

**Vermont Commission on Women**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
February 11, 2015  
Pavilion Office Building, 4<sup>th</sup> floor conference room  
Montpelier, VT

**Commissioners present:**

Marcia Merrill (Chair), Nancy LaVarnway  
Eileen Boland, Charlotte Dennett  
Melinda Moulton, Danielle Martel  
Ruth Finn, Dr. Felicia Kornbluh,  
Jennie Gartner, Kerry Secrest

**Commissioners absent:**

Gretchen Bailey, Carol Buchdahl  
Lynn Batchelor, Laine Dunham  
Shambulia Gadsden Sams, Susie Hudson

**Staff:** Cary Brown, Lilly Talbert

**Presiding:** Marcia Merrill

**Recording:** Claire Greene

**Interns:** Becca White

**Advisors:** Diane Derby representing the office of Senator Leahy, Kim Swartz representing the Department of Health, Katarina Lisaius representing the Office of Senator Bernie Sanders, Anne Burmiester representing Planned Parenthood of Northern New England, Becky Raymond representing Central Vermont Building Bright Futures Council

**Guests:** Robin Lunge, Director of Health Care Reform at the Agency of Administration

**Welcome/Introductions:** Marcia welcomed everyone and those present introduced themselves.

**Approval of January 2015 minutes**

Motion to approve the minutes as submitted

Motion made by Melinda Moulton, seconded by Nancy LaVarnway

**MOTION APPROVED**

**Staff/Events and Updates**

***Women's History Month, March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015***

Following VCW's March meeting will be a celebration of Women's History Month over a brown bag lunch (bring your own!) by learning from a panel of historians and scholars addressing questions facing women's history in the 21st century. Moderated by Cary and panelists include Dr. Felicia Kornbluh, Director of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies at the University of Vermont, Marilyn Blackwell, independent historian, and Holly Allen, Assistant Professor of American Studies at Middlebury College. This event is in partnership with Vermont History Museum as well as with VPR who will air commentaries from both Felicia and Cary. For more information about this event, you can visit VCW's History and Accomplishments webpage.

***Equal Pay Day/Women's Day at the State House, April 14, 2015***

We are promoting this as Women's Day, combining the theme of Equal Pay Day with that of Women's Visibility Day. Tentative schedule will include:

- Planning to start the day with bagels, coffee and networking in the cafeteria

- Working in partnership with Women’s Legislative Caucus. Rep Mollie Burke of Brattleboro will be reading a resolution on the House floor that day.
- Dress in red to symbolize women being “in the red” due to the gender wage gap
- Posted up in the card room throughout the day with materials from Advisory Council members as well as our own
- We’ll be distributing Equal Pay buttons
- A proclamation signing by Governor
- We may host a women’s economic security presentation from family demographer, Kristin Smith at the Carsey School of Public Policy at UNH @ Durham. If this presentation happens, it would take place in room 10, between 1 and 2 or in the Ethan Allen room @ lunch time.

Staff will be emailing when more details arise.

### **Legislative Luncheon Recap:**

Claire gave an overview and commissioners discussed the event.

### **Legislative Updates**

VCW intern Rebecca White provided the following legislative update:

#### *Theme 1: Children and Families*

**S.9**— an act relating to improving Vermont's system for protecting children from abuse and neglect in response to infant deaths:

**H.75**— an act relating to the Office of the Child Advocate office of child advocacy:

**H.46**— an act relating to the creation of a Vulnerable Adult Fatality Review Team

**S.35**— an act relating to access to DCF’s records of abuse and neglect:

#### *Theme 2: Healthy Workplaces*

**S.15/H.187**— An act relating to absence from work for health care and safety:

**H.1 /S.20**— an act relating to establishing and regulating licensed dental practitioners:

#### *Theme 3: Gun Regulation/Reform*

**S.4**— an act relating to notification prior to sale of firearms relinquished pursuant to relief from abuse orders:

**S.31**— an act relating to possession and transfer of firearms:

**H.90, H.91 and H.92**— an act relating to approval of an amendment to the charter of the City of Burlington regarding police confiscation or seizure of deadly or dangerous weapons

#### *Theme 4: Corrections/Criminal Justice Reform*

**H.221**: An act relating to criminal justice reform

**H.121**— an act relating to the use of criminal records in employment decisions

**H.105**— An act relating to disclosure of sexually explicit images without consent:

**S.60**— an act relating to payment for medical examinations for victims of sexual assault:

Commissioner request: invite Suzi Wizowaty to the next meeting to unpack the criminal justice reform bill.

## Health Care

### **Women's Health Care:**

Anne Burmiester, VCW's advisor representative from PPNNE, gave an overview of her current work:

#### Part 1: Legislative agenda:

(1) Resolution reading:

J.R.H.2— a joint resolution supporting a woman's right to decide her own reproductive choices as well as commemorating the anniversary Roe v. Wade and the 50th anniversary of Planned Parenthood of Northern New England

(2) Involvement in numerous coalitions and testifying as necessary:

- Healthy Workplace Coalition
- Domestic Violence Legislative Committee
- Oral Health Care
- Alliance for Clean and Healthy Vermont—

(3) Budget interests:

- 2 million dollars a year to support access plan and help women get free access to health care (intended for those that don't qualify for Medicaid but don't have a health plan either— for women who are in that middle area)
- Requesting a 2.5 increase in Medicaid for 2016 governor's budget

#### Part 2: Policy agenda:

- Meet regularly with Green Mountain Care Board (GMCB)
- Part of bi-state primary health care group advocating for federally funded community health centers.
- Involved in many workgroups making sure PPNNE is a constant women's health referral
- State Innovation Model (SIM) grant from the federal government
- Outreach: PPNNE navigators are out and about singing people for the affordable care act. Current access plan focuses on (1) going into communities who need information around of these services most and (2) working on a bipartisan strategy to reduce teen pregnancy.

### **Vermont Health Care Reform:**

Robin Lunge, Director of Health Care Reform at the Agency of Administration, provided an overview of current health care models for the state:

#### ***Who does what in health care reform:***

1. *Department of Health Access (DVHA):* primary public payer
  - Medicaid, Vermont Health Connect, Blueprint for Health

2. *Green Mountain Care Board (GMCB)*: works to take cost containment to the next level, not just reducing costs, but taking unnecessary costs out of the system while improving quality.
  - Regulatory role—hospital charges, insurance companies can increase premiums yearly and that there is a factual basis
  - Innovation role—pulling people from all over the spectrum to think about the current system and move it in a new direction that isn't only top down, but collaborative in leading and funding new ideas.
3. *Governor's Office and Secretary of Administration (SOA)*: planning and policy oversight to insure that the left hand and right hand of state government are all 'rowing in the same direction' and avoid any disconnection.

Health Care Reform Goals:

- reduce health care costs and cost growth
- assure that all Vermonters have access to and coverage for high quality care
- assure greater fairness and equity in how we pay for health care
- improve the health of Vermont's population

***Three major initiatives:***

2015 Cost Shift Proposal

The all-payer Model

Vermont healthcare innovation model

**Announcements:**

- Silloway case being appealed and Margaret Barry from Vermont Law School is writing the amicus brief in support.
- Vermont Equal Pay Compact— would be modeled after The Boston Women's Workforce Council 100% Talent Compact.
  - A voluntary opportunity for business and schools to sign on and indicate at least one way they will contribute to closing the wage gap. Allows the commission to highlight who in the state is committed to this mission and a great way to visibly show how Vermont is supporting this effort. More on this next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 12:29pm