

Morris County Advisory Committee on Women

March 19, 2019

Morris View Meeting Room

Present: Pam Bennett-Santoro, Lila Bernstein, Joann Bjornson, Allison Delcalzo-Berens, Elaine Muller, Gayle Pearson

Absent: Kathy DeFillippo, Carole Harper, Patti Page, Shelby Rhodes

The meeting was called to order at 6:05pm by Chair Gayle Pearson.

MEETING SUMMARY

February 19, 2019 Minutes	
	Pearson presented the February 19 minutes for approval. No changes were recommended, and the committee adopted minutes without discussion at 6:05pm.
Freeholder Report	
	Pearson reported that she met with Freeholder DeFillippo who stated that the Director of Human Services position is still posted and that there have been several promising applications. The Committee will have to draw on its current resources until the position is filled. Muller recommended that the Committee members do networking to look to other organizations and individuals for support. Pearson also reported that she sent a letter to Ms. Carpinteri on behalf of the Committee.
Homeless Women	
	Bjornson reported that the Point in Time Count was completed in January, but the data has not yet been released. She reported that the largest challenges for homeless women anecdotally have been medical, obtaining permanent housing and domestic/intimate partner violence. Bernstein noted that one large issue she has noticed is that when women are temporarily hospitalized, incarcerated or in drug rehabilitation, their children go into the child protective system which causes the women to lose their housing voucher. When the women attempt to get their children back, they no longer have the voucher available to them. Bjornson stated that there are different types of vouchers and that this is one challenge that some women have faced. She reported that her agency, Family Promise, and Homeless Solutions have received the grant of 32 units on Ruth Davis Drive that can be used to house populations that have been traditionally difficult to house and that formerly incarcerated women are one of these populations. She reported that her agency works with the STAR program to move formerly incarcerated persons into housing. Bjornson reported that there are programs in other countries, states, counties which make a temporary foster home available short term for when women do need to engage in longer term services. She also noted that they are looking at the property at Ruth Davis Drive as having potential to act as <i>Housing As Healthcare</i> , explaining that when medically vulnerable populations are housed, they are less likely to need and use emergency services and that their overall health improves. Bernstein reported that she feels there is a lack of connection between system components. Pearson noted that when children are exposed to incarcerated parents, etc., their long-term success is affected. Bjornson recommended that the Committee invite the case workers from the STAR program to a future meeting to further discuss the needs of discharged inmates.
New Business	
	Bernstein stated that she thinks that the Chamber of Commerce should be outreached to solicit new members for the Committee and to ask if the Committee can run a symposium for women in business. Bjornson suggested waiting until the Committee's membership review is completed next month before attempting to solicit new members. Delcalzo-Berens suggested waiting to do any events at all until the Committee is better organized. Pearson recommended that a member start the process of corresponding with the Chamber of Commerce. Bennett-Santoro volunteered to outreach the President of the Chamber of Commerce and report back at the next meeting.
Old Business	
	<u>Annual Report</u> : The Committee reviewed the draft of the Annual Report and made recommendations. Delcalzo-Berens will finalize and send for the Freeholders to review. She recommended that the Committee seek to get on the Freeholder agenda for early 2020 to present its report from the 2019 year early.

Housing Provider Stakeholder Follow Up: This agenda item was moved to the next meeting.

Morris County Women’s Center: This agenda item was moved to the next meeting.

Seeds of Change Nomination Process: The Seeds of Change had been scheduled for late April, however the Committee has not yet solicited nominations. It was recommended that the event would be rescheduled for the fall and amended to be a simple proclamation or resolution at a Freeholder meeting. Bennett-Santoro will contact Liz Kisatsky for a list of people who were solicited last year, and this list will be reviewed at the next meeting.

Women in Jail: Pearson will invite the case managers from the STAR program to a future meeting, possibly in the late fall.

Website: This agenda item was moved to the next meeting.

Conference: Bernstein reported that she would like the Committee to host an annual hallmark event and noted that the Essex County Prosecutor’s Office has an annual female empowerment youth conference which she would like to replicate in some way for Morris County. She reported that Detective LaGuerre oversees youth community events in Morris County and that she has outreached him to discuss having a conference in Morris County. Pearson suggested that Bernstein start to explore this idea and report back to the Committee at the next meeting.

Revision of meeting calendar for 2019: The Committee decided to change all future meetings to the third Tuesday of the month, to increase the frequency of meetings to monthly, to change the meeting start time to 5:00 and to reduce the length of each meeting to an hour and a half. The April meeting will take place on the fifth Tuesday, April 30 as the third Tuesday is too short notice to adjust already scheduled commitments.

Membership: The current bylaws list a range of between 11 and 15 for the total number of members allowed in the Committee. Bernstein stated that the Committee should be stacked to its full capacity. Delcalzo-Berens recommended that the current membership roster be reviewed for attendance issues and that poor attendance be addressed. Bjornson suggested that the bylaws be amended to include a “leave of absence” clause to ensure that members are not penalized for medical or other issues that preclude them from attending several meetings in a row. Bjornson recommended that bios be completed for all current members and then reviewed at the next meeting to determine gaps and needs. Bennett-Santoro suggested including racial diversity as part of the Committee’s gaps. Bjornson will send a template for each member to complete their bio which will be compiled by Delcalzo-Berens prior to the next meeting.

Freeholder Meeting Attendance: This agenda item was moved to the next meeting.

Announcements and Updates

Bjornson asked if anyone needs business cards. Muller and Bernstein asked for business cards. Bjornson will print and bring them to the next meeting.

Meeting End

Meeting was adjourned at 8:05pm.

ACTION ITEMS

Who	What
All members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete member bio and send to Allison by April 15• Volunteer to attend freeholder meetings• Review materials prior to meetings
Allison	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete Annual Report and send out to the Freeholders• Send updated meeting calendar to Liz to be published on the webpage• Compile member bios for distribution prior to next meeting• Create draft work plan for remainder of 2019

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create draft of leave of absence process
Pam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request from Liz a list of recipients that were sent the Seeds of Change Nomination Form last year • Connect with President of the Chamber of Commerce regarding a partnership
Gayle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite STAR program staff to a future meeting (maybe November)
Bernstein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect with Det. LaGuerre regarding his capacity and interest in a female empowerment conference
Joanne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send template for member bios • Print business cards for members in need
Shelby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete previous action items regarding the website and report at the May meeting