



# COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

## COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Friday, February 24, 2017  
San Mateo Credit Union Offices  
350 Convention Way, Redwood City – First Floor Conference Room

### **Draft Notes from Retreat**

Linda Koelling, President, called the meeting to order at 9:10 AM.

The following Commissioners were present: Linda Koelling, Anisha Weber, Shweta Bhatnagar, Janet Dulsky, Stacie Furia, Tanisha Hughes, Kristy Koberna, Vivian Lino, Marguerite Machen, Christine Padilla, Lisa Williams

No members of the public were in attendance.

The Agenda was approved and adopted unanimously on a motion by Anisha Weber and second by Shweta Bhatnagar.

Linda welcomed Supervisor Carole Groom who spoke briefly to the Commission, thanking them for their work and encouraging their planning efforts.

Linda then introduced Pat Brown who served as the facilitator for the retreat.

In addition to planning, one intended outcome for the retreat was for Commission members to get to know each other better. To this end, the group participated in an introduction exercise in which each member shared a unique knowledge, skill or experience that she brings to her Commission work with a partner. The partners then shared this information with the group:

Honora Miller, Commission Director then gave the commission information on the history of the Commission on Women's work in the past. Key points – the commission over the course of its history since 1982 has responded to the needs of the time whether that meant holding workshops on how to transition to or back to the workplace or financial skills for women: conferences for teen girls: public hearings on the need for women to have a greater role in public office: the Women's Hall of Fame Awards: Women's Health Conferences; legislative breakfasts with local elected on the County, State and National level; recommendations to the BOS on legislation; Speak Ups (facilitated discussions with women throughout the County to learn about women's needs); Status of Women Indicator (never came to fruition when commissioner lead left – but still a great idea); advocacy regarding the Women's Jail; collaborating with the Career Closet on multiple clothing drives; Women's Art Exhibit (in collaboration with the Arts Commission each March).

Honora also pointed out the importance of making sure that the Commission's work is aligned with the Board of Supervisor's Vision 2025. The Commission aligns well with the Collaborative Community area of the vision.

Pat noted that the Commission's strategic plan, created in 2010, is essentially out of date, but the Commission is actively working in the following areas:

- a) Women's Leadership Conference
- b) Women's Criminal Justice
- c) Women's Hall of Fame

The Commission's mission statement in the most recent strategic plan was reviewed:

*The Commission on the Status of Women, an advisory body to the Board of Supervisors, seeks to improve the quality of life for women of all ages in San Mateo County. Through strategic partnerships and collaboration, the commission identifies women's needs, advises the board of supervisors, and educates the community on matters concerning women.*

In discussing the need for a planning process at this time the following points were made:

- There is no current plan in place.
- There are 6 new commissioners.
- The Commission is working in three substantive areas
- The capacity of the Commission and available resources require focus.
- It is important to be clear about desired outcomes in order to track progress.

Pat presented a proposal for the Commission to consider:

- Use this retreat to develop a one year work plan that includes current areas of effort and adds one (or possibly two) additional priorities for the period of March 2017-March 2018.
- Defer strategic planning until after the Women's Leadership Conference (scheduled for March 2018).

Commissioners agreed with this proposal.

In a brainstorming session, the group then developed the following list of potential focus areas for the Commission in the upcoming year:

1. Implement a process to assess the current status of women in SMC by conducting facilitated conversations with selected target groups including nonprofits serving women, women in the workplace, and seniors. Use this information to inform strategic planning, for discussion at the Leadership Conference and build a network of people who know about and support the CSW.

2. Connect with other relevant SMC Commissions (Aging, LGBTQ, Youth, Disabilities, Veterans, etc.) to discuss women's issues and current concerns that have come up in their context.
3. Review the indicators previously identified by the Commission that would, adapt as needed and then begin to gather data on the current status of women in the County.
4. Since housing is a priority issue with the Board of Supervisors, get involved with the Home for All Initiative.
5. Look into the issue of women in the workplace (preparation through STEM education, and working in male dominated work environments).
6. Delve into the need for mentoring as a way to support women at various stages in their lives and in the workplace.
7. Support/enhance the CHOICES program operating in the Women's Jail.
8. Immigration
9. Healthcare
10. Gender Income Gap

The Commission discussed each of the proposals, reorganized the list to link similar issues and decided on the following approach for the upcoming year.

1. The Commission will continue with its three existing committees and add the following focus areas:
  - **Take steps to begin assessing the current status of women in SMC.**
  - **Begin to look at ways to promote the success of women in the workplace**
2. The Commission will implement a process to follow legislation relevant to its priorities. Linda Koelling and Christine Padilla volunteered to track legislation and report regularly.
3. The Commission also requested updates at Commission meetings related to the issues of **healthcare** and **immigration**.
4. Shweta Bhatnagar and Lisa Williams expressed interest in getting involved with the Home for All Initiative and serving as Commission liaisons to the Initiative. Supervisor Groom will facilitate their involvement.

After the lunch break, Commission members worked in small groups to develop work plans that identified goals, objectives and actions for each focus area for the period of March 2017 to March 2018. A work plan template was provided for each group and the following terms were defined:

**Goal** = *“What we want to accomplish*

**Objective(s)** = *more specific than a goal – (SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time based)*

**Actions** = *specific steps that will be taken to accomplish the stated objective*

The following is the list of small groups that worked on developing work plans:

1. Women's Leadership Conference: Janet, Stacie, Vivian
2. Hall of Fame: Christine, Lisa, Juda
3. Criminal Justice: Tanisha, Marguerite, Lisa, Shweta
4. Assessing the status of women in SMC: Kristy (worked with Group #5)
5. Promoting women in the workforce: Anisha, Linda, Shweta

As the session was ending, each work group provided a summary of the work plan they were creating. There will be time at the upcoming Commission meeting for work plans to be finalized and compiled into a CSW Work Plan for 2017-18.

As a closing activity, each Commission member was asked to share one work that describes her "passion", the energy that motivates her Commission work.

Change

Fairness

Equity

Inspiration

Hope

Mindful

Results

Impact

Community

Joy

All of the above

Resist

Improvement

Impact

Results/Outcomes

After final comments from Supervisor Groom, Linda Koelling adjourned the session at 1:30 PM.