

Morris County Advisory Committee on Women

July 19, 2018

Morris View Meeting Room

Present: Lila Bernstein, Jennifer Carpinteri, Kathy DeFillippo, Allison Delcalzo-Berens, Carole Harper, Virginia Lyttle, Elaine Muller, Gayle Pearson,

Absent: Pam Bennett-Santoro, Joann Bjornson, Patti Page, Shelby Rhodes

The meeting was called to order at 6:12pm by Chair Gayle Pearson.

MEETING SUMMARY

July 19, 2018 Minutes	Lyttle made a motion to adopt minutes. Motion was seconded by Harper. No changes were recommended and the committee adopted minutes without discussion at 6:23pm
Human Services Report	<p>Carpinteri reported that the Successful Transition and Reentry (STAR) program has started in the jail, two staff members, an educator and a social worker, have been hired and are in the process of being trained through the state and the Office of Temporary Assistance (OTA). The goal of the program is to connect inmates to available services prior to their release and to follow inmates for a period of twelve months after their release. Bernstein noted that there is a program in Essex County where women are moved from the jail to a halfway house which helps get them connected to education and employment services before they transition back into mainstream society.</p> <p>Carpinteri also reported that the OTA has secured funding for a vehicle and has contracted with a community based organization, Family Promise, to provide mobile services to residents in areas of the county that are underserved.</p>
Presentation and Discussion: Women in the Military	<p>Pearson introduced new member and Seeds of Change recipient, Lila Bernstein. Bernstein reported that while she has lived in Morris County in the past and currently, she lived in Essex County for over 25 years so she has many connections to that community. She reported that last year, funding was made available to study the needs of women veterans in Essex County. A grant was provided to the Women Lawyers for Justice who found deficits in services for women veterans as well as evidence of sexual assault and discrimination in the population. The National Council of Jewish Women provided funding for a lunch and learn during which 200 women attended a panel of speakers including a psychologist, the director of a local community-based organization and two female veterans.</p> <p>Bernstein highly recommended that the committee consider a specific goal prior to engaging in next steps and reported that the initiative behind this topic has not moved forward since the lunch and learn. She reported that it is very difficult to identify women veterans because they generally do not want to be associated with the military any longer. For example, Congressman Frelinghuysen held a veteran's event last year and while it was highly attended by male veterans, attendance from women was low. She posed the question: what are we looking to do?</p> <p>Muller suggested that the committee is broadly looking to improve the quality of life for women veterans in the county. Bernstein asked that the goal be more specific, for example, improve quality of life in terms of housing, job opportunities, etc.? Pearson brought up a book about female Vietnam veterans which indicated that the women did not want to be identified. Carpinteri stated that the committee has county resources, such as community based organizations, the vet clinic and various meeting spaces, at our disposal. She suggested we do a needs assessment and then connect to services and review funding priorities in the county. Bernstein reported that a stakeholder's meeting should be included in the needs assessment. Lyttle asked how the needs assessment was accomplished in Essex County. Bernstein answered that agencies provided information such as number of clients served and anecdotal reports of</p>

what the gaps and barriers are to the population. Pearson stated that her goal is for the committee to be a conduit between the different service organizations. Carpinteri agreed that we can do service collaboration and ingrain this into the system to create a more efficient process for entry into services. Bernstein stated that one of the recommendations that came out of the Essex County initiative was to create a booklet of services for women veterans. Muller suggested that just doing education may make service providers that do not work specifically with women veterans aware of the population. Bernstein recommended a roundtable style discussion with the stakeholders and said that this could be a large undertaking.

Pearson summarized that some of her ideas are to identify stakeholders and have a meeting, possibly initiate a support group and publish a brochure or resource book. DeFillippo stated that women typically go about their business and, especially since they are less likely to come forward on their own, establishing a foundation by which to foster trust is important. Carpinteri agreed but said that we do not want to create a new system but instead work within what already exists, publicize and work within the system to influence system change.

Harper asked how women veterans are identified and if they receive communication from the military. Carpinteri reported she suspects that the communication is not ideal which is why the county veteran's department works so hard to do outreach. She stated that benefits and income bring people to the services. She reiterated that the clinic staff needs to be involved in this conversation. She stated that her personal goal is to increase coordination between the federal and local levels of the VA to enhance programming and communication. A stakeholder's meeting will facilitate the communication between the different arms.

Bernstein recommended that the committee members be educated before moving into the next step. Her group in Essex County had done a few surveys and some research last year as part of their project and she offered these materials to the committee for review. Carpinteri recommended that the committee review these materials prior to the next meeting and that we would invite some key organizations to the meeting to educate the committee in advance of a stakeholder meeting. Muller recalled that Larry Ragonese had come to give the committee advice on how to get information to the public and she suggested that community education is an important piece of this project. Carpinteri suggested a learning forum in collaboration with the Aging, Veteran's and Disabilities Advisory Committee. Pearson advocated for having women veterans speak out so as not to be in isolation. Bernstein cautioned that at the lunch and learn panel in Essex County, one of the woman veterans on the panel began to cry. Carpinteri stated that if we do a learning forum, there needs to be professionals trained in the trauma-informed care model.

Bernstein asked how does this committee do education. DeFillippo answered that starting the conversation with stakeholders and then following up with publicity about the programs would be one way. Muller reported that the committee has facilitated workshops and educational opportunities for the community in the past. Bernstein suggested the library(ies) become involved with the topic for women's history month in March. Muller stated that there are many institutions of higher learning in the county and perhaps students would want to take this on as a project. Carpinteri suggested getting an intern that she would supervise for the purpose. DeFillippo shared that her concern is for women who do not want to self-identify and that putting information into daycares, doctor offices and grocery stores would be ideal. However, she reiterated that the committee needs a structure to this research project first. Harper suggested the use of social media for education and information distribution. Carpinteri noted that there are different types of space and that an educational setting is not always a safe space for many people. Muller suggested that we many not come into contact with many veterans because people who join the military are often low-income earners who join in order to improve their lives.

	<p>Pearson reported that she met with Gena Farkus, public relations from Barclay’s Bank which is a British bank that is starting out in the US. They do not yet have a branch nearby but they do have an office in Whippany. During her meeting with Farkus, Gayle learned that Barclay’s can be a resource for resume writing and employment searching and her suggestion is to offer these services to women veterans. Carpinteri noted another provider, the Veterans Legal Service Clinic where pro bono attorneys provide services for veterans. Lyttle suggested the committee extend Barclay’s an invitation to the stakeholder meeting. DeFillippo suggested utilizing Barclay’s for funding an initiative of the committee. Pearson is not sure that this is something Barclay’s will do but it does not hurt to ask.</p> <p>Lyttle noted that human trafficking awareness took five to seven years to develop traction and that only by keeping at an initiative for a prolonged period will a cause become mainstream. DeFillippo suggested getting on the speaker network and going to Kiwanis and Women’s Clubs throughout the county to increase awareness.</p> <p>The committee agreed to do a women veteran’s stakeholder meeting in January followed by some kind of educational event in March or April. Carpinteri will invite select veteran’s services providers to the next committee meeting in September to provide additional education. The committee will determine a date and other details about the stakeholder meeting after this conversation.</p>
Discussion Items	<p><u>Housing Providers Stakeholder Meeting Follow Up</u>: The committee discussed next steps in to finalize the housing work that the committee has done. There will be a follow up breakfast on October 15 to provide an overview of the outcomes as well as to hear an update from the stakeholders. Carpinteri, DeFillippo and Delcalzo-Berens will create an agenda and talking points for the follow up meeting to present at the September Committee meeting.</p> <p><u>Response from Sheriff</u>: The committee discussed the response to the committee’s follow up questions to the sheriff. Carpinteri reported that there have been positive changes in attitudes and perceptions at the jail in regards to the female inmates and women’s issues. Pearson reiterated her concerns about LPNs completing physical exams as this is not part of their usual scope. Carpinteri explained that civil service allows the use of titles that are not necessarily in line with professional certifications. Delcalzo-Berens recommended that a comprehensive sexual health screening is performed to reduce the number of STI that are spread throughout the population. The committee decided to send a letter to the Sheriff, thanking him and the jail representatives and asking them to attend at least one meeting a year to ensure ongoing collaboration.</p>
Old Business	<p><u>Annual Report</u>: Members made suggestions for edits to the report. Delcalzo-Berens will prepare a final version and submit to Carpinteri for presentation to the freeholders. Carpinteri will ask Larry Ragonese whether the committee will be able to present the Annual Report to the freeholders during a scheduled meeting.</p>
New Business	<p>No new business.</p>
Announcements and Updates	<p>Carpinteri asked that any conversation regarding voter registration include Ann Grossi, the Morris County Clerk.</p> <p>DeFillippo distributed the County College of Morris Women’s Center Newsletter. Muller reported that there is no current director of the Women’s Center but she is hoping to keep in contact with the new director when she starts. She also reported she will reach out to Betty Simmons who is a VP in CCM to inquire if she is interested in participating in the committee.</p> <p>Lyttle announced there will be book sale in Bernardsville in August and distribute bookmark flyers.</p>

	Pearson announced an upcoming event on women veterans hosted by Mikie Sherrill. Flyer will be distributed via email.
Meeting End	Meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm The next meeting will be September 20, 2018 at 6:00pm.

Action Items

Who	What
All members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer to attend freeholder meetings • Review materials prior to meetings
Allison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create draft letter of thanks to the sheriff • Finish annual report and send to Carpinteri • Coordinate Housing Provider Stakeholder follow up meeting with Liz for 10/15/18 • Follow up on Seeds of Change Award Ceremony date 3/22/19
Lila	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forward research from the Essex County project to Jen/Liz/Allison for distribution to the committee
Jen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with Larry Ragonese presentation of the Annual Report to freeholders • Distribute list of statewide women's committees to the group • Invite veterans service providers to September meeting
Jen, Kathy and Allison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete an agenda and talking points for Housing Provider Stakeholder follow up meeting