

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

CALIFORNIA



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MAYOR

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

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KATIE L. BUCKLAND, J.D.
VICE PRESIDENT
ROCIO L. CORDOBA, J.D.
DOMINIQUE DIPRIMA
HELEN H. HAN
LILIANA PÉREZ
FRANCILLE RUSAN WILSON, PH.D.

MINUTES

APRIL 11, 2008
Los Angeles City Hall
200 North Spring Street, Room 1050
Los Angeles, CA 90012

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Susan Berke Fogel, President
Katie Buckland, Vice President (via phone)
Rocio Córdoba
Dominique DiPrima
Liliana Pérez
Francille Rusan Wilson

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Helen Han

STAFF

Kellie Hawkins, Interim Executive Director
Anne Dunn
Veronica Hendrix
Rayshell Chambers
Hannah Farley
Lisa Chandler
Shannon Nemzer
Calvin Birdsong
Satin White (intern)
Taylor Mitchell (intern)

GUESTS

Nikki Shipley
Stella Catanzarite
Gregg Irish

I. CALL TO ORDER

Commission President Fogel called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH 6, 2008

On motion by Commissioner Wilson, seconded by Commissioner DiPrima and unanimously carried, the minutes were approved.

III. PRESENTATION

Deborah Gonzales, LAPD Women's Coordinator – Position at LAPD and the role it plays in support of women in the department

Detective Gonzales distributed a fact sheet of the history of the women's coordinator position to the Commissioners for their review.

Detective Deborah Gonzales gave a brief overview of the history of the women's coordinator position. She thanked the Commission for inviting her to speak about the position. In 1979, as a result of a lawsuit which alleged discriminatory practices in the hiring, selection, and promotion of women, LAPD was placed under a consent decree. Once that lawsuit was settled there were a lot of changes to the department to allow women to freely acclimate themselves to police work. The badge of policeman and policewoman was changed to police officer, and the height requirement was lowered. She stated that the most interesting change was the fact that the women's coordinator position was developed, a position that would help guide and develop women through their career in the department.

Detective Gonzales stated that she was appointed in 1981, and right about that time the department underwent a lot of training for zero tolerance in discrimination, sexual harassment, and hostile work environment issues. She stated that there were benefits to the department: It provided the Chief of Police with immediate and unfiltered information; it provided any department supervisor at anytime the guidance and resolution options for handling these kinds of complaints; it allowed a lot more women to feel freer to come forward with these kinds of issues, with one reporting source and one person who tracked everything; and it provided the opportunity to have information assimilated faster.

Detective Gonzales stated that now there is a proposal to deactivate the position. President Fogel asked Detective Gonzales if she could speculate on the impact that this position has had on women officers and other police department employees as it relates, not only to recruitment, but to retention. Detective Gonzales stated that she was certain that it has had a positive influence because in her position she was able to talk to a lot of women. She stated that without fielding all these types of calls it might be difficult to outline what are the needs of women, unless some kind of survey is done. She stated that the impact wouldn't be known until the position is dissolved.

In response to a question by Commissioner Wilson regarding hostile work environment issues, Detective Gonzales stated that in her position she found it very easy to be able to help these victims when they reported a hostile work environment because it was one-on-one peer counseling to provide guidance and walk victims through the process. As someone who experienced this behavior and was able to work through it, victims had someone they could talk to and relate to.

Commissioner Wilson recommended writing a letter of concern. President Fogel stated that Commissioners want to write a letter asking more questions.

Ms. Hawkins stated that the Commission should look at partnering with the Woman's Police Association as it relates specifically to recruitment and retention. There is no official mentoring system within LAPD. She stated that the Association provides that opportunity and supporting their efforts should be considered.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Interim Executive Director Kellie Hawkins stated that as the Commission celebrated Pioneer Women in March during Women's History Month which should not be the only time to celebrate women, and they should look for other opportunities to celebrate women.

Ms. Hawkins stated that Esther Soriano Hewitt died last Wednesday of liver cancer. Ms. Soriano Hewitt was the foreperson on the Rodney King jury. She also ran the Los Angeles County Dispute Resolution Program. Ms. Soriano Hewitt was an uncelebrated and unsung heroine. Ms. Hawkins recommended that the Commission create the Women of Peace Award in Ms. Soriano Hewitt's honor.

Ms. Hawkins stated that she is going to try to meet with Budget Committee members and their staff within the next two weeks. The Mayor's budget will be released next week.

V. DISCUSSION ON MATTERS FOR COMMISSION ACTION

A. Commission on the Status of Women Policy Platform – Legislative Committee to present Commission's Policy Statement for Fiscal Year 2008-2009
Following discussion, on motion of Commissioner Pérez, seconded by Commissioner Wilson and unanimously carried, the Legislative Policy Statement for Fiscal Year 2008-2009 was approved.

VI. LEGISLATION

Commissioner Córdoba, Legislative Chair, reported on the following bills:

AB 2038 Crime Victims with Disabilities Act

This bill was introduced 2/15/2008 by Assemblymember Sally Leiber (California).

Staff recommends: Hold support, pending further research

SB 1356 Contempt: Victim of Domestic Violence

This bill was introduced 2/20/08 by Senator Leland Yee (California).

Staff recommends: Support

AB 1771 Domestic Violence Convictions

This bill was introduced 1/10/2008 by Assemblymember Ma.

Staff recommends: Non-support

Rayshell Chambers discussed reasons why this bill should not be supported. President Fogel recommended that bills that are opposed should be so stated.

On motion of Commissioner Wilson, seconded by Commissioner Pérez and unanimously carried, not to support SB 1771.

SB 1523 Domestic Violence Victims Limited English Proficiency

This bill was introduced 2/22/2008 by Senator Shelia Kuehl (California).

Staff recommends: Support

SB 1712 Adulterated Cosmetics - Lipstick

This bill was introduced on 2/22/2008 by California State Senator Carole Migden.

Staff recommends: Support

H.R. 4137 College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007

This bill was introduced 11/9/2007 by George Miller.

Staff recommends: Support

H.R. 3922 Gang Reduction, Investment, and Prevention Act

This bill was introduced by Representative Vern Buchanan and has 29 co-sponsors.

Staff recommends: Hold support, until further research

Commissioner Córdoba recommended that this bill have further discussion in Legislation Committee for a more concrete recommendation.

H.R. 901 High School Athletics Accountability Act

This bill was introduced on 2/7/2007 by Congresswoman Louise Slaughter.

Staff recommends: Support

SB 1489 Education about Labor Protections for Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Victims

Senator Shelia Kuehl (California) introduced this bill on February 21, 2008.

Staff recommends: Support

SB 1600 Charter Schools & Comprehensive Health Education
This bill was introduced on 02/22/08 by Senator Sheila Kuehl (California).
Staff recommends: Support.

Following discussion, on motion of Commissioner Córdoba, seconded by Commissioner Wilson and unanimously carried, to support SB 1356, SB 1523, SB 1712, H.R. 4137, H.R. 901, SB 1489 and SB 1600.

VII. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- A. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) – Overview of CEDAW
Deferred to the May meeting.
- B. Young Women from Adversity to Resiliency Program (YWAR) – Update on YWAR activities and upcoming events
There was no report.
- C. LGBT Community – Update on Commission’s involvement with LGBT groups
There was no report.
- D. April 23, 2008, Denim Day in L.A. – Update
Ms. Hawkins stated that Denim Day is April 23rd and invited Commissioners to attend two information session in City Hall hosted by the Commission at 11:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. There will also be a City Council presentation and asked President Fogel to speak, if she was available.

Ms. Hawkins stated that elections will be held at the June meeting as directed by the Mayor’s office.

VIII. REPORT BY COMMISSIONERS IN THE COMMUNITY REGARDING ACTIVITIES PARTICIPATED IN SINCE LAST MEETING

There was no report.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

Stella Catanzarite, Deputy Director of the Workforce Investment Board, distributed informational packets to the Commissioners and members of the audience.

Gregg Irish stated that he is the Mayor’s chief advisor on workforce development and the Executive Director of the Workforce Investment Board.

Mr. Irish gave an overview of the Board. He stated that the Mayor’s Workforce Investment Board is a Commission comprised of 51 members. The majority of which are employers but it also includes members from organized labor, community-based organizations, and government. The Board meets on a quarterly basis but has committees that meet regularly, at least once a month. The City receives \$50 million a year in workforce investment-backed funds from the U.S. Department of Labor.

Mr. Irish stated that the Board is currently in the process of holding public hearings and developing a plan for the expenditure of the \$50 million. So having the Commission executive director interested in where the linkages to women are, they want this Commission involved in some of the activities. He stated that the Board has not properly outreached to women’s organizations. There is a great deal of potential for a return on their investment.

President Fogel stated that a gender analysis would be very helpful to focus efforts on what strategies the Commission can collaborate. Mr. Irish stated that he can provide a report which was generated by the Commission for Children, Youth and Their Families. He stated that the report deals with certain strategies to get people into living wage jobs.

Commissioner Pérez asked about outreach strategy. Mr. Irish stated that women are not specifically addressed although the significant segments or populations that they serve are identified in their plan; it is a draft plan. There are public hearings going on with regard to how they are going to spend \$50 million beginning July 1st. He stated that the outreach plan has not been developed, but is in committee for discussion.

Mr. Irish welcomed Commissioners to provide public comment on the plan. He also invited Commissioners to their committee meetings. He stated that the Board needs to meet with the Commission on the Status of Women for their expertise in terms of how to better address the needs of women.

Ms. Hawkins requested the meeting schedule and a copy of the draft plan. President Fogel stated that the Commission looked forward to working with the Board.

On motion by Commissioner DiPrima, seconded by Commissioner Pérez and unanimously carried to create a Jobs Committee, was approved.

X. ADJOURNMENT

President Fogel adjourned the meeting at 1:05 p.m.

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