**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the Solano Commission for Women and Girls was conducted via Zoom and was called to order at 6:01 pm.

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present (12)**

Olivia Ruiz Solano County, District 1

Ana Petero Solano County, District 2

Sabine Goerke-Shrode Solano County, District 3

Jennifer Hamilton absent Solano County, District 4

Laura Petty Solano County, District 5

Gayle Vaughan City of Benicia

Kay Kelley City of Rio Vista

Elease Cheek City of Vallejo

Pat Nicodemus City of Dixon

Edie Thomas City of Vacaville

Dr. Rechelle Nettles City of Fairfield (presumed)

Dr. Andrea Lemos Solano County Office of Education

Sakina Ali SCWG Youth Appointment

**Members Absent (3)**

Tiffani Thomas (on leave) City of Suisun

Akon Walker ( ill) SCWG Appointment

Jala Carter Youth Member

**Staff, Speakers, and Guests Present/Announcements**

Jennifer Artz, Program Manager, ”My Friend’s House”

Mary Henderson, Business owner and retired public health nurse in Solano County

Lily Poloski, Educator from Benicia

Rochelle Sherlock, Past President

Clarisa Sudarma, County Counsel

Mayra Montano, Mental Health Clinician with Solano County Mental Health

Rozalind Sinnamon-Johnson, Owner of Ethnic Notions; Community Advocate

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC/BOARD MEMBER**

Commissioner Petty reminded us of Zoom etiquette: Focus your attention to the zoom meeting. If you need to do something else, please leave the meeting. Mute yourself unless you want to speak. It helps to connect with one another if we can see your facial expressions, so please turn on your camera and sit still.

**REGULAR BUSINESS**

1. Additions/Deletions to the Agenda

There were no additions or deletions.

1. Motion to approve the agenda by Commissioner Cheek, seconded by Commissioner Kelly Vote - Unanimous
2. Approval of the Sept. 17, 2020 SCWG Meeting Minutes, as amended

Commissioner Petty thanked Commissioner Petero for being Secretary for the last two years and taking such thorough notes/minutes.

Motion to approve the Sept. 17, 2020 minutes by Commissioner Ali and seconded by Commissioner Cheek. Former Commissioner Sherlock pointed out she was temporarily absent during a vote on working groups and requested the minutes reflect that. The amendment was made and the motion to approve the amended minutes carried. Vote -Unanimous.

**REGULAR CALENDAR**

1. Introduction of Newest Commissioners/Appointments Update

Commissioner Kelly of the Membership Committee was excited all vacancies have been filled and we have a full Commission. She explained the process of soliciting applicants which included writing letters to all the cities and doing advertising on social media, and a PSA to all the newspapers.

Commissioner Kelly introduced Pat Nicodemus as our representative from the City of Dixon, Edie Thomas representing Vacaville, and Dr. Rechelle Nettles. Dr. Rechelle is here as a guest tonight, but will be confirmed by the Fairfield City Council on Oct. 20th. In addition, we also have Dr. Andrea Lemos representing the Solano Office of Education. Commissioner Kelly stated: “We are just really thrilled to have these women on our Commission.”

Each of the new members was given three minutes to tell about themselves.

-Dr. Andrea Lemos: Will represent the Solano County Office of Education. She is Deputy Superintendent of Educational Services and Student Programs at SCOE. Dr. Lemos has worked in preschool settings including Head Start, has worked as a special education teacher, site assistant principal, and principal, including for a community school, where kids come if they are expelled or incarcerated. Dr. Lemos has also been the statewide chair of Special Education Administrators of County Offices.

-Pat Nicodemus: Will represent the city of Dixon. Ms. Nicodemus recently retired from working with the Women’s Reentry Achievement Program, which was most recently under the auspices of the Solano Sheriff’s Deparment. For 30 years, she has worked with women in jail, and those newly released from jail, helping them to work on and overcome trauma, educational challenges, and health issues. Ms. Nicodemus is now working with the newly forming My Friends’ House, an arm of the non-profit Solano Social Services Corp, whose aim is to help impoverished and homeless members of our community. Her focus there will be assisting at-risk youth in our community.

-Edie Thomas: Will represent the city of Vacaville. Ms. Thomas is the director of Connections 4 Life, a non-profit supporting people throughout Solano County who have significant disabilities, with a focus on assisting clients with independent living and supportive living. Ms. Thomas has worked with people with disabilities for the last 30 years, having previously worked with the Dept. of Rehabilitation for the State of California and also as a Vocational Rehab Counselor.

-Dr. Rechelle Nettles: Will represent the city of Fairfield. She comes to the commission with over 20 years in non-profit management, including as the Development Director of the Girl Scouts of America, a Director for the Boys and Girls Club of America, and having worked in outreach helping the homeless and formerly incarcerated people to be reintroduced into civilian life. She has over 15 years of working in higher education, and has been a mentor with the Umoja program at Napa Community College for the last three years.

Commissioner Petty thanked our founder and first Chair and very hard working member of the Commission, Rochelle Sherlock. “We are sorry to see you go as a Commissioner, but I know you will be here working with us. And when you are not here you will be pouring over your Doctorate and then we will welcome you back as Dr. Sherlock. So, thank you, Rochelle, for making this Commission the success that it is at this moment.”

1. The Equity Training was previously scheduled to start at this meeting, however Commissioner Walker needs more time to secure and schedule speakers. This agenda item was postponed until next month.
2. Sharing Information for Member Development

Five attendees shared their information about something they did as a girl which they would like to get back to as an adult.

Mayar Montano (Guest) lives in Vacaville and described how carefree she was as a child. Jennifer Artz (Guest) lives in Suisun and has lived most of her life in Solano County. She would like to get back to being more creative. Commissioner Kelley lives in Rio Vista and was a non-profit director for 35 years. She would like to get back into singing, as she did as a girl. Former Commissioner Rochelle Sherlock lives in Cordelia and was a tomboy with a deep curiosity. Rozalind Sinnamon-Johnson (Guest) lives in Vallejo and has owned and operated Ethic Notions for 24 years. She too would like to get back into creative arts. Lily Poloski (Guest) lives in Benicia and is on the Benicia Arts and Culture Commission and the Economic Development Commission. She would like to get back to being more of a risk taker.

Commissioner Petty noted a pattern that seemed to develop, that all of the speakers had some version of wanting to get back to being more fearless and creative.

1. Work Groups Check-In

Commissioner Petty reviewed the process of how we established our workgroups beginning with creating a status report about what was going on with women and girls in Solano County. As a result of the research from that and from hearing from local speakers, the Commission voted to attack initially five different topics. These working groups are new and are in transition already because of membership changes. Each Commissioner is expected to join at least one group. A significant portion of each meeting will be a check in from the work groups so the whole Commission can learn from what the working groups are learning and we can then set priorities as a Commission as a whole. It might mean an event or legislative action around a topic. We see this process as a dialogue rather than a report. Each working group is expected to meet at least once between each Commission meeting.

-Human Trafficking:

Commissioner Ruiz reported on a flyer being sent out about an event about human trafficking from founding member Francis McCullough (Solano County Library). Commissioner Kelley is working with other groups on a human trafficking and violence against women event in Rio Vista to introduce the issue to the community and build awareness. Will coordinate multiple groups including a UC Berkeley program to create a conference on the subject in the near future. Intercommunity awareness and maybe have businesses have a sign in the window that says this is a safe place, for women in trafficking. She suggested we look at helping to create some legislation about this.

Lily Poloski reported that In and Out had a recent campaign to build awareness.

Rozalind Sinnamon-Johnson reported human trafficking is a problem in Vallejo. For young women who want to get out, there is no place for them to go. As shelters have closed during the pandemic, the human trafficking problem has gotten worse. Ms. Sinnamon-Johnson and former Commissioner Sherlock walked the “route” in Vallejo with the police, previously, to begin to find some solution, and suggested targeting the male predators, but police were not receptive to Ms. Sinnamon-Johnson’s suggestion. Girls of color are often more involved than white girls per Ms. Sinnamon-Johnson.

-Maternal Health and Infant Mortality:

Commissioner Petero reported out on a meeting held last week with Commissioner Walker and Chair Petty. The group was looking at the data on the morality rate of babies of color which is high in our county. As a professor at Solano Community College, Commissioner Petero assigned her student to find articles on the infant mortaility rate of children of color in Solano County.

Mary Henderson: Would like to join this group, but is also involved in another Fetal/Infant Mortality Group that meets every three months, with a meeting coming up on Oct. 21. She will report back about their discussions and findings.

Commissioner Hamilton: There’s an organization in Solano County that has African-American Infant Mortality as their focus. She will send information about that organization to Commissioner Petty.

-Homelessness: Commissioner Goerke-Shrode will take on the lead and set up a meeting before the next Commission meeting. Others were asked to join. Discussion was held about how homelessness, poverty, human trafficking and transgender issues all intersect.

-Poverty; Commissioner Thomas reported she and Commission Vaughan met and discussed how poverty intertwined with many of the other group topics. This group has started to review a list of the county, state, and federal agencies, as well as non-profits that provide services: including Solano Cares in Solano County and 211, by United Way neither of which has been updated lately. Future plans include possibly making a spreadsheet of available services, and maybe conduct a survey Monkey with the Supervisors to see what they think is needed. We intend to check with various cities to “get their take” on poverty in their areas and how they are dealing with it.

Commissioner Goerke-Shrode reminded us of the county website: Solanocares.org,

that has a list of every organization that can help, although it needs updating.

-Food Insecurity

Commissioner Ali reported the group was looking into who is already working on food insecurity, who will be our partners so we don’t recreate something already there. There is a lot of food support during the holidays, but not always. We pictured working locally and putting together a foodbank, connecting with local farmers, and maybe even creating more jobs. Commissioner Ali is working some with Food is Free Solano, which gets free food from local farmers and distributes it through the county. Other groups have had difficulty working with the Board of Supervisors on this issue and perhaps we can help facilitate communications and support there.

-Other

Commissioner Vaughan suggested we have a group calendar, perhaps a Goggle Calendar. Discussion was held on who would do up keep on it, but it would need to be on the website, and no one has the technical skills or time to run it, at the moment. Instead, all group leaders should send their meeting information to Commissioner Petty, who will distribute the information.

Commissioner Cheek suggested we develop a Legislative work team to research what legislative advocacy would look like. Discussion was held over whether this was too early for this group or if we should be prepared with legislative advocacy when the time comes, so we aren’t delayed in affecting change. Commissioners Cheek, Vaughan, and Nettles agreed to work on this over time.

1. Bylaws Updates and Amendments

Chair Petty led us in a discussion of establishing an ad hoc committee to review and update the bylaws. Commissioner Kelley agreed to be the chair of the group. Commission Ruiz and Petty volunteered to be on the ad hoc committee. They will work to “clean up” any confusing areas so the document can be a guidance for governing and review how our policy recommendations go to, and are used by, the Board of Supervisors. There needs to be bylaws relating to a nominating committee, for example.

Commissioner Petero moved that we establish an ad hoc committee to review the bylaws that will be chaired by Commissioner Kelley. Commissioner Kelley seconded.

Under discussion: Commissioner Petero asked for making bylaws about the Secretary’s duties more specific, regarding taking minutes at committee meetings.

Vote-Unanimous

1. Committee Reports

-Executive Committee

Commission Ali reviewed that committee’s discussion of rules and roles, making sure we stick to the timing as best as possible and staying on topic.

-Communications Committee

Commissioner Vaughan briefly reported that press releases were in the process of being written about the Status Report and specific ones about each new Commissioner, which will run in their hometown papers. Content will be reviewed by those Commissioners and by the Executive Committee before submission.

-Events Committee

Commissioner Ali discussed the online event for recognizing girls with videos posted on our site. That was tabled due to lack of submissions, at this time. If anyone has ideas for other online events, contact Commissioner Ali, as she is the only one remaining on this committee.

-Status Report Committee

Commissioner Petty reported that the work of the committee was 99% finished. A check was issued to the consultant, but has not yet been cashed. Information about it has not been readily available. Commissioner Kelley has been in contact with our fiscal agent and will continue working to get the consultant paid.

Commissioner Petty praised the work of the committee and then suggested that we no longer need this committee to move forward at this time.

Commissioner Vaughan wondered what happened to all of the original data that was collected for the summary status report and whether it could be helpful to the work groups. Commission Petty replied that probably each member who did research likely retained the information gathered, but noted some of it was dated.

1. Future Agenda Items

Commissioner Petty called for items for our next Agenda.

Discussion was held on how we approach the scheduling and format of the Equity Training we are hoping to have.

Discussion was held about the need for Ethics/Brown Act Training. Commissioner Kelley explained that all new members need to take both the Ethics and Brown Act Training. All other Commissioners have to take the Ethics Training every two years. The County Counsel is working on a recording of the Brown Act Training that people can watch. Ethics Training is available online at AB1234. It’s a two hour training, with a certificate given at the end. Commissioners were asked to print out the certificate and send a copy to Commissioner Kelley and Commissioner Vaughan so that they can properly record it. Commissioner Petty requests that we all complete our trainings by the end of this year.

**ADJOURN**

Chair Petty adjourned the meeting at 8:02.

Our next meeting via zoom will be on November 19, 2020 at 6pm.