

Morris County Advisory Committee on Women
May 17, 2023, 5:30pm to 7:00pm
Via Microsoft Teams

Present: Donna Boyce, Joann Bjornson, Kasey Errico, Elaine Muller, Karen O’Keeffe, Sydney Ugalde

Welcome: Ms. Boyce called the meeting to order at 5:35pm and welcomed members.

Review of March 15, 2023 meeting minutes: A motion to approve the minutes were made by Ms. Muller, seconded by Ms. O’Keeffe.

Subcommittee Reports:

- a. **Membership:** Ms. Bjornson reported that the subcommittee has been asking people in the community. We had a couple of great people that did join or start to join and had to drop out (two people recently). We are going to regroup a bit tonight.

Would now be the right time to bring on new members and then maybe start them in September? It’s been Ms. Bjornson’s experience that most people don’t usually join a committee in the summertime. We want to ensure that we are bringing on new members at the right time. Ms. O’Keeffe stated it may be a good time to invite people to the September meeting as this will be an in-person meeting, it’s a good starting point. Ms. Muller also agreed. Meeting someone face to face and having them interact with the committee forms a kind of bond.

Ms. Boyce stated the next step is identifying the folks on this subcommittee to move forward with this piece of work. Ms. Bjornson asked members to think about where we may have some gaps and also where we may have some overlap. Ms. Bjornson reminded members that the Committee is also looking for diversity for new membership. Also in need are people who are doers, enthusiastic, engaged and available. Ms. Muller added that we should be looking for people that are connected to the community in a variety of different ways. She also suggested looking at the people who have been recommended, but not chosen, for the Seeds of Change Award. Ms. Bjornson asked Ms. Ugalde if she has the applications from previous submissions to see if there’s anyone that may be a good candidate for membership. Ms. Muller suggested we consider going back a few years and not just this past year to see if there’s any interest. Ms. O’Keeffe stated that it may be nice to find someone in the for-profit sector too. Ms. Bjornson said she would check with the Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Boyce said we can also look into the Morris Leadership and Alumni members at some point.

Ms. Errico stated that as Committee members make contact with potential applicants, you will want to get the Biographical Profiles (with their resumes) filled out and sent back so the Commissioners can work on the approval process in time for approved candidates to attend the September meeting. Ms. Bjornson will send a draft introductory email that she has used in the past to Ms. Kisatsky for review and dissemination upon approval from the Committee. Ms. Kisatsky will also forward all past Seeds of Change nominations to Ms. Bjornson and Ms. Boyce for review. Ms. Bjornson shared that Laura Stanzilis, who is working on the Housing is Healthcare project, is also working on a project with the Public Health Department. She may be a good person to identify a public health person as a potential candidate. Ms. Boyce suggested reaching out to Michele Roers from United Way to get updated information on the COVID impact on New Jersey and the local community. She could share some information that might actually have some good resources for us and spark some thinking on what more is needed in the community as well as provide us with some contacts and people who may be helpful on

this Committee to provide the Commissioners with the information they need about COVID impacts moving forward. Ms. Boyce also recommended Ms. Roers attending the July meeting with a presentation of the long-term impacts of COVID. Ms. Boyce and Ms. Bjornson will discuss this matter further during their sub-committee meeting.

b. 2023 Seeds of Change Award

- Review 2023 process and presentation - Ms. Errico suggested that in July, set some steps/goals in place for Seeds of Change planning, especially if the September meeting is going to have a presentation and a lot of other material to sift through. Ms. Bjornson agreed. This will give the Seeds of Change sub-committee time to work on the event in June and July. Ms. Ugalde stated that the event worked out well and she thought it was easy to have the feedback and the form. However, she was wondering if there's maybe another area or audience that we could be sending the application to.
- Recommendations for 2024 – Ms. Muller recommended adding notifying the press (after ordering the Seeds of Change plaque) on the check list timeline. Ms. O'Keeffe asked if the Committee is still focused on the “volunteer” component as part of the Seeds of Change criteria. The Committee received several applications from social service agencies, but few for volunteers. Ms. Bjornson stated the volunteer component should remain. The Committee needs to reach out to a wider audience (CCM, local schools, local women's groups, and clubs). Ms. Errico stated that when the SOC sub-committee identifies volunteer-based organizations, we can have a conversation with Vince Vitale, the new County Communications Director, to see what he may have on his contact list which might spark other ideas too.

Ms. Errico stated that based on this year's award nominees, a question should be added for the nominator as to their relationship to the nominee. This information is helpful in terms of the press release. Ms. Errico was also looking for clarification that work is going to be done over the summer so when we meet in July, there can either be an update or a draft of the nomination form (and other items) for the Committee to review and move forward. Ms. Boyce asked the SOC sub-committee if this is a doable commitment in the off cycle. The full Committee will commit to responding and getting matters prepped. The full Committee will formally discuss this in July and be ready to vote on any items we need to vote on in September. In October, we'd like to start sending out the SOC application form.

- Outline timeline for 2024 SOC Award/Draft Handout – Ms. Errico stated that the purpose of this checklist was to make the process easier for the Committee and for everyone to know what we are responsible for in our office. It's important to be clear so the Committee knows what needs to happen and who is taking care of what step at a dedicated date. The Committee reviewed the document and made minor recommendations. The second draft will be sent to the committee for review and revisions.
- c. Housing as Healthcare – Ms. Boyce suggested that the Committee do a little “refresh” on this project. Ms. Bjornson will report on some updates on projects that Family Promise is starting. Ms. Boyce stated that housing as healthcare is still an emergent need and Family Promise is doing great work on these matters. Ms. Bjornson shared there are many components to housing as healthcare, such as the post COVID issues, people who are medically frail and not using the shelter system, and in general how they're serviced and the Health Departments. The new Family Promise project is called Housing as Healthcare for Economic Development, and they are partnering with the Sheriff's Office, Zufall, Atlantic Health and the Housing Authorities on this endeavor. The economic development piece is

about; if people are housed and their health care is managed, they are employable differently. They are not losing their jobs and they are able to be a different member of the community. So, there's multiple components as we flush this out. Ms. Boyce is supporting Family Promise on this project and working with Laura Stanzilis. Ms. Stanzilis is a public health nurse and is involved with the North Jersey Health Collaborative. Family Promise provided the narrative over a year ago and it needs to be revised and resubmitted as situations have changed. Ms. Stanzilis and Ms. Boyce will assist in other community pieces and how would that fit so that there's a synergy between our project and what the Committee is doing. Ms. Boyce shared that the project is Congressionally directed spending, so it's representative. Congresswoman Mikie Sherrill championed this endeavor and secured this funding for the County. This project is also a HUD pilot project. For the Committee to be involved somehow would be really nice and a great help to the community. Ms. Boyce and Ms. Bjornson will meet in the sub-committee and discuss the details further.

Ms. Boyce suggested having a presentation on Housing as Healthcare for Economic Development in September.

Old Business

- a. MC ACoW meeting format/process discussion – Ms. Boyce reminded the Committee that the next cycle sub-committee meetings will convene. The September meeting will be in-person. The public notice will be in the papers through Human Services.

New Business

- a. Nominating Committee – Ms. Bjornson stated that by September, the Committee should know who still wants to be on the Committee and what roles members might take (Chair and Vice Chair). Ms. Boyce recommended developing a document that spells out the process, through an annual timeline, for nominating and voting for Committee roles before the September meeting. Ms. Boyce volunteered to be part of the Nominating Committee. She will follow up with an email to see who also wants to be on this Committee. Once this has been established, the Nominating Committee will frame out the timeline document from there.

Public Section/Questions: None

Next Full Committee Meeting: July 19, 2023, via Microsoft Teams

- a. Set sub-committee meeting dates/times and forward the information to Ms. Kisatsky.
- b. **September 20th meeting will be in-person at the Dept. of Human Services, 1 Medical Drive, Morris Plains

Adjourn: Ms. O'Keeffe made a motion to adjourn, Ms. Ugalde seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

