

Hampden County Commission on the Status of Women and Girls  
Minutes DRAFT

December 13, 2018  
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Indian Orchard Citizens Council  
117 Main St, Indian Orchard, MA 01151

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TOWN OF LUDLOW

- 1) Call to Order and Roll Call
  - a) Distefano called the meeting to order at 6:15 PM
  - b) Roll Call
    - i) Present: Dawn DiStefano, Michelle Goncalves, Pattie Hallberg, Jennifer Metsch, Nicole Murray, Shaitia Spruell, Shanique Spalding (arrived at 6:29), Ellen Moorhouse (arrived at 6:18 PM)
- 2) Public Speak Out (15 minutes)
  - a) No members of the public were present for public speak out.
- 3) Subcommittee meetings
  - a) Subcommittees did not meet. Instead, committees reported out as a group:
    - i) Legislative Subcommittee  
(1) No report
    - ii) Programming Subcommittee  
(1) No report
    - iii) Social Media and Communications Committee  
(1) No report
  - b) Murray moves to close discussion of subcommittees. Hallberg seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

*Moorhouse arrives.*

- 4) Approval of minutes from November 8, 2018 meeting
  - a) Metsch moves to accept minutes. Spruell seconds. Motion passes unanimously.
- 5) Chair report
  - a) Recommendation for new commissioner has been forwarded to MCSW. MCSW will meet in January and will vote on the nomination at that meeting.
  - b) Distefano attended a planning meeting for a research project for Women's Fund research on the status of women and girls.
    - i) Group is trying to understand what data exists already and what is needed. Public Health Institute is conducting the evaluation.
    - ii) Research scope is limited, and the Women's Fund is looking for suggestions on creative ways to collect data.
    - iii) Women's Fund identified top 4 areas for research:
      - (1) Sexual and intimate partner dating violence
      - (2) Public safety and crime (safety of women and girls in their own neighborhoods)
      - (3) Incarceration and juvenile detention (tied with Political Representation)
      - (4) Political Representation (tied with Incarceration)
    - iv) Report will have to be complete by April 8, 2019

*Spalding arrives.*

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- c) Community Health Needs Assessment is conducting focus groups and key informant interviews.
    - i) They would like to see a copy of the HCCSWG survey results
    - ii) Metsch, Hallberg, Spalding, DiStefano attended the regional semi-annual convening.
      - (1) At the meeting, Berkshire Commission mentioned that it would like to do a public hearing in the Western Massachusetts Regional Women's Correctional Center in Chicopee. That commission is interested in the Hampden County location because the Berkshire incarceration facility has been closed, so it now serves their population.
      - (2) This conversation will continue at the January HCCSWG meeting.
  - d) Moorhouse moves to accept chair report. Spruell seconds. Passes unanimously.
- 6) Vice Chair report
- a) Sexual Health Lobby Day (with MCSW) will be January 17
    - i) Planned Parenthood is organizing transportation from western MA to the State House.
    - ii) Participants are needed as trainers. Would like 18-20 trainers present and approximately 400 people.
      - (1) January 12 @ 11-3 is a train the trainers training. Additional participant webinars will also be created. Logistics are still being sorted out.
      - (2) Cosponsors are needed for the lobby day.
    - iii) The following bills will be the focus of the day:
      - (1) Expanding Abortion Access
      - (2) Healthy Youth Act
    - iv) Funding focus will be:
      - (1) HIV
      - (2) Teen pregnancy (unintended pregnancies)
    - v) Legislative bills will not be submitted until January 18, so many of the questions during the day may focus on cosponsors and budget asks.
  - b) Metsch moves to accept chair report. Moorhouse seconds. Passes unanimously.
- 7) Old Business
- a) Fall HCCSWG Hearing and report to MCSW
    - i) Hearing occurred November 8, 2018 at Chicopee Boys and Girls Club
    - ii) Commissioner Metsch was commended for undertaking significant organization of the hearing
    - iii) Metsch will draft formal thank you letters to the Chicopee Boys and Girls Club, Chicopee Public Access, and Brian Nicks Production Company.
    - iv) Notes from hearing will be included in the HCCSWG annual report
    - v) Chicopee TV has posted the video from the hearing.
      - (1) Commissioners are asked to watch the video before the hearing and to be prepared to discuss how to organize the data and what concrete steps to take next at our January meeting.
        - (a) Commissioners should consider if the issues identified can be addressed through legislation or procedural changes in departments, school committees, etc.
        - (b) DiStefano suggested the following key topics from the hearing and asked that commissioners review the list for edits as they watch the video.
          - (i) Health and wellness education and access (food, personal hygiene)
          - (ii) Domestic violence
          - (iii) Sexual harassment and assault (reporting, counseling, education)
          - (iv) Gender biased dress codes
          - (v) Lack of mentors and leaders
          - (vi) Environmental issues
          - (vii) Social media – bullying, slut shaming, harassment
          - (viii) Non traditional careers for women
    - vi) Spalding will send an email to all registrants alerting them to the new video posting and to request written testimony from those who spoke.

- (1) The email should include a mention that the HCCSWG will attend the March 28 Springfield Public Schools speak out so the speakers know that the commission is still acting on their testimony.

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- b) Constituent/Community Survey
- i) Survey will close January 7, 2019 with a goal of 100 responses.
  - ii) All previous HCCSWG speakers will be asked to distribute the survey.
- 8) New Business
- a) MSCW semi-annual convening
    - i) Meeting occurred December 6, 2018 at Quinsigamond Community College
    - ii) Many commissions have picked a theme and collecting, disseminating data and then creating action plans on that theme.
      - (1) Regional commissions are focusing on: housing and healthcare, legal issues for women and girls, sexual health, teen sexting, resource guide creation, domestic violence
      - (2) There was little discussion of girls (versus women) among the other commissions
      - (3) HCCSWG commissioners occurred around the sufficiency of focusing on only one issue when the commission covers the full status of women and girls.
    - iii) Regional commissions vary in how they organize the commission. Some do not have subcommittees and some divide based on content topics (e.g. housing, health)
    - iv) Many commissions hold one one hour meeting once a month.
    - v) Calling into meetings is complicated in terms of public meeting and only those in person count toward a quorum.
    - vi) National Association of Commissions for Women have a useful website [nacw.org](http://nacw.org) and regional commissions are already members.
  - b) Planning for Legislative Breakfast
    - i) Tentatively planned for March 8, 2019 to coincide with International Women's Day.
    - ii) Anticipated capacity is 50-70 people
    - iii) Commissioners will call college campuses to check on events already planned for March 8 and what space exists for our use.
      - (1) Moorhouse – Elms
      - (2) Spruell – Springfield college
      - (3) Metsch – WNEU
      - (4) Hallberg – Baypath
      - (5) Goncalves – STCC, UMass at Springfield
      - (6) Murray – Westfield
      - (7) Distefano – Elms
      - (8) Spalding – AIC
    - iv) Advertising should include high schools to try to include girls.
- 9) Any Other Items that may Lawfully Come Before this Body
- a) Metsch moves to open the floor for public hearing. Hallberg seconds. Passes unanimously.
    - i) Yolanda Cancel attended a Springfield School Committee meeting to pass on information heard at the HCCSWG hearing.
      - (1) Spfld Public Schools organizes 4 public speak outs a year, with one occurring December 13, 2018. The next will be March 28 @ 6 PM.
        - (a) Cancel spoke to a Springfield school committee member to raise concerns about sex education; the committee member was also experiencing similar concerns with her own daughter.
        - (b) HCCSWG may want to consider speaking at the speak out

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- (2) Charter Schools have advisory boards and oversight committees that are separate from the Springfield School Committee, so citizens would have to speak to those groups to address concerns in charter schools.
  - ii) HCCSWG is asked to consider its role as a convener between the Springfield School Committee, the Empowerment Zone and the charter school boards.
    - (1) Speakers identified at our hearing and through Yolanda's work may be speakers at the HCCSWG legislative breakfast.

10) Adjournment

Metsch moves to adjourn. Spruell seconds. Passes unanimously

Meeting adjourns at 8:05 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Goncalves

Secretary