

**CITY OF NORWALK
COMMISSION ON STATUS OF WOMEN
REGULAR MEETING
VIA ZOOM TELECONFERENCE
SEPTEMBER 11, 2023**

ATTENDANCE: Claudia Werman Connor, Chair; Sharon Baanante; Ashley Gulyas,
Shannon O'Toole Giandurco; Sarah Rendon Garcia; Kristina Testa-Buzzee

STAFF: Michelle Woods Matthews, City of Norwalk Director of Communications

Call to Order

Ms. Connor called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. and acknowledged those in attendance as noted above.

Approval of Minutes – August 14, 2023

Corrections: Page 3 add 'L' to LGBTQ; Page 4 correct Baarante to Baanante.

- ** MS. BAANANTE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF AUGUST 14, 2023 AS CORRECTED WITH CHANGES NOTED.
- ** MS. GULYAS SECONDED THE MOTION.
- ** MOTION PASSED WITH ONE ABSTENTION (O'TOOLE GIANDURCO)

Public Comment - none

New Business

- Update on meeting with Recreation and Parks on the Master Plan

Ms. Woods Matthews reported that Mr. Stowers was unable to attend this meeting as was on the agenda, but she received a memo from him that outlined his comments. He is looking forward to working with the Commission and he asked for his presentation to be rescheduled. Ms. Woods Matthews reviewed the timeline for the City's 10 Year Master Plan is slated for approval, and she will send comments and questions from the Commission to Mr. Stowers so that he can address them at the next meeting.

Ms. Baanante spoke on data collection to tap into the data that has been compiled and incorporate a gender analysis into their sports plan to ensure girls have same opportunity as boys.

She added that when she and Michelle met Mr. Stowers, it was great to see that he is very open to gender equality for youth participation in the City youth sports programs and he looks forward to providing this data on Recreation and Parks usage.

Ms. Gulyas added that the subject of transgender athletes should be included with regard to a policy for those to participate in the gender group that they identify with.

Ms. Connor suggested that members send to her comments and questions that she can forward on to Mr. Stowers.

There was discussion on the next meeting date of October 9, which is a school holiday and the next day October 10 is a day of professional development for teachers. Ms. Connor will survey the group for possible alternate meeting dates and Ms. Woods Matthews will email the Commission if the meeting date changes.

Next steps for potential changes to the Commission's name

Ms. Baanante reported that the sub-committee met and surveyed surrounding cities and towns on commissions that address issues similar to this one. They came up the recommended change to the name to 'Commission on Gender Equity.' Ms. Woods Matthews explained the process of putting this on the agenda for the Ordinance Committee and public hearing. Ms. O'Toole Giandurco clarified that a formal proposal is not required, but a bullet-point outline of the rationale that the objective is for the title to be more consistent with the mission and to be inclusive with addressing all marginalized groups.

- Form a subcommittee to put together a recommendation for a potential annual Norwalk Awards ceremony for 2024

Ms. Connor reviewed the ideas discussed on an awards ceremony:

- Date to be in conjunction with International Women's Day in March.
- Recognize members of the community both young person and adult
- Develop criteria and guidelines for award for individuals that have made an impact on the community in line with our mission.
- Promote on social media and engage community partners.
- Modest entry fee and sponsorships.
- Location suggestions include Arts Space, NCC Art Gallery, or local open space venues such as Space Cat Brewery.
- Ms. Testa-Buzzee agreed to look into locations.

Ms. Connor suggested that rather than a sub-committee project, it would be beneficial to have all members take part in this program and participate where it can best fit into commitments and schedules.

Old Business - Community Outreach and Civic Engagement Committee

Ms. Gulyas reported upcoming events and reviewed the sign-ups for table coverage:

Farmer's Market - October 27
SoNo 5K – October 1

Ms. Woods Matthews noted that 'Touch a Truck' is October 21 and she will look into details with Department of Public Works.

The Norwalk Public Library Partnership is a graphic novel by Jerry Craft on November 1. She is working on book marks to have out for the table and will any other giveaways that are available.

Ms. Gulyas reported that results from Pride in the Park and Farmers Market have been added to the tracking report to tabulate key data on issues.

- New organizations that may want to partner with the Commission. Ms. Zucco reported the sub-committee is working on collaborating with events, and she will have more information next month after their meeting.

Diversification of Boards of Commissions Committee

Ms. Testa Buzzee reported there is an opening on the Fair Housing Advisory Commission, and she read the role of the Board. She mentioned that the former member was with NEON and reminded members to share this opening to members of the community.

Ms. Connor thanked the Commissioners for all their hard work and noted the next meeting is scheduled for October 9, 2023.

ADJOURNMENT

** MS. GULYAS MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** MS. BAANANTE SECONDED THE MOTION.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Telesco Secretarial Services