

# Women's Policy Coalition Meeting

## Meeting Minutes

Monday January 13, 2020

Present:

Marian Palley  
Monica Shockley-Porter  
Marj Johnson  
Susan Sherk  
Madeline Bayard  
Marie Maks  
Linda Barnett  
Shamarla McCoy  
Rebecca Cotto  
Sophia Sotiello  
Kyle Gay  
Melanie Ross Levin  
Kim Lowman  
Carvel Building  
820 N. French Street  
Wilmington, DE 19801

Location:

### **1. Welcome and introductory remarks**

Minutes from the previous meeting approved with all in favor and none opposed.

### **2. Update on Women's Voices Project**

Over the next year, OWAA will work on a research project called the Delaware Women's Voices project. The first part of the project is a survey of Delaware women that asks about issues are most important to them. OWAA is still looking for partners to help distribute the survey. Partners are listed on the OWAA website and are asked to help spread the word about the survey utilizing the resources available on the website. The second part of the project is conducting listening sessions across the state to not only talk about the issues that are most important but also discuss what the women in our communities see as possible solutions. OWAA wants to do more than just provide data about the women in Delaware, but also speak to women directly about what are they concerned about and what is important to them. OWAA will take data, the results from the survey, as well as what we learn through the listening sessions to put together a report that will be made available to legislators, the community, and beyond. It is a national project through the National Association of Commissions for Women

and several states have already completed the project. Representatives from the Women's Commission in Maryland are coming to Delaware on March 2nd to train us on how to conduct the listening session. The training is open to the public, and we're hoping train many partners as the more sessions we conduct, the more inclusive the results can be. Maryland shared how incredibly helpful it was for their work. We have access to a paper survey for populations that do not have access. Please visit the OWAA website for different resources for how to share the project. It touches on a large variety of issues, so we think it's a good joint project. The survey has been extended until the end of January. We do not have access to the data until the end of March. We most likely have fewer responses from Kent/Sussex so please help with those folks if you can. If you're interested in hosting a listening session, please let OWAA know, we will need partners for that. The training meeting will be held on March 2nd at 11:00am-please join us if you can. **Action item-Send training meeting details to the group.** A member offered to ask downstate AAUWs to send the survey out to their lists. Women's March Sussex is holding an event this weekend and will have laptops set up at event as well as sending the survey out to 700 people. They are also willing to host listening sessions. **Action item-OWAA will send out a pitch with a new due date that people can forward to partners.**

### 3. Legislative Updates and update on "She Decides Delaware"

There will soon be a bill that will look to clean up the criminal code regarding self-abortion. Planned Parenthood of Delaware is leading the "She Decides Delaware" campaign to get the word out about this issue including a postcard campaign. The legislation would remove archaic language from the criminal code and decriminalize self-abortion. With the anniversary of Roe coming up, there will be an event on Wednesday 01/22 event to bring awareness that Roe could be overturned and what that means for Delawareans. Other upcoming events include Black Maternal Health listening sessions which is a three-part series sponsored by Black Mothers in Power. The first was a very powerful session, had a huge turnout, inviting women to tell their own stories. The second part will focus on community planning and the third on policy and regulations. There a sponsor for the decriminalizing abortion bill but they haven't announced yet.

Early education updates- The Early Childhood Assistance Program (ECAP)serves only around 800 kids which just 5% of this population making Delaware 40th in the nation for serving this age group. The Consortium bill was put in last year but there will no longer be a push for it. Discussion around how it makes more sense to work through the budget process to increase funding for early care and education. There is a state coalition (First State Pre-K-) that will continue but no longer need a task force. To join the First State Pre-K campaign visit <https://www.firststateprek.com/>. Another issue that will be forth is POC (Purchase of Care) subsidies-looking for increases because right now only around 65% of cost is provided. We need to figure how to pay everyone for the care that is needed. SB 150 which addresses kindergarten registration will also be introduced this session and seeks to streamline the process. Currently there 28 different processes across the districts. The bill is asking for one online process as

there is no reason kindergarten registration should be any different than current school choice process.

#### 4. OWAA Updates

OWAA is supporting several bills this session including-

- Bill 252-Increases the tipped minimum wage-most tipped employees are women, started as a percentage of the regular wage but never kept up.
- Minimum wage bills-eliminating “training minimum wage” also \$15 min wage.
- HB 215-Advocate Privilege- states that advocates for victims of domestic violence, domestic abuse, sexual assault, abuse by a caregiver, human trafficking, or stalking may not disclose any communication made by a victim to the advocate without express written consent of the victim. The police do not support this bill.
- 258-allows the Department of Correction to implement prison nurseries, which would allow women inmates that give birth during their time incarcerated the option of raising their infant up to the age of 18 months. Studies have shown that prison nurseries allow a mother and child to bond during this critical time of infancy and in turn lowers recidivism rates of these women inmates. This bill would further take the burden off of the foster care system and reduce the damage done between the mother and child relationship as a result of imprisonment.
- Sb144-prohibits discrimination based upon genetic information in the issuance or renewal of disability, long-term care, and life insurance by doing the following: 1. Clearly explains what constitutes discrimination under this Act. 2. Allows the results of genetic information approved by the Insurance Commissioner to be used for disability or long-term care insurance in a manner that is reasonably related to anticipated claims experience. 3. Prohibits sharing the results of direct-to-consumer genetic tests with insurers.
- SB 169-Revenge porn bill-adopts the Uniform Civil Remedies for Unauthorized Disclosure of Intimate Images Act. This Act addresses an increasingly common form of abuse that can cause severe and often irreversible harm: the disclosure of private, sexually explicit images without consent.

OWAA updates-

- This year’s Hall of Fame event is on 10/14/20 at Dover Downs. The application will be opening in early March and more info will be coming soon.
- Salary negotiation seminars will be held again this year. OWAA is partnering with libraries to hold the trainings. The event is free to attend and open to the public. Please share with your networks. We have some trainers, but we definitely need more as it’s a challenge to find folks who are trained. A member mentioned that she is trained and knows others that she can reach out to. **Action item-follow-up with member about finding more trainers.** OWAA

hasn't released details yet but it will go up soon. The group agreed that libraries are great partners-great community space, they can really help publicize the event.

- There is a new factsheet on the OWAA website on equal pay day with latest data. OWAA usually partners with AAUW for equal pay day down at Legislative Hall.
- Suffrage Centennial updates-there's an event (parade/monument dedication) in Dover on 09/26. There is also a website with lots of events listed. **Action item-send committee link to the Delaware Centennial website.** On March 7<sup>th</sup> the War of the Roses will be performed at First State Heritage Park. **Action item-OWAA will send more information about the play.** There is a Centennial commission that's open to the public if anyone wants to attend a meeting. The Commission is chaired by Jackie Griffith. **Action item-OWAA will send link to Centennial Commission website.**

## 5. New Business

The group discussed the possibility of holding another Speed Meeting with Legislators event. Last year not many people came and only three legislators. The idea was to have groups associated with the Executive Policy Coalition to have facetime with legislators, but the turnout was lower than expected. The group discussed other ideas that might be more successful in bringing more folks together such as holding ignite sessions (groups would have 5 minutes to present to legislators). The Kids Caucus model was also suggested as something that is successful. Partnering with the Women's Caucus to create an agenda was suggested as an idea. OWAA cannot provide food but we can think it through and see what we can put together. It was suggested to charge for the event to cover the cost of food and provide the incentive to show up. Ten groups should be enough to cover food cost. It was agreed to look at the calendar and see what would work with the suggestion that it should be held early in session. It was shared that the Byrd group has a really good legislative calendar that could be helpful. There was a reminder that the Pay Equity event is March 31<sup>st</sup>. **Action item-OWAA will reach out to legislators to explore the women's caucus idea.**

## 6. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn, all in favor, none opposed. Noted that meetings are quarterly but possible to meet more often as needed. The next meeting isn't until May 11<sup>th</sup>.