

Commissioners Present: Marcia Merrill, Chair; Laine Akiyama, Sharon Baade, Gretchen Bailey, Eileen Boland, Cary Brown, Carol Buchdahl, Ruth Finn, Linda Fogg, Cathy Frey, Karen Henry, Anne McClaughry, and Vicky Young.

Commissioners Absent: Mary Claire Carroll, Retta Dunlap, and Marion Milne.

Advisory Council Members Present: Joanne Brooking representing Central Vermont Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Maggie Gendron from Senator Leahy's office, Barbara Hannon representing Older Women's League, Lindy Hatcher representing Vermont Federation of Business and Professional Women, Linda Ingold representing Vermont Women's Business Center, Louise Luring representing American Association of University Women, and Carol Story representing the Girl Scout Council of Vermont.

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

Presiding: Marcia Merrill

Recording: Janet Bullard

Chair Marcia Merrill called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

### Minutes

Motion made by Carol Buchdahl to approve the minutes of the June 11, 2008 meeting as submitted. Seconded by Vicky Young. Then amended as follows: Under VCW Planning delete second sentence, "The following... to each issue." Amendment accepted and minutes approved unanimously.

### Upcoming Events: VCW Website, Legislative Lunch, and Status Report

Lilly reported that she is updating the Commission's website and would like feedback from all on the current VCW website, what people like, what should be changed, etc. Next Lilly informed everyone that she has been working on the Commission's annual status report since May with her intern Surbhi and as such is giving sections of the status report to committee chairs for their review. She also welcomes others to review the status report for her.

Lilly informed everyone that she, Wendy, Janet, and Laine will be meeting after the VCW meeting today to start planning the luncheon which will be held on Wednesday, January 14, 2009. Lilly called for ideas, suggestions, etc., for this year's luncheon. Also, Lilly explained that the Commission's Visibility Day won't be happening this year and as such we would like to highlight the Commission's Advisory Council at the Legislative Luncheon. Other ideas and suggestions are welcome!

### Upcoming Issues: Budget FY'10, Elder Economic Security Index, Paid Sick Days

Wendy reported that the administration had to carve out \$32 million from this year's budget. After preparing our response to the administration, the Commission was held harmless from this budget rescission. Wendy stated that next year's budget is going to be tighter than this year.

Wendy also reported that she is involved with an Elder Economic Security Index and that she is working with the Coalition of Vermont Elders, American Association of Retired Persons, Livable Wage Campaign, Vermont Low Income Advocacy Council, and the congressional delegation to develop a basic needs budget for elders.

Also Wendy reported that she has been working with the paid sick days coalition over the summer. The coalition plans to have a bill introduced this year. The coalition is being led by Colin Robinson from the Livable Wage campaign and Carlin Finn from Voices for Vermont Children. Colin is willing to come and address the commission on this issue.

Commissioners agreed to have Wendy continue working on these initiatives, keeping them informed as the work continues.

### Looking at the Health Care Elephant – Conversations with Wendy

Wendy gave an overview of her experience in the health care field and then after some discussion small discussion groups were formed to talk about what role, if any, the Commission should have in the health care reform debate.

Many issues were raised in the discussion groups: the role of women as the major decision makers around health care for their families, the budget crisis and its effect on the Medicaid budget and long term care options, the need to understand Health and Medical savings accounts and malpractice and tort reform.

Future speakers were suggested: Bea Grouse of the Hospital Assoc, Tom Huebner, CEO of Rutland Regional Medical Center.

Frustration was expressed about the ability of the Commission to influence and affect change in these complex areas. Some groups suggested that the Commission should concentrate on areas where it would make a difference such as paid sick leave, insurance for women post divorce., etc.

### Plus/Delta

What we liked about this meeting: introductions – round robin, good materials to read, energy, good coffee cake, small group work, diversity of opinion

What we didn't like about this meeting: nothing.

Meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.