

ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
MINUTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2025
VIRTUAL – EMERGENCY MEETING

7 PM

ATTENDANCE: Maxanne “Maxie” Witkin; T. Nicole Hutchinson; Elisabeth “PJ” Palmer Johnson; Kafi Joseph; Lexi White; Shelley Brown; Vanita Datta; Yvette Jiang; Eva Bastianon; Jennifer Beatty; Hope Nelson, and Krystle Bransky

ABSENT:

Kendra Green, Nichelle Johnson Billups, and Allison Heiser

STAFF:

Debra Evans

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

None.

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Chair White welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Chair White welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

EMERGENCY MEETING CONTENT

This emergency meeting was called to recap what happened with Chair White’s term on the Commission. The following are some issues that were discussed in this meeting:

- Term limits for the Commission.
- Addressing gaps in the City’s process.
- Discuss a potential leadership gap in the Chair position for the Commission.
- Pose questions for City liaisons.
- Share a proposal that was presented from the membership committee.
- Answered questions to clarify ways of proceeding.
- Commission ordinance should be consistent with the City’s ordinance and timeline.

LEXI’S RECAP

Chair White was notified on September 10, 2025, that she should submit a term application as soon as possible and was informed that she should submit it before September 30th for consideration at an upcoming City Council meeting. Chair White pointed out that she received a reminder email in August, but did not act on that for the following reasons:

- 1) It was from an unfamiliar sender
- 2) She was on vacation.

Shortly after, Chair White was notified that a Commission vacancy was actually filled at the September 9th Council meeting. Chair White expressed that she felt that she did not see a notification or deadline for her to submit a term application. She requested a meeting with Debra Evans, City Liaison, and Keia Waters, Deputy City Clerk, about not seeing this information and that it was unclear that there would be a vacancy discussed on September 9th. Chair White was informed that with one vacancy being filled would leave herself, Commissioner Brown, and anyone else who applies for the Commission applying for the vacancy. She was advised to have a conversation with Commissioner Brown, in which she did, and also reached out to the women on City Council (she has not heard back) and to Mayor Alyia Gaskins, who mentioned the City's process for notifications. She stated that she would inquire further to ensure that proper notifications happened. Chair White also reached out to Gloria Sitton, City Clerk. Chair White's three-year term is set to expire September 30, 2025.

Chair White requested an updated copy of an ordinance where the language does not reflect the Clerk's process or timeline. The ordinance stated that term ends on May 31st, which is when the Commission does their annual elections. Board terms are annual terms, and the Commission is a three-year term. Chair White stated that she was able to locate an email from August 25th but looks for these types of updates from Ms. Evans. She also shared that there is a hypothetical January term ending that is cited and it made it challenging to identify the dates correctly for when terms end and when terms would be considered before Council. A request was made to move on to an open forum for discussion and transparency on the matter.

Some questions were proposed:

- How are vacancies treated before Council?
- Is there an incumbent policy?
- Are there ways that the Commission can influence how votes occur?

Commissioner Hutchinson expressed that those who had repeated terms have not missed their term dates and that the City Clerk has been thorough in sending messages out. She also asked clarifying questions to Chair White on what she shared, her term, and the process as well as calling for more transparency (for more information on this section of the meeting, please see the video recording at 12:24 [here](#)).

Re-application process for a Commission member is part of the slate and process before City Council. As an incumbent on shares the work they have done and activities they have been involved in and City Council votes; not the City Clerk.

Commissioner Brown suggested holding each other accountable and troubleshoot what can be done so that both she and Chair White can stay on the Commission.

Action Item: Commissioner Joseph stated that she can take the lead on setting reminders and doing regular check-ins.

It was mentioned that the Youth Commissioner position should be shifted to one year because the two former Youth Commissioners did not finish their terms to turn it to a full Commission member position. It was noted that one youth application is in the process.

Commissioner Witkin proposed as a solution to resign from the Commission to offer up her position. There would be two slots if she resigned. The question was asked if it is possible to have an ex-officio member who serves as an advisor to the Council, but the Commission does not have that option.

It was asked if a Commission meeting can be postponed due to extenuating circumstances. The ask was not approved because it would delay the new member from being active.

Someone will have to step into the Chair position as of October 1st.

Action Item: Chair White and Commissioner Maxi are invited to the next meeting. The Commission will have an election for the Chair position at the November meeting. First Vice Chair Jiang is not seeking chairmanship. Commissioners who attend virtually may vote as long as there is quorum in the room.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

The October 14th meeting will be in person. **Action Item: Ms. Evans will send an announcement and will send Commissioner Joseph a panelist link.**

Action Item: An email on the Freedom Fund Dinner was sent to the Commission from Commissioner Palmer Johnson. She would like representation from the Commission for Women. The event takes place on Tuesday, September 30th.

The Silent Witness Vigil has been postponed; a new date will be announced.

Thursday, October 23rd, is Purple Thursday in support of Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

NEXT STEPS AND ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:47p.m.

UPCOMING COMMISSION MEETING DATES FOR 2025:

- October 14th
 - November 11th meeting (virtual) may need to be rescheduled and may need to be in-person to hold an election. The Commission's E-Board is working to determine if the election can be done virtually with PJ and Gloria from the Clerk's office.
 - December 9th
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