

ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
MINUTES
TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 2025
VIRTUAL MEETING
6 PM

ATTENDANCE: Lexi White; Maxanne “Maxie” Witkin; Shelly Brown (1 absence); T. Nicole Hutchinson; Nichelle Johnson Billups; Krystle Bransky; Allison Heiser, Yvette Jiang (1 absence), Jennifer Beatty, and Cecelia Hunter

ABSENT: Emily Eckert (1 absence); Elisabeth Palmer Johnson; Kendra Green (1 absence); Kafi Joseph; Jennifer “Jenn” Stowe (1 absence)

STAFF:

Debra Evans
LaTanya Chinagorom

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: None.

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Chair White welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

WELCOME TO NEW COMMISSIONER AND INTRODUCTIONS

All introduced themselves and welcomed Commissioner Cecilia Hunter whose interests are academics, mentorship, and reproductive rights.

APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 2024 MINUTES

A motion was made to approve the minutes for January 2024. Commissioner Witkin moved to approve the minutes as presented; seconded by Commissioner Johnson Billips. All were in favor.

WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH PROCLAMATION (CITY HALL *3/25, 7 PM)

The Commission has the opportunity to re-introduce a proclamation honoring Women's History Month at the March 25th City Council meeting, beginning at 7 PM. A working document with draft language was circulated ahead of this meeting. The language is acknowledging the importance of the contributions of women and acknowledging them in our community, detailing the history of women's history month. Proposed edits were provided by Commissioners Palmer Johnson and Heiser. Recommendations were made to lift up organizations that were a part of the previous Commission for Women's 2018 report, Carpenter’s Shelter, Whole Women’s Health of Alexandria, Friends of Guest House, and the Alexandria Small Business Development Center. Chair White recommended to include Virginia Repro Equity Alliance, a new coalition called Virginians for Reproductive Freedom, Vola Lawson Breast Cancer Fund, and the Department of Community and Human Services’ Sexual Assault Center and Domestic Violence

Program and to highlight Mayor Aaliyah Gaskins as she is the first Black woman to serve in the capacity of Mayor of the City of Alexandria in the history of Alexandria. The phrase “including but not limited to” will be included before listing the organizations, knowing there are others.

Action Item: All were asked to review draft language by the end of the day on Wednesday, March 5. The deadline for the language for the proclamation due Friday, March 7th. Chair White and Second Vice Chair Jiang have been working on this effort.

STATUS OF WOMEN UPDATE PROPOSAL-SUBCOMMITTEE LEADS’ RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

The Commission will revisit the 2018 Status of Women Report to see how the Commission can update it. The action item at the January 2025 meeting was for the subcommittee to convene and provide a proposal on how to circulate the draft. Four phases of the project are as follows:

The four phases will be as follows:

- 1) Map out a sketch of the project - put together language to provide to City Council.
- 2) Discovery phase – Summarize their findings – put together an initial draft.
- 3) Map out for August through September 2025, co-creating and publishing an updated resource. Have a public engagement event, revise the scorecard and report based on feedback.
- 4) Present a final report and scorecard to City Council for official publication.

Recommendations were made to have a scorecard approach, phase zero and to get buy in and advocacy for clear goals. It was suggested to propose a budget as a goal. It was also suggested that a white paper be presented to City Council as Phase Zero.

Chair White motioned to revisit the proposal for a next step vote at the March 11th full Commission meeting. The motion was seconded by First Vice Chair Hutchinson. All were in favor. It was recommended to incorporate women’s mental health.

SUBCOMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Advocacy and City Council Relations – No report.
- Community Outreach & Engagement reopened a relationship with Carpenter’s Shelter. They outlined key volunteer needs - to provide a meal at the Shelter’s Mill Road location. They will email another list of needs and have provided their Amazon wish list. The Commission can provide those needs by having an annual event.

Commissioner Heiser was able to attend the Alexandria Women for Good February 2025 event.

Events Coordination – Commissioner Heiser has a social media engagement strategy to post twice per month with Women’s History Month featuring one of Alexandria’s local historical activists, Idora Lyles, and will plan for the rest of the year.

- Member Engagement & Volunteer Coordination – Chair White provided this report on Commissioner Green’s behalf: Looking at potential tabling at weekly local farmers’

markets on Saturdays. **Action Item: All were asked to contact Chair Green directly if interested.**

LIAISON UPDATES

- DASH has a new chair for their Advisory Committee. Into the budget session now. Service will be every 30 minutes. She is coming to the end of her second term and is hoping to renew her term with the Advisory Committee.

NEXT STEPS AND ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

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

- March – International Women’s Day / Women’s History Month / Equal Pay Day
- April – Equal Pay Day

UPCOMING COMMISSION MEETING DATE FOR 2025:

- April 8
 - May 13
 - June 10
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