

# Somerville Commission for Women

## Regular Meeting

January 16, 2018

7:00pm

Cross Street Center

165 Broadway

**Present:** Jessica Alter, Co-Chair  
Kristen Strezo, Co-Chair  
Stephanie Goodell  
Kat Rutkin  
Maggie Norcross Devin  
Marlena Erdos  
Melissa Alfone  
Patricha Paul  
Kaitlyn Dmyterko  
Cristina DeWeese  
Sumayya Essack

**Absent:** Daisy Monsalve

**Staff Members in Attendance:** Chris Hosman

**Guests:** Holly Fox  
Katie Wallace

**Meeting Called to Order:** Meeting was called to order by Jessica Alter at 7:00 p.m.

**Previous Minutes:** Review of minutes and approval postponed to February.

**Steering Committee Update:** Listening sessions are planned for both Mystic Housing Development and the Council on Aging.

There is an interest in supporting SomerViva's work around TPS. Review of the Mayor's Press Release regarding how to best support our fellow residents and current city initiatives.

Stephenson Aman, President of the Mystic Tenant's Association, reached out to discuss the possibility of the SCW supporting a girls group at the Mystic Housing Development. The Steering Committee is in the process of scheduling a meeting to discuss further details.

Holly fox shared that there is also a Women's Empowerment Group led by Cynthia Massillon at Somerville High School that will be meeting on January 23<sup>rd</sup> from 2:45-3:00pm. Stephanie Goodell, Kat Rutkin and Holly Fox were interested in attending and conducting a listening session.

**Task Force Updates:** Financial Literacy Task Force met. They would like to utilize a more general first training to narrow down the needs and support those needs with more detailed trainings in the future.

Working on planning a 2 hour session at the library in April with financial advisors and support from local programs and credit unions. The larger group could break off based on interest. The hope is to foster conversation by pairing like interests.

The Outcomes would be as follows:

Women would be given the opportunity to share financial issues  
Specific questions could be directed to the experts on hand  
Gauge whether or not there is an interest in more specific subjects related to finance

This would not be a formal topic presentation. It would be an informal opening session where information is gathered to influence future sessions. The SCW has conducted a series of sessions in the past. Questions to consider: What will the attendees get out of it? Are there any concrete takeaways? Can we look into what companies may already offer these types of trainings in a broad and casual manner such as FA, CCU, Naveo, SCU?

Financial Literacy training will be held in April based on a motion made by Jessica Alter and seconded by Stephanie Goodell.

Organizational Task Force met with Outreach Sub-Committee. Working on the Google Drive. At the next meeting we will discuss some way to review the drive with the group.

#### **Sub-Committee Updates:**

Policy Sub-Committee met and discussed crafting an information request to the School Committee for information regarding Consent Curriculum in the Somerville Public Schools. The topic of consent straddles a variety of ages. The sub-committee would like to get a better understanding of how this is addresses and possible propose a partnership with RESPOND if this is not currently happening in the schools. An information request will be sent to the School Committee asking about consent curriculum and how it is implemented based on a motion made by Kristen Strezo and seconded by Stephanie Goodell.

The Policy Sub-Committee would also like to know more about what the sexual harassment policy and procedure is for the City of Somerville and what the policy is for grievances. They want to submit an information request for the number of incidents and what the responses were for both city employees and sub-contractors. Also, how are incidents registered and noted. What happens when an incident occurs? Have there been any? What is reported and how many were in house? The sub-committee will analyze if they believe the policies are adequate. It raises awareness when people are looking at the policies. The letter would be addressed to Personnel. Policy Sub-Committee will write an information request letter to the City of Somerville Personnel Department requesting the Sexual Harassment Policy, Grievance Procedures and Data based on a motion made by Cristina DeWeese and seconded by Stephanie Goodell.

A resident approached a commissioner about legislation regarding workplace bullying. It is bill S1013. There are currently no workplace bullying laws. There was a request that we write a letter of support. The bill was heard by the House and Senate in April. It has not moved forward. There is currently no main sponsor of the bill. Further

information is needed to decide how we can best support the bill. The summary of the bill was read. It is currently in the Joint committee on Labor and Workforce Development. The Policy Sub-Committee will meet and bring back more information.

House Bill 3586 deals with women who are incarcerated. The number of women incarcerated is quickly growing. 25 percent of these women are mothers. Bill discusses gender specific programming for "Justice Involving Women" There was an attempt to get parts of the bill on a larger bill involving incarceration. The inclusion of Section 8 was successful. The commission could write to the conference committee to specifically support the section that supports women while it is still in negotiation in the Senate. Moving forward, the sub-committee will supply the text and present more information.

Other bills of interest include H2172-Paid Leave, H2365-Raising minimum wage to \$15.00. Most likely these will go to ballot. H11-10- Creating a regional Women's Commission for Middlesex County.

The Policy Sub-Committee will report back next month.

**Fundraising Update:**

Flatbread does a community support night on Tuesdays. You need to submit an online form. Typically expect to raise \$350-\$700. Raffles increase the amount. They are currently booking into the summer. Once submitted it takes typically 1-2 months.

Winter Hill Brewing is open to a fundraiser. On a Monday night they would collaborate on a specific menu item, and the proceeds benefit the SCW. Welcome Project was very successful. This being the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the SCW, this may be a good time to undertake such a function.

Renee's Café is also welcoming to fundraisers.

American Fresh Brew House also does fundraisers.

The SCW will submit the online form to Flatbread based on a motion made by Jessica Alter and seconded by Kaitlyn Dmyterko.

The SCW will approach Winter Hill Brewing about a spring fundraiser based on a motion made by Kristen Strezo and seconded by Kaitlyn Dmyterko.

Reviewed information regarding the prices of tote bags for fundraising purposes.

Reviewed possibility of various objects for sale for fundraising purposes.

**Women's History Month Event:** Two potential dates for event, March 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. Women's History Month event Task force created based on a motion made by Jessica Alter and seconded by Cristina DeWeese. This will be an open Task Force and any member may join as available.

**Salary Negotiation Workshop:** Planning for a May Salary negotiation workshop. PBS New Hour recently highlighted the program. .

**Adjourned:**

Based on a motion made by Jessica Alter, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00. Seconded by Patricia Paul.