

Virginia Council on Women

Minutes of August 22, 2017 Meeting

Patrick Henry Building, Richmond, VA

Members Present: Meta Braymer (Chair), Hala Ayala (Vice Chair), Miriam Bender (Secretary), Erin Evans Bedois, Amy Bridge, Caryn Foster Durham, Ikeita Cantu Hinojosa, Carol Rick Gibbons, Lori Merricks, Devin Pugh-Thomas, Susan Rowland, Katy Sawyer, Michelle Strucke.

Staff Present: Kelly Thomasson, Katherine Waddell

Call to order

Chair Meta Braymer called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and welcomed new members Amy Bridge and Caryn Foster Durham, who were present, and Ashley Reynolds Marshall, JD, and Katherine Noller-Tyson, MD. She also announced the reappointment of Devin Pugh-Thomas, Susan Rowland and Carol Rick Gibbons.

Agenda and Minutes

The agenda was unanimously adopted following a motion by Katy Sawyer, seconded by Carol Rick Gibbons. The minutes were unanimously adopted following a motion by Katy Sawyer, seconded by Lori Merricks.

Member Orientation

Meta Braymer called attention to the charge to the Council from the General Assembly, which is in the Virginia Code, and reviewed the membership and officers' roles. She noted that members are expected to serve on a committee and attend at least 2 of the 4 meetings during a year.

The members viewed the video regarding public meetings and public records and briefly discussed the requirements. E-mails should be sent to Kelly Thomasson, Katherine Waddell and Traci DeShazor if members have questions or want to communicate with the rest of the Council. Public meeting requirements set limitations about telephonic participation in meetings, i.e., if it is planned in advance and participation is in an open, noticed place except in emergencies when a member can call in without advance notice of the location.

Old Business

Women's Healthcare Initiative. Katherine Waddell distributed Governor McAuliffe's letter directing Council efforts regarding healthcare and described the Council's dinner at Housing Families First and the Governor's proclamation for *Women & Girls' Wellness Month*. The new co-chairs of the committee will be Katy Sawyer and Ikeita Cantu Hinojosa.

STEM Essay Committee: Carol Rick Gibbons described the essay and scholarship program, and its growth in applicants, funding and scholarship amounts since its beginning in 2012. The committee is looking at other activities to encourage girls to focus on STEM including a Women and Technology conference that is scheduled to be held in November and having past scholarship winners mentor new winners. The committee also wants to diversify and expand the sponsors.

Governor's Summit on Women. Meta Braymer indicated that she would like to host another summit but that it would be up to the new Governor. The Council will discuss it at the January meeting. Issues that must be considered for a future summit are location and funding. The Summit Committee will be co-chaired by Meta and Lori Merricks.

Strategic Plan. Meta Braymer reviewed the summary prepared by Traci DeShazor and noted that the Council needs to continue its development in the coming year.

New Business

Goals, Ideas and Projects for 2017-18. Meta Braymer noted that the gubernatorial election will have an impact but that the Council needs continuity and will keep moving forward with its committees and the development of a “vision”. She hopes to have a facilitated discussion regarding the “vision” in October. Kelly Thomasson indicated that all of the materials from the Council will be given to the new administration during the transition.

Legislative Issues for 2018. The issues on which the Council will focus will depend on the new administration. Several members reported that other organizations with which they are involved track legislation on small business, women-owned business and healthcare. They will review their records from the 2017 session to identify bills that will come up again. Caryn Foster Durham will share with the Council a 2015 NAWBO report regarding women in business. Kelly Thomasson reminded the group that the Council is an advisory and not an advocacy body. Miriam Bender suggested that the Council rethink its legislative action activity given the short time frame for making legislative comments, noting that it might be more effective for the Council to make the public aware of pending legislation and encouraging the public to contact their legislators.

Membership Activity. Kelly Thomasson reminded members about the Council’s Facebook page and asked members to send articles and information to post.

Subcommittee Membership. Meta Braymer will send a sign up sheet for members to indicate the committees on which they want to serve.

Election of Officers. The proposed slate of officers of Devin Pugh-Thomas to become Vice-Chair and Miriam Bender to continue as Secretary was unanimously voted, following a motion to close the nominations by Sue Rowland, seconded by Carol Ricks Gibbon, and a motion to elect the nominees by Hala Ayala, seconded by Erin Evans Bedois.

Council Timeline. Meta Braymer asked members about their preferred day and time of day for meetings. She will send an email to get input from members so that the meetings for the year can be scheduled. The Council will also consider the feasibility of moving the meetings around the state.

Announcements. Conferences that may interest Council members include: Grace Harris Leadership Conference (November 3); Senator Warner’s Conference on Women (October 21 in Virginia Beach); NAWBO conference on leadership and entrepreneurship (November 1). Meta Braymer will ask members to identify other conferences and inform the Council of them.

Next Meeting. October 24, 2017.

Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 2:28 p.m. on a motion by Miriam Bender, seconded by Lori Merricks.

Respectfully submitted,

Miriam Bender, Secretary