

## Vermont Commission on Women

### Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 14, 2018 | 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.  
32 College St, Montpelier VT

#### Commissioners present:

*In-person:* Marcia Merrill (Chair), Gretchen Bailey, Eileen Boland, Lisa Senecal

*By Skype or phone:* Carol Buchdahl, Deborah Bucknam, Mary Daly, Charlotte Dennett, Danielle Martel, Melinda Moulton, Marybeth Christie Redmond, Colin Ryan, Kerry Secrest

**Commissioners absent:** Ruth Finn, Emilie Kornheiser, Nancy Lavarney

**Advisors present:** *In-person:* Kevin Veller of U.S. Congressman Welch's Office; Katarina Lisaius of U.S. Senator Sanders' Office. *By Skype or phone:* Ashley Michelle Fowler of Mercy Connections

**Staff:** Cary Brown, Lilly Talbert

**Presiding:** Marcia Merrill

**Recording:** Lilly Talbert

#### Welcome/Introductions

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Meeting called to order at 9:43 a.m.

1. Marcia welcomed everyone and asked them to introduce themselves.

2. Meeting Agenda Approval Process:

MOTION made by Eileen and seconded by Lisa.

To approve the meeting agenda, giving discretion to the chair to deviate from the agenda as necessary.

MOTION APPROVED. Agenda adopted.

3. Approval of February 2018 Meeting Minutes:

MOTION made by Eileen, seconded by Lisa.

To approve the February 2018 minutes as submitted.

MOTION APPROVED. Adopted as presented.

#### 4. Staff Update

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Legislative updates:

- Lisa spoke about H.707 which passed the House 131-2.
- H.196 is in the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing, and General Affairs.
- H.294 has moved to the Senate.

Legislative Lunch planning: Cary reminds the group that the foundation funds this event. Date: January 9, 2019, held at the Capitol Plaza Hotel.

Lilly spoke about Equal Pay Day observation, which falls on Tuesday, April 10, 2018. There will be a resolution in the House at approximately 10 am, and a proclamation signed by the Governor. There will

be a quick press conference, either at the proclamation signing – time TBD, or at noon in the Cedar Creek room. All are invited to attend, and please wear red to symbolize women being in the red, due to the gender wage gap.

Lindsey Lathrop Ryan is developing and delivering two or three salary negotiation workshops this spring, funded by a grant from the New England Women’s Policy Initiative.

## **5. Listening Project**

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Marybeth Redmond’s training for interviewing and story gathering has been postponed until the April meeting, due to so many commissioners attending this meeting by Skype and phone.

Cary requested feedback on the latest survey draft and will have it finalized before the April meeting.

There may be an opportunity to collaborate with the National Association of Commissions on Women on a nationwide project they are doing to coordinate public forums and surveys in multiple states. Cary has joined a planning group for that project.

## **6. Committee reports**

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Economic Equity and Security – Melinda asked commissioners to think about planning what they will do for the listening project in communities and as VCW members.

Health, Safety and Civil/Legal Rights – Carol reported that the committee reviewed VCW’s new [Sexual Harassment in the Workplace: Bystander Intervention](#) document and proposed additional edits; reviewed Lisa’s draft of a sexual harassment policy; and the committee will discuss creation of a new policy statement supporting comprehensive reproductive health education for adult women requested by Health Committee

Education and Human Development – Danielle spoke about work to update policies; about Let’s Grow Kids and VCW coauthored white paper feedback which was helpful in developing early childhood policies.

## **7. Statement re: Increasing Minimum Wage**

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Cary passed around material pertaining to proposals to increase the minimum wage.

MOTION made by Carol, seconded by Gretchen:

Given that women in Vermont are currently in a more precarious financial situation than men, and given that raising the minimum wage any amount would have a positive impact on many women, and given that raising women’s earnings would have an additional positive impact on Vermont and its economy, the Vermont Commission on Women supports efforts to increase the minimum wage as one strategy for promoting a livable income for Vermonters.

MOTION APPROVED. Adopted as presented

### **Announcements**

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PBS has been airing a series of shows on sexual harassment entitled, “#MeToo, Now What?” – recommended by Eileen.

Charlotte announces that she is expanding her law practice to include elder law and elder abuse.

Katarina: Senator Sanders is hosting a series of senior meetings. Beginning with our next meeting, Sheila Reed will be our new representative from the Senator’s office.

### **8. Executive Session**

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The planned Executive Session was postponed until the April meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:18 p.m.