

Morris County Advisory Committee on Women
March 16, 2022, 5:30pm to 7:00pm
Via Microsoft Teams

Present: Karen O’Keeffe, Kasey Errico, Pam Bennett-Santoro, Joann Bjornson, Eileen Specchio, Donna Boyce, Elaine Muller, Charlotte Miller, Sydney Ugalde, Sandi Garcia

Welcome and Introductions: Ms. O’Keeffe welcomed members and new member Sandi Garcia. Introductions were made.

Review of February 16, 2022 Meeting Minutes: The Committee reviewed the February 16, 2022 meeting minutes. A motion to approve the minutes were made by Ms. Specchio, Ms. Bjornson seconded the motion.

Orientation to the Advisory Committee on Women: Ms. Errico presented a comprehensive and detailed PowerPoint presentation to the Committee on the roles and responsibilities of membership. The presentation also included information on the Advisory Committees/Boards within the Department of Human Services, and the Human Services Divisions. Links to the Human Services website, Board of County Commissioners website, and a review of 2021 County Accomplishments were also included.

Q&A

Ms. Bjornson asked what the Municipal Alliance was. Ms. Errico stated that the Municipal Alliance is a network made up of community members such as local leaders, school officials, teachers, health officials, law enforcement, civic organizations, and business. This statewide network assesses needs and implements drug prevention programs/activities. The Alliances are overseen by the Morris County Dept. of Human Services, and the Governor’s Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse. Ms. Errico will add this information to the PowerPoint and will share when revised.

Review/update of subcommittees:

Ms. O’Keeffe asked committee members to get back to her by the April 20th meeting on which subcommittee they would be interested in participating in.

- **Membership** – Ms. O’Keeffe stated that all committee members should be interested in growing the ACoW’s membership. Ms. Bjornson encouraged members to keep in mind, when recruiting new members, to include diversity in gender, age, race, ethnicity, as well as leaders in your community. Ms. Bjornson informed the Committee that potential candidate, Nancy Eberhardt, will refrain from attending meetings until we have a response on her application from the Commissioners.
- **Seeds of Change** – Ms. O’Keeffe once again thanked the members of the Committee and County staff for the great outcome of the Seeds of Change Award. She also thanked Ms. Mueller for her assistance in reaching out to Carole Harper and her input for the Proclamation. Next year, members on this subcommittee may want to revisit what application processes worked, and which ones need to be revised, so that more candidates can have an opportunity to apply in 2023. Ms. Boyce sent several applications out to prospective candidates, she would like to do the same for next year. Are there pictures from the event that she can include in an email? Ms. Bjornson stated this information is in the Morris County E-Newsletter. Ms. Errico also sent the Committee the links, which included pictures. Brian Murray may have additional pictures to share.
- **Action Committee** – This Committee agreed that a three year focus for the ACoW will be “Housing as Healthcare”. The Homeless Trust Fund letter of support, which was discussed at the last meeting, falls under this umbrella. Ms. Bjornson recommended starting a plan to narrow this focus down. This topic should be discussed at the April meeting to begin the process. Ms.

Bjornson briefly reviewed the purpose of the Homeless Trust Fund and the process to get it implemented. The Committee did vote to write a letter on behalf of the ACoW. Nancy Eberhardt agreed to draft a letter, however, as she is not currently on the Committee, it would not be appropriate for her to do so. Ms. Bjornson and Ms. Boyce volunteered to draft the letter. Once the letter is drafted, it will be shared with the Committee for review.

- Ad hoc committees (i.e., Annual Report, Communication, etc.) Again, Ms. O’Keeffe reiterated how important it is to be involved in at least one subcommittee or all, if it is doable. Please email her with your choice of subcommittees at your earliest convenience.

Old Business: Homeless Trust Fund support letter discussion (discussed above)

New Business: Economic Empowerment Summit aimed at educating and providing opportunities to women on the ways to compete in the world from a position of economic strength. A tentative date of April or May is being considered, and the event will be held at one of the Dover Schools. Ms. Bjornson stated this event will be sponsored by the Morris County Housing Partnership. She stated it would be helpful to have some support at this event from the ACoW. Ms. Bennett-Santoro volunteered to attend. Ms. Bjornson will provide more information on this event by the April meeting.

Next Meeting: April 20, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. via Microsoft Teams.

Public Section/Questions: None

Ms. Boyce made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Ms. Bennett-Santoro seconded the motion.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 6:51 p.m.