

Commission Minutes  
September 5, 2007

Commissioners Present: Marcia Merrill, Chair; Sharon Baade, Gretchen Bailey, Eileen Boland, Carol Buchdahl, Mary Claire Carroll, Retta Dunlap, Ruth Finn, Linda Fogg, Cathy Frey, Anne McClaughry, and Marion Milne.

Commissioners Absent: Cary Brown, Karen Henry and Vicky Young.

Advisory Council Members Present: Ed Booth representing Vermont chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, Joanne Brooking represent Center Vermont 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, Linda Ingold representing Vermont Women's Business Center, Sarah Kenney representing the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, Margaret Luce representing Vermont State Nurses' Association, Barbara Saunders representing the Child Care Fund of Vermont, Jayne Sheridan representing Vermont Works for Women, and Carol Story representing Girl Scout Council of Vermont.

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

Guests: Robert Appel, Marie Eddy, and Alan Gilbert.

Presiding: Marcia Merrill

Recording: Janet Bullard

Meeting called to order at 9:34 a.m.

Welcome from Chair/Introductions

Marcia welcomed Linda Fogg a new commissioner from St. Johnsbury. Linda is Director of St. Johnsbury Works, a downtown development organization. Everyone welcomed Linda and then introduced themselves.

Minutes

Motion made by Marion Milne to approve the minutes of the June 13, 1007 meeting with the following correction, add Joanne Brooking representing the Central Vermont International League for Peace and Freedom to the advisory council member's present list. Seconded by Carol Buchdahl and voted unanimously.

Meeting Space/Parking Report

Janet reported that she was asked at the June Commission meeting to look into other places to hold Commission meetings due to the parking situation in downtown Montpelier. She stated that over the summer she and the staff looked into the suggestions made by folk at the June meeting and also a few other locations as well. Janet informed everyone that due to budget constraints many of the locations identified are not feasible, and with other locations parking is still an issue. A suggestion was made to look into the McFarland State Office Building in Barre, which Janet will do. If folk have any other suggestions, please get in touch with Janet.

### Harassment and Bullying in the Schools

Marcia introduced Marie Eddy, a guidance counselor at Hannaford Educational Center (Middlebury) and past State President of Vermont Business and Professional Women (BPW). She stated that Marie has a passion for reducing the bullying problem, particularly in schools, and as a result of that passion, is going to show a World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) video entitled, "Wrestling with Manhood", produced by the Media Education Foundation.

Marie reported that she has shown the WWE video to local chapters of business and professional women around the state as well as several other organizations. Her goal is to raise awareness about this issue and the WWE. Marie reported that national BPW passed a resolution this past summer condemning the story lines on WWE. Marie then showed the video and a brief discussion followed the video.

Next, Alan Gilbert, Executive Director of the Vermont Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), gave an overview of the harassment and bullying legislation that has been enacted as well as a summary of the legislation pending before the Legislature. Alan informed everyone that he has been the executive director of the ACLU for about 4 years and in addition to this, he has been a teacher and has served on several schools boards and is currently on the U-32 school board.

Then Alan asked Robert Appel, Executive Director of the Vermont Human Rights Commission (HRC), to speak about harassment and bullying. Robert clarified certain aspects of the legislation that has been enacted. Robert also reported that the HRC received funding to review the current harassment and bullying policies in state schools. This review should be done by late fall, Commissioners asked that Robert provide them with a copy of this review and attend a future commission meeting to discuss findings.

### Update Policy Overviews and Description of Committee Work on our Website

Wendy stated that she and Lilly have been reviewing and updating the Commission's website and as a result are suggesting changes in the policy overview section and the committee description section of the website. She reported that she and Lilly drafted suggested language for each section and would like the committees to meet now and review the suggested wording and edit as appropriate. Once each committee has reviewed its section and made any corrections/suggestions, these changes will be made and brought before the entire Commission to vote on at the next commission meeting. Committees then met to review the drafts and make edits as appropriate.

### New Business

Marcia asked if anyone had any new business to bring up before the Commission. No one did.

### Plus/Delta Evaluation

Carol reported that Marcia and the committee chairs had a conference call before the Commission meeting to plan the agenda for the meeting and as part of this decided to have an evaluation component at the end of each meeting.

Carol asked folk to share their thoughts on what made today's meeting work for them.

What worked

Lots of useful information was shared  
Appreciated time to explore an issue in depth  
Knowledgeable speakers  
Lots of participation by everyone  
Different presentation formats  
Time for committee work

What could have worked better

More time for committee work  
Technology set up before meeting starts  
Start and end on time  
Time to discuss next steps, particularly after watching the video

Carol asked for a volunteer to lead the evaluation component at the October Commission Meeting and Eileen volunteered to do so.

Marcia thanked everyone for a productive meeting and noted that Commission meeting materials will continue to be sent electronically, via email, in an effort to save postage costs and also staff time. She encouraged everyone to print out meeting materials that they want and bring them to Commission meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.