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Representative Arthur J. O'Neill

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Teresa C. Younger

PCSW COMMISSION MEETING
THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2009
PERMANENT COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM
18-20 TRINITY STREET, HARTFORD, CT 06106

- Present:** Commissioners Susan O. Storey, Tanya Meck, Elizabeth Donohue (via phone), Yvonne R. Davis (via phone), Barbara DeBaptiste (via phone), Carrie Gallagher (via phone), Melanie O'Brien, Jean L. Rexford (via phone), Denise Rodosevich, Cindy R. Slane, Cecilia J. Woods
- Guest:** Judge Beverly Hodgson
- Staff Present:** Teresa C. Younger and Rosemary López
- Excused and/or Absent:** Commissioners Adrienne Farrar Houël, Patricia E.M. Whitcombe, Senator Andrew J. McDonald, Senator John A. Kissel, Representative Michael P. Lawlor and Representative Arthur J. O'Neill

Chairperson Susan O. Storey called the meeting to order on Thursday, May 7, 2009 at 2:35 p.m.

Chairperson Storey welcomed and introduced Judge Beverly Hodgson, PCSW's Consultant who is monitoring sexual harassment complaints of corrections officers at the Department of Correction (DOC).

Judge Hodgson reported that for nearly 5 years she has been monitoring the investigation of sexual harassment complaints at the DOC. She has developed a 2 very constructive relationship with the Affirmative Action Unit which investigates complaints. Over this time she has noticed that the number of complaints has dropped off substantially. There has been a significant culture change at the DOC so pinpointing the reason for the drop is hard to do. She mentioned that at this point 80% of the complaints filed are about gossip, the other 20% are serious complaints. There is a rise in complaints of woman to woman harassment. The DOC is being strict about their "zero tolerance policy" and is handling the complaints very well. Judge Hodgson identified and commented on an issue of concern having to do with the amount of time that supervisory staff takes to refer sexual harassment issues to the Affirmative Action Unit (AAU). When she brought this concern to the AAU director and he mentioned that he would take the issue up with supervisors involved.

Judge Hodgson contract expires on June 30, 2009. Ms. Younger mentioned that she in conversations with Commissioner Theresa Lantz and she has received a verbal commitment to continue another monitoring contract as soon as the General Assembly votes on the budget.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2009 COMMISSION MEETING

Action Item # 05-09-01

Commissioner Meck moved the approval of the minutes of the Thursday, April 2, 2009 Commission meeting. Commissioner Gallagher seconded the motion. The motion passed with Commissioners Rodosevich and O'Brien abstaining.

REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON

Chairperson Storey thanked Commissioner Tanya Meck, Chair of the Nominating Committee, for all her time and energy to put together a slate of officers for the upcoming year. Chairperson Storey deferred to Commissioner Meck to give a report.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Meck, presented the following slate of officers for consideration for office during the 2009-2010 year:

Chairperson	Adrienne Farrar Houël
Vice Chairperson	Cecilia J. Woods
Treasurer	Elizabeth Donohue
Secretary	Denise Rodosevich

Commissioner Meck thanked them for accepting the nomination to serve on the executive committee. A vote on the slate will take place at the June Commission meeting. The Chair will accept any additional nominations from the floor at that time.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Teresa C. Younger, Executive Director apologized for not having a written report. She commented that it had been a very busy time but everyone.

Ms. Younger gave the following updates:

- Michelle Noehren, Legislative Analyst, put together some great Pay Equity Day activities. We had an amazing Pay Equity Day event where about 25 or 30 people attended an intergenerational coffeehouse in West Hartford. To mark the day we requested and were granted a Pay Equity Day proclamation by Governor Rell. Several schools in Connecticut reported using the high school curriculum that was sent to their schools. We distributed

nearly 2,000 pay equity buttons and had two Op-Eds that appeared in the Connecticut Post, Danbury News-Times, Stamford Advocate and The Day in New London over the weekend.

- Christine Palm, Communications Director, is attempting to get an Op-ed on ESSI placed for mother's day.
- Natasha M. Pierre, Legislative Director was featured in the Connecticut Law Tribune on her appoint to the Commission on Child Support Guideline Commission by Governor Rell. Copies of the article were distributed.
- Fairfield University sent out a petition to Governor Rell and Legislative Leadership with over 200 signatures of students and staff requesting the continuation of PCSW.
- Ms. Pierre represented the PCSW in Washington DC at the invitation of U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis. Secretary Solis read our testimony on women and green jobs and invited PCSW to participate in a roundtable discussion on the future of women and green jobs. PCSW was the only group from CT and the only women's public policy agency. After Ms. Pierre's return the staff has met and is looking to see what can be done here in Connecticut.
- Lisa Sementilli has been working to create a short 5 to 7 minute video highlighting the voices of women and their concerns around healthcare. The video will draw attention to the Connecticut Women's Health Campaign Universal Healthcare Principles and will be shown on the PCSW and hopefully the Healthcare4All websites.
- There is a commitment on a national level by insurance companies to stop using gender as a filter for costs associated with health insurance premiums. This progress would mean that women would pay the same premiums as men.
- 30 plus years ago the first generation of women to work in the building and constructions trade began breaking ground and now they will be retiring. We have co-sponsored an event on May 16, 2009 with the Carpenters Union Local 24 to honor these women that have made history.
- Doreen Fredette, Project Coordinator, has been putting together a conference for Women Business Owners. The conference will take place on Friday, July 24, 2009 at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain CT. Save the date flyers were distributed
- Jeanne Miner, Trainer continues to provide the Sexual Harassment Awareness and Prevention Training to state agencies and is preparing for the next Affirmative Action Officers/Attorney General Designee training where she will train about 200 people.
- PCSW continues to monitor the budget very closely. At this time we are in a holding pattern with all budget matters but have had many conversations with legislators and the conversations are still occurring. Given the financial crisis in so many states, women's commissions in New England and throughout the county are going through some tough times. Trends show that many other commissions are feeling the pinch of tough times also.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Ms. Younger distributed copies of the budget to the commissioners for their information. She reported that the agency has been very frugal and will be returning a significant amount of money back to the general fund.

OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Slane reported that she was talking to a State Trooper that mentioned she was the only female officer that graduated in her class of 29 a couple of years ago. Commissioner Slane was shocked to learn of the low numbers of women involved in the Connecticut State Police and that the recruitment number of women was still so low.

Ms. Younger mentioned that she had attended the graduation of the new State Police troopers where of 61 officers and there were only 5 women. Ms. Younger has exchanged letters with the Commissioner John Danaher of the Department of Public Safety and will be calling him to schedule a meeting with him to continue the conversation on the retention and promotion of women in the ranks of the Connecticut State Police.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Slane suggested that PCSW look into the number of women on local boards and commissions in the future. Ms. Younger committed to looking in to it.

Ms. Younger announced that the June 4th commission meeting will be a full 2 hr meeting due to all the items on the agenda.

Ms. Younger also informed them that sometime in late summer or early fall they would have a commissioner retreat depending on the budget.

It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

The next meeting of the PCSW will be held on **Thursday, June 4, 2009, at 2:30 p.m.** at the PCSW Office in Hartford.

Adrienne Farrar Hoüel
Secretary

Rosemary López
Date Approved