commission was. Crossling asked to address the question, stating that even if there were not populations represented on the commission, it was something they needed to make sure was covered in programming and through other inclusionary efforts. Goddard added her response, saying that if the members of LGBT communities were asking if they were welcome to serve on the commission, that they would be more than welcome. She asked Crossling if there should be intentional pursuit of certain unrepresented populations. Crossling stated that yes, there should be intentionality. In the creation of programs, staff would look at who was on the list, identify gaps in representation, and would actively pursue people to fill those gaps and represent their perspective. This was especially important in considering the market audience for particular programs. Goddard asked if it was most appropriate for the chair of the equality committee to take on that role. Crossling responded that it certainly depended on the type of programming, but all could be responsible.

Crossling reminded commissioners again to continue to sell tickets for the upcoming Women's Equality Day Breakfast. While it was not yet to the size or magnitude of the MLK Breakfast, it was a program designed by commissioners and therefore, labor intensive for commissioners. She encouraged them to find sponsors, because sponsors allowed them to get socioeconomic diversity in the room. Options were to have an organization purchase a table, purchase extra tickets, or simply donate funds to allow those less economically fortunate to attend.

Crossling went on to stress the importance of the upcoming annual commission retreat. Like every other year, she asked commissioners to submit topics for discussion.

Stanley shared the Triad Retreat information for July 29 in Winston Salem. Commissioners Jasper-Morant, White and Lowe expressed their desire to attend, along with Goddard and Jimerson.

Crossling asked to go on record as apologizing for last minute notices being received by commissioners. Because of the many transitions over the past five years, between staff and former chairs, staff was unaware of the Barber Park event until the last moment. The decision was made to pass it along because staff did not feel it was fair to let it pass by without at least some notice of the event, especially because it was an event that was known to be connected to the CSW. She stated empathy for those who received the information last minute and a desire to become more connected, because it was not ok for commissioners to receive an invitation at the ninth hour. She added that office personnel like Marion Davis and Jodie Stanley also needed to be kept in the loop. She assured commissioners that the late notice was not intentional, nor could it have been prevented.

Goddard thanked Crossling for expressing these sentiments, agreed that it was spur of the moment but commissioner pulled it together, attended and got a great photo together at the ground breaking.

#### V. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Fuller asked that a correction be made, she should have been listed as absent during the June meeting.

#### Motion to approve the June Minutes as Amended

Motion 1<sup>st</sup>: Commissioner White

Motion 2<sup>nd</sup>: Commissioner Foster

Unanimous approval

VI. Announcements

Goddard asked if any more announcements needed to be shared. Foster asked Stanley if pictures could be shared about events they had attended, and Stanley stated that yes, staff would be glad to share pictures of commissioners on their facebook page, commission programs and events on the City calendar, and would share commissioner highlights in the monthly newsletter.

Foster stated that she had invited several visitors to the meeting.

VII. Recognition of Visitors and Presentations

Chair Goddard recognized visitors, thanked them for coming, and asked them to introduce themselves to the group. Invited by Commissioner Foster, each gave their name, shared a little about their background and thanked the Commission for inviting them. Diane Price, member of Mt Zion Baptist Church, stated that this had been a great meeting, and expressed that she was glad to be with the commission. Deidre Bineham said that she was a retired DC police officer, doing some volunteering with the Greensboro Police Department where she met Foster. Also an attendee of Mt Zion, she invited the third visitor, Marsha, whom she had met at church.

Lowe announced that the Small Business Center was hosting a speed mentoring event on August 8. She promised to send commissioners the information via email after the meeting. The program was geared towards those that were 45 and older, and was an effort to get older community members involved in mentoring.

Love invited all to the next evening's Mental Health, Police and Public Safety event at the Historical Museum, which would cover the rights and resources of all involved, with discussion around what needed to happen to keep everyone safe. This was a program created in response to the crisis associated with mental health that had lately received national attention. Refreshments would be provided at the program. Fuller added that she had the chance to attend part of the forum last month which was well presented and very informative.

Goddard thanked all for coming, noting that it was a well attended meeting with so many commissioners present.

VIII. Adjournment (7:37 pm)

Motion to adjourn

Motion 1<sup>st</sup>: Commissioner Fuller

Motion 2<sup>nd</sup>: Commissioner Jimerson

Unanimous approval

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*Chairperson*  
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*