**Solano Commission for Women and Girls**

**April 15, 2021, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.**

**Minutes**

**CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL 6:02 p.m.**

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present**

Oliva Ruiz Solano County, District 1

Ana Petero Solano County, District 2

Sabine Goerke-Shrode Solano County, District 3

Jennifer Hamilton Solano County, District 4

Laura Petty Solano County, District 5

Gayle Vaughan City of Benicia

Pat Nicodemus City of Dixon

Kay Kelley City of Rio Vista

Tiffani Thomas City of Suisun

Edith Thomas City of Vacaville

Andrea Lemos Solano County Office of Education

Akon Walker Member at Large

Doriss Panduro Member at Large

Sakina Ali Youth Member at Large

Juliana Biggs Youth Member at Large

**Members Absent**

Dr. Rechelle Nettles City of Fairfield

Elease Cheek City of Vallejo

**Visitors**

Jennifer Artz ( Homeless advocate)

Mary Henderson (Former nurse, active on the Maternity and Infant Health team)

Sidone Seltzer: High schooler who is interested in the committee

Catherine Teresi Pres. of American Medical Women’s Association, Touro Chapter (AMWA)

Erin Scheftz- Vice Pres, AMWA

Anna Kutateladze: Community Outreach, AMWA

Sarah Lee: Education Coordinator, AMWA

Suman Sidhu: AMWA

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC/BOARD MEMBER**

* Edie Thomas has agreed to attend the State and National Women’s Commission Conventions.
* Chair Petty wants to join both the State and National Women’s Commission on behalf our group. It will cost about $100, which Chair Petty will donate it. She suggests that we make joining a budget item for the future and will add that to May meeting agenda as an action item**.**
* Congratulations to Akon Walker and her husband whose doctorate was accepted during our zoom meeting.

*1. Additions/Deletions to the Agenda, Approval of the Agenda*

Commissioner Petero moved and Commissioner Lemos seconded that the agenda be approved with a minor correction. Unanimous vote to approve.

*2. Approval of the March, 2021, SCWG Meeting Minutes*

Commissioner Hamilton moved and Commissioner Lemos seconded that the March, 2021 minutes be approved. Fourteen attending members voted aye. Commissioner Ali abstained.

*3. Approval of Special Meeting Minutes from April 10, 2021*.

Commissioner Vaughan moved and Commissioner Hamilton seconded that we approve the minutes from the special meeting on April 10, 2021. All present at that meeting votedto approve the minutes.

**REGULAR CALENDAR**

1. *Deeper Introductions*

Juliana Biggs our newest youth representative is from Benicia, a recent George Washington University graduate and soon turning 22. She has an older brother who served in the military, and has a cat. Her favorite book is Hood Feminism by Mikki Kendal.

2. *Collaboration Opportunities with Touro University’s local chapter American Medical Women’s Association*

The women from the American Medical Women’s Association (AMWA) asked us to collaborate on a project that would involve collecting and distributing menstrual and feminine products to women living in homeless camps. They have set up a Venmo account and are looking for ways to collect physical items. Donation boxes are available on the Touro Campus, Chair Petty offer her office in Fairfield, and Commission Vaughan volunteered her home in Benicia. Jennifer Artz said she could take donations at the Vacaville Thrift Store, if they are marked with her name.

Discussion of types of materials ensued, with an emphasis on the need for biodegradable wipes.

We determined what the AMWA needed from us, and how we would work together. Various Commissioners suggested other groups that could be helpful.

There is an urgency to finish this project by the end of the semester. The drive for collection is April 19-May 14. A collaborative team agreed to meet on May 4, at noon via zoom. Chair Petty invited the AMWA members to join the Maternal and Infant Health Disparity Group.

Commissioners Tiffani Thomas and Akon Walker explained the Birth Justice events we are sponsoring with Solano Heals: on May 8 and in June. The format will follow the Head, Heart, Hands model…. Science, women sharing experiences, and then action we can take.

4. *Financial Report:*

Commissioner Ali reported that there were no new checks for deposit, and no expenditures, leaving the balance the unchanged at $1973.85.

5. *Friends of the Commission/Developing 501(C3)*

Commissioner Kelley explained that the Friends of the Commission would be made up of some women from the commission and former founders as well as others who would be on a board, to establish a 501C3, which can fund raise and act as our own financial agent. Commissioner Kelley will help get this established, hopefully before her term ends in January under the new bylaws or by October under the old bylaws. She will be asking for a committee to help with proofreading and checking details and another to help solicit members for this Commission.

Commissioner Kelley moved that the Solano Commission for Women and Girls starts a formation of Friends of the Commission, a separate 501C3, to provide assistance with our business matters. Commissioner Goerke-Shrode seconded.

Discussion was held about the positive aspects. Commissioner Kelley Commissioner promoted the idea as a way for the Commission to move forward. She suggested that a committee or the whole Commission would need to develop a strategic plan; what is it we need money for, etc. Commissioner Hamilton has checked with county council and found that it’s legal and we don’t need BOS approval, but we should let them know by an email from Chair Petty.

Commissioner Kelley supported the idea that we will need to budget moneys for the State and National Convention, website development and joining those groups as stated above and that we should discuss a budget plan at the next Commission Meeting.

A vote was taken to investigate the formation of a 5013c, Friends of the Commission. It was unanimously passed.

6*. Legislative Advocacy in keeping with Advisory Board Policies*

Commissioner Hamilton explained that there is a Legislative Body of the BOS and they help craft what the platform and which legislation they want to support or oppose to the Legislator. They have regular meetings, which is open to the public. Should there be legislation that individuals think need to be supported or opposed by the BOS, those individuals would bring legislation to the Commission for approval and then one of the Commissioners would present our standing to the Legislative Body, asking for a letter of support from the BOS.

Commissioner Hamilton offered to put together an email with a link for previous agendas, and link for how you get invited to the meeting, and look at what legislative bills they are considering to advocate for women.

Commissioner Hamilton explained that any newly proposed legislation would need to be sent to State Legislature by October deadline.

Commissioner Edith Thomas explained a piece of legislation she is working on and asked if the Commission could support that. As we currently have no working group on Legislation, she should just bring it to the full Commission for consideration.

*7. Working Group Break Out Rooms*

Chair Petty explained how teams can be working and asked for input about how the teams working. She suggested that we check in on frustration how we are progressing during our break out groups.

8.*Working Groups Whole Commission Discussion*

PHFI, Poverty, Houselessness, Food Insecurity: Commissioner Edith Thomas reported out how the group will be working with AMWA for the Period Product Distribution, at their meeting on April 30th at 1 pm. The group will also discuss how to bring Cities and Counties together over houselessness and create better communications between the two. Chair Petty asked them to develop a format for working with Touro suggesting we get materials directly to the homeless camps, rather than to a group where they might sit on the shelf.

Chair Petty also informed the working groups that Kourtney has put a placeholder on the website for each working group. Each group can put up resources and information but it needs to be packaged in a nice way and sent to Kourtney before June.

Maternity and Infant Health Disparity: The discussion centered around the upcoming Birth Justice evens cosponsored by Solano Heals. Mary Henderson spoke about various needs for supplies, donations, and appreciation gifts for the panel. Commissioner Tiffani Thomas explained how they are developing a resource guide as a handout as well as on our website. She spoke about getting out the flyer for the event. Commissioner Walker shared her contact information and Venmo link for the event.

Violence against Women and Girls: Commissioner Ruiz thanked our new youth Commissioner Briggs for jumping in and finding out so much information to share with us. Commissioner Ruiz described our last meeting where we had a speaker , Angel from the Solano Family Justice Center, who filled in a lot of information for us about what the County has to offer victims of Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking. The biggest gap need is beds. There just aren’t enough spaces for these women to go. The team is continuing to research resources, checking out non-profits, filtering what is available, what is effective, what is not and how we can most effectively work to close the gaps we find.

Chair Petty suggested that working group members send snippets or photos about our work to her or other website workers to get them on our Facebook page or website.

9. *Website Update*

Chair Petty reported that we have Kourtney for a few hours through the summer and that we should be able to conduct a Zoom meeting on training in June. Jennifer Artz, and Commissioners Edith Thomas, Briggs, and Chair Petty volunteered to work on website.

10*. Committee Reports* None at this time

General Comments:

Jennifer Artz and Commissioner Nicodemus are working on a new 6 week program of horse therapy serving 5 young ladies who lost their homes in the Vacaville fire. Chair Petty has a couch to donate to Ms. Artz program, but needs help moving it.

11. Agenda Items for May 2021 Meeting

-Discussion about State Commission

-Follow-up with Touro

-Debriefing of May 8 event

- April 27 BOS bylaw results.

12. Discussion of possible legislative advocacy

Both Commissioner Edith Thomas and Commission Nicodemus has suggestions for legislative advocacy. Commissioner E. Thomas will send her proposed legislation to Chair Petty, who will in turn send it out to the full Commission for consideration at a future meeting.

Commission Nicodemus suggested we invite a Contra Costa Assembly member to tell us about the Kira Johnson Act, which empowers communities to make investments in community-based non-profits and others to help prevent or reduce maternal morbidity.

**Next Meetings:**

Exec. Comm.S May 6,

Full Commission May 20

**ADJOURN** : Chair Petty adjourned the meeting at 7:59pm.

Submitted by,

Gayle Vaughan, Secretary