

**Vermont Commission on Women**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019 | 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**  
**109 State Street, Montpelier VT**

**Commissioners present:**

Lisa Senecal (Chair), Ed Adrian, Nancy Brooks, Kellie Campbell,  
Lisa Carlson, Mary Daly, Charlotte Dennett, Erica Hare, Emilie  
Kornheiser, Marcia Merrill, Kim Nolan, Marybeth Christie  
Redmond, Lisa Ryan, Kerry Secrest

**Commissioners absent:**

Heidi Tringe

**Advisors present:**

Lisa Falcone of Mercy Connections  
Katarina Lisaius of U.S. Senator Sanders' Office  
Matt Levin of Vermont Early Childhood Alliance  
Amy Brady Voices for Vermont's Children  
Aly Johnson-Kurts of Change the Story VT

**Guests:** Edisa Muller

**Staff:** Cary Brown, Hannah Lane, Lilly Talbert

**Presiding:** Lisa Senecal

**Recording:** Hannah Lane

**1. Call to order an approval of June 2019 minutes**

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Meeting called to order at 9:40 a.m.

Lisa welcomed everyone and asked them to introduce themselves. Lisa welcomed new Commissioners Erica and Nancy.

**Approval of June 2019 Minutes**

**MOTION** made by Emilie, seconded by Mary:

To approve the June 2019 minutes as submitted.

**MOTION APPROVED. Adopted as presented.**

**2. Staff Updates**

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• Change the Story VT – Aly

Change The Story will be launching a new report. It is coming out in November or December. It will be an update to Women, Work, & Wages, and Where Women Work and Why it Matters. The update will combine both into one report, and they will have a launch with Capstone Community Action.

CTS announces a new Vermont Leaders for Equity and Equal Pay program; they will be bringing together between 6 and 11 business to work towards equal pay over one year and will be

working with Gallagher Flynn. If you know of any businesses that may be interested, CTS is recruiting until the end of September.

Commentary from director Tiff Bluemle comes out tomorrow in VTdigger about the need for structural change around race and gender in the State.

- VT Suffrage Centennial Alliance  
65 members, organizations and individuals. <http://VTsuffrage2020.org>  
Handed out a sheet with upcoming events, including one this Friday afternoon at Middlebury College.
- Sexual Harassment & Workplace Discrimination Public Education and Outreach Campaign  
November website launch, with publicity around then. The campaign name is Workplaces For All. There will be kickoff activities in November.
- Data management position  
We had some carry-forward money available, and this year we got approval to keep most of it to hire a temporary, part-time data management position.

### **3. Commissioner priorities**

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Commissioners identified some of the issues they'd like to put attention toward:

- Reducing use of term "Women's Issues", and increasing buy-in that we all benefit
- Increase discussion of lack of options for low-wage workers experiencing harassment
- Mandatory (required to be taken) maternity and paternity leave
- Requirement that all salary information is public including private employers
- Listening Project – data
  - Not what we think – what do we hear?
- Easy wins (little things like "Men Working" sign, changing tables in men's rooms)
- ERA x2
- Title IX Discrimination against incarcerated women. Education, job training, access.
- Paid Family Leave
- Raise the minimum wage
- Women's economic power, specifically low wage workers
- Child protection reform and transparency
- Child Care
- Communication around legal protections – breastfeeding protections, sexual harassment protections. People don't know about them.
- Obesity – poor nutrition
- Continued investment in childcare
- Massive culture change within women's correctional facility needed
- Children's health – school lunch programs, nutrition taught in schools (P-12)
- Universal basic income
- Promote our resources -> social media, website, send a rep to conferences, advisory organizations here. Send a rep?

### **4. Committee structure and function discussion**

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- Standing committees

It might help engagement if Committees followed a timeline that was transparent – like an annual timeframe. It can be difficult to understand what the process, goal, or timeframe is. Work cycle. Is there an annual report?

Several Commissioners echoed this suggestion and thought it would be helpful to have clarity around a decision, strategic planning, an annual calendar, and reporting. Prioritization was mentioned, narrowing the workload as a strategy to increase outcomes.

Commissioners liked the idea of using ad hoc committees for short, finite issues or projects, for example, the Title IX work we did last year.

Hannah offered for consideration the idea of dividing the Health, Safety, and Civil Rights Committee into two Committees, the Health and Safety Committee, and the Civil and Legal Rights Committee, because this is a significant topic area for one committee to cover. Commissioners agreed.

**Creation of a fourth Standing Committee**

**MOTION** made by Emily, seconded by Lisa R:

To create a fourth standing Committee called Civil and Legal Rights.

**MOTION APPROVED. Committee created.**

- Update on DCF discussion
- Update on childhood health (Lisa C and Mary)

Mary and Lisa Carlson have been working over the summer on childhood health issues. They've identified that obesity begins in childhood, so they have been discussing getting started in schools. Chronic disease in children is on the uprise. Federal guidelines for school lunch programs leave flexibility for schools, they wonder about implementing Vermont guidelines. Why don't we teach nutrition in school? Recommended Commissioners watch the movie "Fed Up".

Matt Levin offered that a number of organizations have been working on these issues including Hunger Free Vermont, and Vermont Food Bank, and there is a coalition working on the Farm to School program. There is lots of work being done in the state, who would appreciate VCW's support.

- Guidelines for taking up an issue

Cary requested Commissioners review the VCW's guidelines for taking up an issue.

## **5. Announcements**

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Marybeth announced the upcoming Story Lab Summit at the Ripton Breadloaf Campus, which is selling out quickly but has room for 20 more.

Lisa Ryan announced the Raising Up Voices for a Vermont that Works for All event this Saturday, September 14<sup>th</sup>, also at the Breadloaf campus in Ripton.

Lilly announced the upcoming Margret Atwood Live Streaming Event with CTS, partners, and Spruce Arts on September 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> in Stowe, the Vermont Women's Fund Annual Event on October 16<sup>th</sup> at the UVM Davis Center with Jody Kantor and Meghan Twohey, and Senator Leahy's annual Women's Economic Opportunities Conference at Vermont Tech in Randolph on October 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Meeting Adjourned at 12:30 p.m.**