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**Hampden County Commission on the Status of Women and Girls**

**Minutes for November 9, 2017**

**Longmeadow Fire Department  
Longmeadow, MA**

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**I. Call to Order**

Chair Murray called the meeting to order at 6:26 PM

**II. Attendees:** Nicole Murray, Shanique Spalding, Patti Hallberg, Dawn DiStefano, Jennifer Metsch, Michelle Goncalves (arrives at 6:35), Arlene Rodriguez (arrives at 7:32)

**III. Approval of Minutes of August 2017**

Motion to approve (Hallberg). Seconded (DiStefano). All in favor. Motion passes.

**IV. Chair Report**

Chair Murray approached Commissioner Hurst with a number of issues related to our bylaws. These will be discussed in Old Business.

Regional Commissioner Applications

Chair Murray reminded Commissioners who have terms expiring at the end of this year that they need to submit their applications to the state commission to be eligible to continue in the role.

Applications for the regional commission are due to the state commission by November 12, 2017.

Regional Commissions have the right to interview potential candidates and can submit recommendations to the State Commission. Regional Commissions cannot eliminate applications, however.

The HCCSWG will not review applications for the 2017 cycle.

Motions to accept chairs report (Metsch). Seconded (DiStefano). All in favor. Motion passes.

**V. Vice Chair Report**

Vice Chair made no report.

Motion to accept Vice Chair report (DiStefano). Seconded (Metsch). All in favor. Motion passes.

**VI. Other Reports**

Subcommittees

Chair Murray spoke to Commissioner Parrot about HCCSWG question regarding subcommittees/taskforces and open meeting requirements. Commissioner Parrot confirmed that any subgroup of the commission (whether called subcommittees or not) that are advising the larger commission must adhere to open meeting laws.

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To activate the HCCSWG subcommittees while keeping in line with open meeting requirements, Chair Murray suggested that:

1. The first portion of the commission's monthly meeting be dedicated to subcommittees.

This means meeting notices will include subcommittee meetings on the agenda.

Chair Murray confirmed that the simultaneous meetings of all subcommittees is not an issue for open meeting law.

2. To allow commissioners to experience multiple subcommittees, we will rotate committee assignments every few months.

Committee assignments:

Legislative: Arlene Rodriguez, Dawn DiStefano, Nicole Murray

Programming and Planning: Jackie Griswold, Michelle Goncalves, Jennifer Metsch

Tech/Social Media: Ellen Moorhouse, Shanique Spalding, Patti Hallberg

Motion that Dec 14, 2017 meeting open with subcommittee meetings first, and then move to the larger group meeting (Metsch). Seconded (Hallberg).

Discussion: The commission meetings will continue to be from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM and subcommittees will occur within that larger meeting timeframe.

All in favor. Motion passes.

#### Public Comments at meetings

Discussion occurred around the timing for public comments during the general commission meeting. It was decided that the meetings should run as follows:

Subcommittees begin at 6 PM. The general body meeting is called to order at 6:45 PM, with public comment as the first item on the agenda.

At the beginning of the open comment session, the chair shall indicate how much time individuals have to speak.

As outlined in the public posting of the general body meeting, those wishing to submit public comment shall submit information in advance to the chair.

#### VII. Old Business

##### Advocacy

Chair Murray reminded the Commission that it must remain bipartisan and cannot support specific candidates. Commissioners as individual citizens can support candidates

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with OUT utilizing their role as a commissioner. The commissioner status cannot be used to promote commissioners politically or to support a specific candidate.

The Commission can advocate for legislation that is beneficial to women and girls – focusing on the issue and not the candidates.

Bylaws

Discussion of draft bylaws occurred and DiStefano volunteered to update the current version and circulate to commission members.

**VIII. New Business**

Semi-Annual Regional Commission Convening meeting will occur November 14, 2017 in Worcester.

Topics HCCSWG may want to raise at the meeting:

Closing of Mass Teen Alliance may provide an opportunity for the HCCSWG to continue related work.

Working with local communities to facilitate trainings to prevent sex trafficking connected with the opening of the Springfield casino

**IX. Announcements**

1. Spalding announced that she has taken a new position working for the Planned Parenthood Advocacy Fund, which organizes around political initiatives and legislative work. Two of the Planned Parenthood legislative priorities overlap with those of the Commission: Healthy Youth (which may pass next session) and ACCESS (which may pass this session). Spalding will send the commissioners snapshots of each bill and can update the legislative subcommittee on legislation moving forward, as appropriate.
2. Chair Murray will contact Moorhouse to confirm that the location of the December HCCSWG meeting is in an accessible location.
3. MA Office of Economic Empowerment is doing workshops across the state to promote financial literacy of women. An opportunity may exist to involve the regional commissions in this work.
4. A newly formed working group on civic learning within the legislature is looking at legislation and curriculum to encourage involvement in public service and to promote K-12 civics education.

**X. Any items that may lawfully come before this body.**

None.

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**IX. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn (Spalding). Seconded (Rodriguez). All in favor.

Meeting adjourns: 8:10 PM

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