



## CECIL COUNTY COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

Cecil County Administration Building  
200 Chesapeake Boulevard  
Elkton, Maryland 21921  
(410) 996-8300(phone)

<https://www.ccgov.org/government/boards-and-commissions/commission-for-women>

### Open Meeting Minutes

April 28, 2022 – 4:30 p.m.

**Present:** Tammy Perkins, Annette Brown, Holly Ayers, Kathie Kennedy, Casie Goins, Sheila Murphy, Tyra Kenly

**Absent:** N/A

**Guest/s:** Danielle Hornberger, County Executive and Janice Stenger

**Other:** Rebekah Corle, Support Staff to the Commission

#### **Call to Order:**

- First Meeting – Rebekah Corle, Support Staff to the Commission, called the meeting to order at 4:32 pm.

#### **New Business:**

#### **Welcome:**

- Danielle Hornberger, County Executive, opened the meeting with welcoming everyone and explaining the goals of the repurposed Commission. Executive Hornberger noted that we received a letter from the State Women's Commission that stated the County's Commission was defunct and inactive since 2010. Executive Hornberger expressed her excitement for the reactivation of the Commission and the positive impact it would have on the County. Executive Hornberger reviewed the State Commission's goals which include studying the status of women in the community, directing attention to critical problems confronting women, recommending methods of overcoming these problems, recognizing women's accomplishments and contributions, and providing informed advice to the Executive and legislative branch of government, including, the County Council.

#### **Introductions:**

- Rebekah welcomed everyone and introduced herself as the support staff to the Commission and encouraged everyone to introduce themselves.

- Sheila Murphy introduced herself as the Community Wellness Chief for Cecil County Community Services. Sheila explained some of the aspects of her current position, as well as her involvement with her community partnerships.
- Tammy Perkins introduced herself as a recent new hire to the County and her previous experience in her profession with domestic violence and family matters as well as her life-long residency of the County.
- Holly Ayers introduced herself as a retired law enforcement from Elkton Police. Holly recently started with the County as well and is a resident of Cecil County. She expressed her happiness to be a part of the Commission
- Annette Brown thanked the County Executive for her appointment to the Commission and introduced herself as Assistant Pastor of the Wright's AME Church in Baltimore. She has been serving for the past 9 years and is a retired Paralegal and fitness instructor. She focuses on women's health and fitness, spiritual or financial literacy. She also has interest in serving not just the women, but her whole family. She is very thankful to be able to serve the people of Cecil County.
- Casie Goins introduced herself as a stay-at-home mother. She is a small business owner but focuses strongly on her duties as a mom. She is also a substitute teacher. Her passion is not to miss the woman who chooses to stay home and be a mother.
- Tyra Kenly introduced herself, stating that she has served Cecil County in some aspect for the last 22 years. She is currently employed through the State. She serves on multiple boards in the County. She has a passion for women and believes that women make the world go around. She was also a coach in Harford County with Parks and Recreation for 5 years. She believes Cecil County is her neighbor and home away from home. She looks forward to helping women and girls in the community.
- Janie Stenger noted she was just here to listen as a citizen.
- Kathie Kennedy introduced herself as a nurse at Harford Memorial Hospital and works in informatics with the University of Maryland. She has been a resident of Cecil County for 5 years, moving from Philadelphia. She is passionate about empowering women so that they have the skills and opportunities needed/available to them when they are ready to move on to a different career path or skills.

**New Business:**

- Rebekah Corle noted on the letter received by the State Commission for Women in November 2021, requesting the County reactive their Commission/create a new one.
- Rebekah also suggested brainstorming regarding the County's current code relating to the Commission for Women. She stated the board should discuss the purpose of the board as well as the code and administrative duties like naming a Chair, making a meeting schedule, and the terms of membership.

- Sheila suggested providing the Commission with copies of codes/by-laws from other Counties and the State as examples as the Commission works towards putting together an updated code/bylaws.
- Very little information available regarding the previous Commission. Tammy Perkins listed a few activities/events the previous Commission had done.
- Annette also suggested looking at other Commissions' mission statements and bylaws to create new ones for the current Commission.
- First piece of homework as a Commission is to review other Counties' by-laws/code.
- Tammy Perkins suggested providing the Commission our mission statement research. Rebekah noted to provide same.
- Tyra suggested considering members that either live OR work in Cecil County.
- Rebekah concurred, noting that we originally wanted only citizens, but we realized that people may work in the County and have a vested interest in the County.
- Tyra also suggested including individuals that worship in the County.
- Sheila noted that membership should also include service groups (Lions Club, etc.).
- Rebekah suggested including high-school aged women in the membership for the Commission to have age diversity.
- Tyra recommended contacting John Roush from Cecil County Public Schools to assist with reaching out to some high school aged students.
- Casie asked about reaching the 12 members as currently stated in the code.
- Rebekah stated that is something that should probably be changed since 12 is an even number and could end in a deadlock vote. She suggested moving the number of members to 13 or 11 with 5 as a minimum to keep a quorum.
- Sheila suggested 11 members for maybe a trial period of a year or so as well as clearly identifying our rules.
- Casie asked about a minimum age to vote on things in the Commission. Census seems to be 18, but they could be subcommittee members, ex-officios or maybe the Commission adapt a junior member distinction.
- Sheila suggested individuals from different age ranges as well and maybe reaching out to YES or the Cecil County Public Library for additional ideas.
- Tyra suggested having a vested interest for a younger group of women. They should have a role that is really theirs. Showing little girls that they can accomplish their goals and provide

the empowerment that they need. She also suggested bringing support and notice to the trafficking issues.

- Annette noted that it was important to be inclusive, no matter what ages are and let their voices be heard on the Commission. Show them that they have value and their opinions and voice matter. She suggested including multiple young women from different walks of life.
- Annette stated assisting these young women in navigating the different scenarios of life and making all of that connect back to the Commission's mission statement is important.
- Tyra asked how we support these women and families when they may not have internet services or access to the internet.
- Sheila suggested discerning what the Commission is and the rest of the pieces should fall into place.
- Tyra stated she wants to establish something that outlasts this group and something worthy of someone else carrying the torch of the Commission.
- Annette noted that Janice stated in chat about including political diversity and Annette concurred that it was also important to do that. The Commission should not be based on politics.
- Casie asked about having a working definition of a woman for the Commission. Clarifying if the Commission was for the biologically born woman or any person identifying as a woman.
- Sheila noted we do need to figure out what develops this group. She asked if other Counties have addressed this. Tammy Perkins noted no. However, Holly noted that other Commissions also openly have men as members, as long as they have a vested interest in women's issues and supporting women. Sheila noted that she does not recall the previous Commission having anything that stated you had to be a woman to be on the Commission. Sheila suggested looking at the definitions of other Commissions.
- Annette shared it was not the Commission's responsibility to define what a woman is as God has already defined that.
- Kathie asked about scholarship opportunities, or something being taken away from other women due to a transgender person applying for same.
- Tyra asked what if a man approached the Commission offering to donate a large sum of money to assist with their efforts, would the Commission turn him away? No, so the Commission should approach each bridge as they get to it. Not worried about the scholarship situation. We need to focus on a foundation and shouldn't turn anyone away.
- Sheila expressed her gratitude to be a part of this group. Noted we should create an environment and focus on issues without excluding.

- Holly Ayers noted she wants it to be a Commission for Women, without definitions.
- Kathie asked how the Commission would implement things and receive funding.
- Sheila stated there are all kinds of way and once the Commission grows, more opportunities will arise.
- 2022 Meeting Schedule - 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the Month (Tentative) –
  - May 26<sup>th</sup> – 4:30 p.m.
  - June 23<sup>rd</sup> – 4:30 p.m.
  - July 28<sup>th</sup> – 4:30 p.m.
  - August 25<sup>th</sup> – 4:30 p.m.
- Rebekah suggested the Commission vote on officials for the Commission –
  - **Sheila Murphy for Chair – Tyra Kenly (first), Annette Brown (seconded) – All in favor**
  - **Holly Ayers for Vice Chair – Tyra Kenly (first), Sheila Murphy (seconded) – All in favor**
  - **Casie Goins for Treasurer – Holly Ayers (first), Tyra Kenly (seconded) – All in favor**
  - Noted that Rebekah will be staff support/secretary. Tyra suggested updating the code for the Commission to include a county employee as staff support
  - Tentative to two-year terms, with the option of one additional
- Tyra suggested having a way to share information instead of e-mail.
- Janice Stenger suggested little bios for each of the members on the webpage.

**Adjourn:**

- Rebekah made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:35pm, seconded by Sheila Murphy, and approved by all.

**Next meeting:**

- May 26<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 p.m., County Administration Building, 200 Chesapeake Boulevard, Perryville Room, Elkton, MD with Zoom option