

## Hampden County Commission on the Status of Women and Girls

### Minutes DRAFT

October 11, 2018

6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Palmer Public Library  
Three Rivers Conference Room, 1st Floor  
1455 North Main Street  
Palmer, MA 01069

- I. Call to Order and Roll Call
  - a. Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM
  - b. Present: Shanique Spalding, Shaitia Spruell, Pattie Hallberg, Jennifer Metsch, Michelle Goncalves
  - c. Absent: Ellen Moorhouse, Nicole Murray, Dawn DiStefano
- II. Public Speak Out (15 minutes)
  - a. No one contacted the commission to speak out
- III. Community-Based Doula Initiative Presentation
  - a. Erica Laquer, Certified Childbirth Educator and Birth Doula, MotherWoman Group Leader gave a presentation about the Community Based Doula Initiative (CBDI)
  - b. CBDI is a non profit with a fiscal sponsorship from the Peace Development Fund in Amherst.
  - c. Doula is an intermediary and advocate for women during labor. She provides education, support and advocacy for the mother on pregnancy, labor, birth and feeding.
    - i. An important aspect of birth doulas is that they stay with the mother continuously throughout labor.
    - ii. Doulas can be birth doulas, postpartum doulas or full spectrum.
    - iii. A doula is educational, not medical.
  - d. CBDI grew out of a partnership with Project Baby Springfield
  - e. CBDI is different in that it is community based. It is not hospital based. Community based programs encourage partnerships of doulas to individuals in their own community, which can emphasize shared culture and values. In low income and underserved communities, the community based doulas become allies and “aunties down the street”; they get to know the client before labor begins.
  - f. Springfield needs doulas because of long-term racial and health inequities. The highest infant mortality rate is in Springfield.

- i. African American babies die in the first year of life at 3 X the state rate of 4.4 per 1000 live births (12 per 1000 live births)
  - g. Benefits of doulas: Fewer cesareans, less pain relief medication, lower use of Pitocin, lower percentage of newborns being admitted to nursery for care, happier with birth experience, more likely to be nursing 6 weeks after birth, faster recovery, better bonding, less postpartum depression
  - h. Percent of parents who are going through pregnancy labor classes has decreased dramatically.
  - i. Access to doulas is generally limited to healthy, wealthier women in urban and suburban areas. Barriers exist for poor women, women of color, rural women, immigrant women, incarcerated women, recent refugees and immigrants.
    - i. CBDI wants to make doulas available to all women, especially those who face barriers.
  - j. CBDI is now focusing on fundraising (including Valley Gives in December) and securing other resources to make the program sustainable, including advocacy around making doula payments a fixed line in the city budget.
  - k. CBDI would like to get 12 people per training session (12 hours), and have 2 training sessions per year.
  - l. Green River Doula Network shows listing of current doulas in the area.
  - m. A drop in location away from the hospital would be a dream for CBDI
  - n. Contact information: [cbdispringfield@gmail.com](mailto:cbdispringfield@gmail.com), 413 685 3553, Springfield CBDI, PO Box 6313, Springfield, MA 01101
- IV. Subcommittee Meetings
  - a. Two subcommittees did not have a quorum. Subcommittees did not meet.
- V. Approval of minutes from September 13, 2018 meeting
  - a. Metsch moves to approve the minutes. Hallberg seconds. All in favor
- VI. Chair report
  - a. Chair was absent. No report was given.
- VII. Vice Chair report
  - a. The Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley is hosting an event 10/15 @ 6 PM at Ludlow Country Club (\$18). It will feature a panel discussion on domestic violence in Hampden County. This is part of the larger Zonta International programming around the He for She campaign, which seeks to involve men in campaigns around eliminating sexual violence.
    - i. HCCSWG is encouraged to attend and any commissioners who go can bring flyers for our public hearing.

- b. Spruell moves to accept the vice chair report. Hallberg seconds. Passes unanimously.

VIII. Committee Reports

- a. Communications/Social Media
- b. Program & Planning
- c. Legislative

IX. Old Business

a. Fall HCCSWG Hearing

- i. Need an event created for the November 8 hearing
- ii. Spalding will create a registration link for our November 8 hearing
- iii. Spalding will create a facebook event page for the hearing
- iv. Agenda for hearing
  - 1. Open with a welcome and description of what HCCSWG does, including an invitation to have people take the survey; then invite testimony.
    - a. Spruell will draft a play-by-play schedule next week. It then will be revised after the MCSW Oct 25 hearing.
  - 2. Bring in sign in sheet and limit speeches to 5 minutes. The program will go through as many as time allow and then they are done.
- v. Goncalves will create signage with the HCCSWG logo
- vi. Goncalves will create a sign in sheet.
- vii. Commissioners are asked to advertise the hearing with their networks and anywhere that seems relevant at their discretion.
- viii. Metsch will reach out to Mass Appeal to see if there are opportunities to be on air
- ix. Metsch will draft a press release by October 15 and circulate to Hallberg for editing by October 16.
  - 1. Goal to circulate the press release via the hccswg gmail by October 17.
- x. Hallberg will circulate a media contact list

b. Constituent/Community Survey

- i. DiStefano circulated Cape and Islands Survey to commissioners to review.

ii. Goncalves will to put the survey DiStefano circulated into a Google Form by October 15.

1. Form will need to have a shortened URL

iii. Survey will be limited to electronic form only.

1. HCCSWG will confirm that DiStefano can still bring computers for use at the hearing.

c. MCSW Turners Falls Hearing on 10/25

i. HCCSWG is encouraged to attend the state's Turners Falls public hearing on October 25 @ 4:30-6:30 PM at the Shea Theater Arts Center.

ii. Hallberg and Spruell will be in attendance and provide feedback for ways to improve our own hearing.

X. New Business

a. MCSW Funding Opportunity

i. MCSW circulated an email with a grant opportunity for regional commissions. Grant is due October 29.

1. Commissioners suggested that we apply to support a legislative breakfast in March.

a. It may be in our interest to apply in October so that funding is not used up before the January application session.

b. Spalding will discuss with DiStefano to understand feasibility of applying by 10/29

b. Ranking of Commissioner Applications

i. Commissioners are asked to review applications for our open seat, come up with their own rankings, and a vote will occur at the November meeting in executive session.

XI. Any Other Items that may Lawfully Come Before this Body

a. Just Ask Salary Negotiation 10/23 training has been cancelled. The next will be November 29

XII. Adjournment

a. Hallberg moves to adjourn. Spruell seconds. Passes unanimously

b. Adjourns at 8:05 PM.