

Commissioners Present: Marcia Merrill, Chair; Laine Akiyama, Sharon Baade, Gretchen Bailey, Eileen Boland, Cary Brown, Carol Buchdahl, Retta Dunlap, Cathy Frey, Linda Fogg, Karen Henry, and Anne McLaughry.

Commissioners Absent: Ann Cardinal, Ruth Finn, Marion Milne, and Vicky Young.

Advisors Present: Joanne Brooking representing Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Joanna Cole representing the League of Women Voters, Lindy Hatcher representing Vermont Federation of Business and Professional Women, Louise Luring representing the American Association of University Women, and Carol Story representing Girl Scouts of the Green and White Mountains.

Guests: Patricia Blair, Jill Evans, and Carmel Quinn.

Staff: Janet Bullard, Wendy Love, and Lilly Talbert.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m., by Chair Marcia Merrill.

Welcome/Check In/Minutes/Announcements

Marcia asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Lilly announced that tomorrow, Thursday, January 14th is the opening of *To Life A Celebration of Vermont Jewish Women* and also the announcement of the official transfer of the Vermont Women's History Project from the Commission to the Vermont Historical Society. The event starts at 4:30 p.m. at the Vermont Historical Society Museum on State Street in Montpelier. Lilly informed folk that the Commission is working with the Girl Scouts of the Green and White Mountains on their 6th annual survey of Vermont girls from grades 6-12. The survey was launched on New Year's Day and will be ongoing until Valentine's Day. This survey is on careers and education. Also, the Commission is partnering with the Girl Scouts of the Green and White Mountains in hosting an afternoon event from 3-5 p.m. with Ms. Rosalind Wiseman, author of *Queen Bees and Wannabes*, for middle and high school administrators and counselors at Center for Technology at Essex on Tuesday, January 26th. At the end of the meeting, Janet distributed (for Carmel Quinn from the Girl Scouts of the Green and White Mountains) paper copies of the Rosalind Wiseman event both in Vermont and New Hampshire and a spreadsheet listing the "Girls Rock the Capitol" Interns for this legislative session.

Wendy reported that funding for the Commission has been included in the Governor's Budget; however, we still need to have hearings in front of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees regarding our budget.

Lindy Hatcher reported that Vermont Federation of Business and Professional Women is looking for nominations for their young careerists award. Candidates must be 35 or younger and excel in their field and their work should support the BPW motto, "Women Helping Women." Lindy will get information on this to Lilly to distribute to everyone.

Carol Story from the Girl Scouts of the Green and White Mountains announced that their Breakfast for Champions is scheduled for May 4th. The breakfast honors and recognizes women who are role models for girls and young women in helping them understand what leadership is all about. Applications are available on the girl scouts website.

Joanna Cole announced that a Susan B. Anthony performer is coming to the Vermont State House on Tuesday, February 16th.

Minutes

Motion made by Anne McClaughry to approve the minutes of the November 4 and November 18, 2009 meeting minutes as submitted. Seconded by Eileen Boland and voted unanimously.

Bullying and Harassment Update

Eileen Boland, Chair of the Education Committee, reported that the Commission received a response to our letter to Commissioner of Education Vilaseca that we sent in October. Eileen distributed a packet to everyone including our letter to the Commissioner, his response and a copy of draft language from the *Report of the Study Committee: Harassment, Bullying and Cyberbullying of Students in Vermont Schools-2009 Legislative Session*. Eileen reported that the our letter to Commissioner Vilaseca addressed the three areas of the study report: Statutory Changes, Standards, and Support and the Commission's position on each of these areas. She continued to say that Commissioner addressed all of our concerns except one – the concern regarding the Human Rights Commission not being able to continue the needed training for faculty and staff due to staffing constraints.

Eileen stated that Commissioner Vilaseca is behind the language recommended in the report. She also informed everyone that Representative Mark Larson is withdrawing his proposed language in the bill and substituting language recommended in the study committee's report. She also stated that other areas of the bill are being redrafted.

Commissioners discussed the language in the study committee's report and the fact that we (the Commission) voted at an earlier meeting to not get involved in discussing language. Please let Eileen know if you want to take a position on language and a time will be scheduled at a future commission meeting to discuss this.

Listening Forum Report Out/Attendees' impressions/next steps

Marcia noted that the Commission held a Listening Forum for Women Under the Supervision of Corrections on November 18, 2009 and that she would like commissioners and advisors who attended the forum to share their impressions of the forum. Wendy introduced Jill Evans, the Coordinator of Women's and Children's Program for the Vermont Department of Corrections and stated that Jill might be able to answer some of the questions we have regarding women under the supervision of corrections.

After much discussion, Commissioners invited Jill to come to the Commission's March meeting to address the following points: What is working in the system? What support should we encourage? What are the gender differences? And what, if any, allowances are being made depending on gender? What can the Commission do to be supportive of the Department of Corrections mission? Marcia stated that the Commission would spend time at the February Commission meeting talking more about the listening forum and what further information we need.

Paid Sick Days Legislation

Motion made by Laine Akiyama that the Commission support H.382 an act relating to paid absence from work and that the Commission sign onto a letter supported by members of the Paid Sick Days Campaign 2010. Seconded by Eileen Boland. Motion Passed.

Plus/Delta

What went well: open honest discussion, having somebody who knows something about what we're talking about-informed guest speaker, fabulous goodies, loved level of civility –respect, express varying opinions and continue

What could be improved? a little frustrated that we're still talking about harassment/bullying issue.

Meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.