

Virginia Council on Women Meeting

August 11, 2015

1:00 pm

Draft Minutes

Members present: Carol Gibbons
Rita Surratt
Ruth Zajur
Lashrecse Aird
Meta Braymer, Chair
Sally Mullikin
Susan Rowland
Suzanne Jackson
Hala Ayala
Mimi Bender
Amy Eckert
Lori Merricks

Members absent: Meredith Harbach
Tracy Key
Olivia Turner
Marcia Price
Julie Coggsdale
Mais Abousy

Staff present: Kelly Thomasson
Katherine Waddell

The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Meta Braymer at 1:05 pm.

A warm welcome was extended by the members of the Council to new members Amy Eckert, Lori Merricks, Suzanne Jackson, and Mimi Bender. The Agenda was presented; a motion was made by Carol Gibbons to accept the agenda and seconded by Rita Surratt. A vote was taken, and the agenda was adopted.

The minutes of the April 15, 2015 meeting were presented; a motion was made by Rita Surratt to accept the minutes as presented with a second by Hala Ayala. A vote was taken and the motion passed.

Member Orientation

The Chairwoman conducted a brief orientation for the Council with the following information:

- Distribution and explanation of the duties and responsibilities of the Virginia Council on Women
- Distribution of letter from Governor McAuliffe dated August 13, 2014, with his charge to this Council
- Distribution of the Governor's Certificate of Recognition for Women and Girls' Wellness Month, April 2015
- The Chair announced that our current standing subcommittees are STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), and Women's Healthcare Initiative. Carol Gibbons gave a brief overview of work of the STEM subcommittee and the STEM essay contest. Lashrecse Aird gave an overview and update of the work of the Women's Healthcare Initiative subcommittee highlighting the April day of service, which included providing a meal at Housing Families First, a shelter for homeless women and children transitioning to independent living, along with a program for the mothers and children. First Lady McAuliffe participated in the service project with the Council.
- The orientation was concluded with the presentation of a video by Deputy Secretary Thomasson on the Freedom of Information Act.

Old Business

A report and update from the STEM Subcommittee was given by Carol Gibbons. She discussed the changes that were made to improve the essay contest and recognition of the winners with a reception at the Governor's Mansion. The committee will bring recommendations on how to continue to improve the essay contest at the next council meeting. Lashrecse Aird had given her report with her previous comments.

Deputy Secretary Thomasson gave an update on the summer intern who worked on organizing the Council's social media, updated the Council website, the STEM essay forms, and documents for sponsors.

Deputy Secretary Thomasson also asked for the Council members to continue to promote our Facebook page and our website as she works to keep this information current. She also asked that members submit their pictures and brief biographies for the website.

New Business

A lengthy discussion was held by the council on the goals, ideas and project for the Council for the next year. During this discussion the chair asked that a subcommittee be formed for a Women's Summit in Virginia. A motion was made to form this committee by Mimi Bender and seconded by Sally Mullikin. A vote was taken, and the motion carried. Meta Braymer and Hala Ayala were appointed as co-chairs of this committee.

Susan Rowland also asked that the Council take a position in supporting Supreme Court Justice Jane Marum Roush for reappointment to the court by a letter to the General Assembly members for the upcoming special session. A motion was made in support of this letter by Hala Ayala and seconded by Mimi Bender. The vote was taken, and the motion carried.

Further discussion was held about speakers for the lunch hour prior to our meeting with possible topics to include STEM opportunities for women, healthcare issues, the Equal Rights Amendment, and roundtable discussions. The Council also suggested a retreat for the members. Amy Eckert noted that the Council's discussion encompassed the raising of the organization's profile and its willingness to work with partners and coalitions of similar interests.

The Chair announced that officers would be elected at the October meeting for the office of Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. She asked that members notify her of their interest in offices or in subcommittees. The Chair distributed a timeline of work for the Council for the upcoming year.

The Secretary asked that reports of the subcommittees be submitted in writing to be presented as part of the meetings minutes.

Announcements of upcoming events included the Leadership Colloquium for Professional Women at the University of Mary Washington to be held the November 5. The Chair will email information to on this event. Hala Alaya announced the *Stand for VA Now Rally* on October 10th in Prince William County. Members were reminded that the next meeting is October 20, 2015.

A motion was made by Mimi Bender to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Hala Ayala. The vote was taken, and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan J. Rowland, Secretary
Virginia Council on Women