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**Hampden County Commission on the Status of Women and Girls  
September Meeting Meeting Minutes**

September 9, 2021

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Online via Zoom: [Zoom Meeting Link](#)

Facebook Livestream: [Link](#)

Please contact [hccswg@gmail.com](mailto:hccswg@gmail.com) for the meeting password

- I. Call to Order and Roll Call- Gabrielle called to order at 6:09PM.
  - A. In attendance:
    1. Tara Marshall
    2. Gabrielle Jackson
    3. Jennifer Metsch
    4. Michelle Goncalves
    5. Jacqueline Velez
  - B. Not Present
    1. Patricia Hallberg
    2. Lizzy Ortiz
    3. Dawn Distefano
    4. Shanique Spalding
- II. Discussion with our featured guest, Mayor Nicole LaChapelle of Easthampton, MA
- III. Public Speak Out-3 members of the public were present in the zoom and spoke during the discussion with the Mayor. Mary Hull, Margaret Tantillo, and Kristen Mello.
- IV. Approval of minutes from July 8, 2021, Jennifer made a motion, Tara seconded, Michelle abstained...we do not have a quorum so approval of minutes will be done in the October meeting.
- V. Chair Report
  - A. Just moved right into new business
- VI. Vice Chair Report
  - A. n/a
- VII. Old Business
  - A. None
- VIII. New Business
  - A. Social media training for Regional Convening
  - B. Strategic Planning and priorities for the year
    1. Gabrielle suggested a social in person event with the commission, like a live coffee chat event.
    2. Jen suggested breaking into smaller committees to come up with ideas on how to take what we have learned during Covid and re-invent our community. Gabrielle started a Google doc with committees and

- ideas on how to begin.
3. Calendar of events
- C. Next meeting October, 14, 2021
- IX. Mass Commission Updates
- A. MCSW September Regional Convening is on 9/29 at 5:30PM to 7PM
- B. Collaboration with our liaison for more events with elected leaders
- X. Gabrielle called the meeting to adjourn at 7:53PM, Jennifer moved, Jackie seconded, all in favor.

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**About Our Featured Guest:**

Re-elected to her second term in 2019, Mayor LaChapelle continues to reduce barriers to government and development while fostering an equitable community that sustains the local economy. The Mayor secured critical public infrastructure grants, creating more jobs and protecting Easthampton's most vulnerable environmental resources. In 2018, Mayor LaChapelle's administration leveraged millions of public infrastructure dollars for a mixed-use development with 76 housing units on a 300,000 sq foot former mill site. She unlocked a new retail project bringing 83 full-time union jobs using state and federal monies that opened in July 2021.

Identifying economic innovation as an equity tool, the Mayor launched BE: Blueprint Easthampton with a National League of Cities City Innovative Ecosystems grant. Established November 2020, the City now has an interactive resource map that allows residents, businesses, and regional partners to expand in Easthampton. During the pandemic, BE launched a hyper-local academy to help informal enterprises to join the formal economy. The academy provides technical, financial support, and executive coaching for each participant to take the next step in their business plans.

Putting fact to vision, the Mayor combines Smart Growth principles with publically led strategic planning to strengthen the City's resources. She fights for both the needs and hopes of Easthampton - housing, downtown growth, arts, climate resiliency, and building reuse projects.

Serving on the Baker/Polito Reopening Advisory Board, Municipal Working Group, and the regional Metropolitan Planning Organization, Mayor LaChapelle advocates for Easthampton and surrounding communities. She is the proud member of the Commonwealth Heroine Class of 2011 and recipient of the North Atlantic States Carpenters Local 336, 2021 Above and Beyond Award for her support of labor during the COVID 19 pandemic. She is a graduate of Smith College and Western New England University School of Law.