

ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
MINUTES
TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2025
301 KING STREET, RM. 2000
7 PM

ATTENDANCE: Maxanne “Maxie” Witkin; T. Nicole Hutchinson; Elisabeth “PJ” Palmer Johnson; Kafi Joseph; Kendra Green (1 absence); Jennifer “Jenn” Stowe (1 absence); Nichelle Johnson Billups; Krystle Bransky; Allison Heiser, and Jennifer Beatty

VIRTUAL: Emily Eckert (1 absence) and Lexi White

ABSENT: Shelly Brown and Yvette Jiang

STAFF:

Debra Evans
LaTanya Chinagorom

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: None.

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

First Vice Chair Hutchinson welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

ROSTER UPDATE- WELCOME TO NEW COMMISSIONERS AND INTRODUCTIONS

All introduced themselves and welcomed Commissioners Heiser and Beatty who bring many skills and knowledge to the Commission. Thanks were extended to everyone for “adopt-a-family” gifts for the holiday and to those who volunteered at the holiday party (book giveaway table). New Commissioners will be invited for coffee with Chair White and First Vice Chair Hutchinson.

APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 2024 MINUTES

Two edits were made to the December minutes. A motion was made to accept the minutes as amended. Commissioner Stowe so moved, and Commissioner Witkin seconded. All were in favor.

CIRCLE BACK ON CITY COUNCIL LIAISON PAIRINGS

Mayor Alyia Gaskins – Second Vice Chair Jiang
Vice Mayor Sarah Bagley – Commissioner Eckert
(Previously Vice Mayor Jackson – Chair White)
Councilman Canek Aguirre – Commissioner Stowe
Councilman John Chapman – Commissioner Witkin

Councilman Abdel-Rahman Elnoubi – Commissioner Joseph
Councilwoman Jacinta E. Green (1st term on Council) – Commissioner Johnson Billips
Councilman R. Kirk McPike – Commissioner Palmer Johnson

Action Item: Chair White will support anyone with their duties as Councilperson liaison. All will begin their duties now.

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE NEEDS, E-BOARD UPDATES AND CALENDAR

The E-Board reviewed awareness months and themes (see “Important Dates / Reminders/Announcements” section). **Action Item: If any Commission members’ work overlaps with any awareness months, they will be included in the social media handles. Women and Girls in STEM and Science in February.**

Some of the Commission’s advocacy groups have vacancies – Community Outreach/Engagement Subcommittee. **Action Item: Commissioner Heiser volunteered to serve as lead on the Community Outreach (social media) Subcommittee. E-Board will try to get the Social Media subcommittee going.**

The 4th Annual MLK Day of Service to clean up Four Mile Run will take place. All were asked to email chair@alexandriadems.org. However, the Commission is non-partisan. Commissioner Palmer Johnson will be attending the Day of Service as well. All who are interested were asked to meet at 8 a.m. at Washington Liberty High School. Saturday, January 25, volunteers will go to the Alexandria Cemetery to remove wreaths. **Action Item: Commissioner Palmer Johnson will send the information to LaTanya Chinagorom who will send the information to everyone.**

REVISITING ACFW REPORT- ADDITIONAL REFLECTIONS AND ACTIVATING NEXT STEPS

There was a Status of Women and Girls in the City of Alexandria Report published by the Commission for Women in 2018. The Commission is revisiting the publication to potentially create an addendum to the report. The Commission would like to do a scorecard with recommendations from the previous report that highlights actions that the Council has made progress on. The goal for the scorecard is for it to be used as an educational tool for City Council and for it to also be used as an educational and advocacy tool for the community, as well as resource for engaging community members. Some suggestions were:

- Pay Equity / Gender Equality / Equal Employment Opportunity
- Alexandria City Public Schools – The Commission may want to have a school liaison be a part of the Commission
- Review on what may or may not have changed
- Have an event and unveiling at the tail end of the Commission’s anniversary

Action Item: Come up with an approach to get department and community data from across the City from 2021 or 2022.

Commissioner Joseph moved for the subcommittee leads to meet to create a proposed plan for how to move forward with the scorecard for the status of women in the City of Alexandria. Commissioner Green seconded. All were in favor. **(Action Item)**

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRIORITIES FROM SUBCOMMITTEE LEADS

Aging Commission – Commissioner Stowe shared that Aging had a presentation on Dementia by Barbara Hewlett. They had Q&A for the Police Department. The Aging Report subcommittee is working on their report. Legislation is out on various topics: caregiver, nonrefundable tax credits, affordable assisted living, and eviction prevention. They also follow the State budget on how aging people in the community can benefit from it. The next Aging meeting will be virtual, Thursday, February 13, 2025.

Human Rights Commission – Their last meeting was December 19, 2024, via Zoom. They voted to reissue a letter in support of the ceasefire that was issued City Council earlier this year. This is a letter that states that they support Congressman Byers' call for ceasefire to the actions in the Middle East. They have not heard from the City Council yet.

They invited the superintendent of schools, as well as the principal of the Alexandria City Public Schools due to receiving reports about a teacher who identifies as gay receiving negative feedback. There are reports that Jewish students at the school have been harassed. They invited them to speak at the Human Rights meeting. They will have a webinar regarding immigration and will invite Jean Kellerer.

Human Rights will be meeting with the president of the Del Rey Civic Association in preparation of doing a Rainbow Crosswalk for the new people the Rainbow Crosswalk was very successful that other communities are asking to be a part of establishing one in their area. The President and officers of the Alexandria NAACP were installed last Sunday; there will be a meet and greet for the City on February 16, at the Alexandria Black History Museum. Speaking with City council on January 25 on advocating for a non-voting liaison on the Citizen Police Review Board. It was suggested that the Commission for Women look into this.

HIV Commission – There will be a focus of city council this year to see how they can consolidate some of the commissions. There are 16 vacancies in the commission. All were encouraged to look at all the vacancies in the different commissions to report back to see if there is a need for us to liaise with any of these commissions. **Action Item: Review commission vacancies and report back.**

SUBCOMMITTEE BREAKOUT TIME

Subcommittees met after the adjournment of the meeting.

NEXT STEPS AND ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

IMPORTANT DATES / REMINDERS / ANNOUNCEMENTS – SEE ACFW CALENDAR FOR FULL LISTINGS

- January- Social Hour/Panel Discussion and Human Trafficking Awareness Month

- MLK Day of Service / Inauguration Day / General Assembly State Legislative Sessions
- February –Black History Month / National Girls and Women in Sports Day / International Day of Women and Girls in Science / Virtual Commission for Women Meeting
 - March – International Women’s Day / Women’s History Month / Equal Pay Day
 - April – Equal Pay Day

UPCOMING COMMISSION MEETING DATE FOR 2025:

- February 11
 - March 11
 - April 8
 - May 13
 - June 10
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