The June 20, 2019 meeting of the Solano Commission for Women and Girls (SCWG) was held in the Multipurpose Room (1600) on the first floor of Solano County Administration Center located at 675 Texas Street, Fairfield, CA 94533

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the Solano Commission for Women and Girls was called to order at

6:06pm. Meeting was delayed due to lack of quorum.

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present (13)**

Ana Petero Solano County, District 2

Laura Petty Solano County, District 5

Rochelle Sherlock Solano County Office of Education

Gayle Vaughan City of Benicia

Mary Lou Batchelor City of Dixon

Cornelia Gibson City of Fairfield

Kay Kelley City of Rio Vista

Tiffani Thomas City of Suisun

Judi Ruggiero-Ferrara City of Vacaville

Elease Cheek City of Vallejo

Akon Walker SCWG Appointment

Doriss Panduro SCWG Appointment

Sakina Ali SCWG Appointment

**Members Absent (3)**

Olivia Ruiz Solano County, District 1

Jennifer Hamilton Solano County, District 4

Kaitlyn Dutton SCWG Appointment

**VACANT** Solano County, District 3

**Staff, Speakers, and Guests Present**

Edith Thomas

Sabine Goerke-Shrode

Dr. Frances McCollough

Shandi Fuller

Stacy Martinez

Sophia Gomez

Ayana Chiles

Zoe Chiles

Angelic Anderson

Jennifer Barton

Gloria Diaz

Sherriff Ferrara

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC/BOARD MEMBER**

*This is your opportunity to address the Commission on a matter not listed on the Agenda, but within the subject matter jurisdiction of the SCWG. Please limit your comments to three minutes.*

1. Additions/Deletions to the Agenda

Ms. Thomas inquired about adding information regarding disability from Northay Regional Center to the agenda. If time permits, Chair Sherlock stated that it would be added to the agenda.

1. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda by Commissioner Cheek and seconded by Commissioner Kelley – Vote: Unanimous

1. Approval of the May 16, 2019 SCWG Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes by Commissioner Batchelor and seconded by Commissioner Petty – Vote: Unanimous

**REGULAR CALENDAR**

1. Status Report: Infant and Maternal Mortality Rates Stratified by Race

Chair Sherlock stated that she will be providing a check box of what has been done so far.

Commissioner Walker introduced the guest speakers, Dr. Shandi Fuller and Angelic Anderson who are co-facilitators of the Solano HEALS program, a hybrid program with the Department of Health and Social Services and a community group that works to decrease the disparate outcomes that happen for African American women as it pertains to childbirth and maternal health as it relates to mortality rates.

Dr. Shandi Fuller presented a PowerPoint presentation by first defining what the Solano HEALS program is, its purpose and history. She began by stating their Mission Statement which is to promote equity and healthy births for Black babies and their families in Solano County. HEALS stands for Health Equity for African-American Lives in Solano and began four years ago as a community agency through city match. They met with members of the community to address black infant mortality rates in Solano County.

Areas addressed in Dr. Fuller’s presentation include the following:

a. Infant mortality which is defined as death of an infant before their first birthday. Infant mortality measures the health of a community.

b. Equity, Equality and Reality

c. Why focus on the Black population? Redesign system for different results. e.g. Infant mortality gap: Death of black infants compared to White infants is 2:1

In Solano County, there are seven Black infant deaths a year. Improvements have been made in programs available.

Strategies to improve include long term, precise impact, systems change, and reparations.

d. Maternal mortality rate

Lower in California than the rest of the country although disparity is the same as it pertains to Race.

e.g. Black moms mortality rate 4X as high as Whites in Solano County.

A question was posed as to what is meant by maternal mortality rate. The answer is due to complications during childbirth, shortly after delivery and is based on 1,000 births while maternal mortality rates is based on 100,000 births.

The rate in Solano County: for a relatively small county, not many births and deaths so equitable analysis is calculated by “near misses” (someone who almost died). Black women are twice as likely than White women to be “near misses”.

e. Why Infant Mortality (black babies)? The reason is because they are born too early (before 37 weeks) and too small.

Results were presented to the community toward creating more awareness.

f. Strategies/Solutions: Upstream/Downstream

Health outcomes

Root of problem: historic and current racism and toxic stress, policy, environment, practices, ideas and theories held.

Visible surface level problems include distribution of wealth, jobs, incarceration rates, place or residence, exposure, environment, air quality, toxic stress that leads to high blood pressure and other health problems.

Solutions began with addressing prematurity and birth outcomes by focusing on “centering pregnancy” which is a two-hour class focusing on women who are at the same gestational period of pregnancy. Group visits including prenatal visits.

Because not a lot of black women are enrolled, one solution has been to have an all Black centering group to reduce the stigma and mental health by increasing access which includes building website for resources.

g. Race equity trainings, addressing racism in the medical field beginning by defining terms, recognizing biases and normalizing the conversation as it pertains to racism in healthcare. There are two versions to address this issue: 1) governmental training on racism and 2) medical providers and health clinics.

A question was posed as to the curriculum proposed for the medical professionals. Answer: Race equity training.

Chair Sherlock stated that Solano Transportation Authority is working on policy to include equity and is conducting workshops. To that end, workshops have been organized in Vallejo and Suisun.

A question was posed as to whether the classes offered were open to members of the community throughout the county. Answer: There are two classes: 1) The CARE team with Commissioner Walker. Commissioner Walker stated that her team is working on a session for County employees. Clarification to the question—classes for pregnant moms. How is the information shared beyond building the website? They are beginning with medical centers including Kaiser that offer prenatal care. More information will be added to the website as it becomes available.

The Program Director of Agape Counseling Center in Fairfield expressed her interest in the services provided and would like to be on the referral list.

Dr. Fuller stated that there are community meetings that meet on the last Wednesday of the month, bi-monthly at JFK Library from 5:30-7:30. The next meeting is in July and open to the community to inform them of the progress. Executive meetings are held during the week at 1pm or 3pm while dates fluctuate. Chair Sherlock explained that part of what is being done with the Status Report is collecting data so as to understand the status of women and girls in Solano County, how to interpret and what role the Commission has or can have in being an advocate for policy change, programs and services, raising awareness in education. She posed a question as to what is needed from groups who might be in a position to advocate should that become a priority. Dr. Fuller stated that advocates are needed to talk to those with political will. Morbidity is an issue that needs to be addressed and voiced as to the urgency of the problem. Support is needed in programs that address Black women and Black babies outside of Solano HEALS and including Solano HEALS.

1. Status Report: Crime and Violence Against Women

Chair Sherlock introduced Gloria Diaz of the Vacaville Police Department and the work Vacaville FIRST of the family intervention response services team, which addresses areas such as elder abuse, domestic violence with social workers and law enforcement.

Commissioner Ferrara added that it is hard to find statistics on female victims in Solano County, as information from Solano County goes to state and federal government but are not reported back out specifically to Solano County, therefore, it is necessary to go out to city agencies to inquire about victims statistics on women and girls in each state and was introduced to Ms. Diaz in order to compile statistics on domestic violence.

Ms. Diaz, a licensed clinical social worker and 25 year veteran of the Vacaville Police Department presented a PowerPoint presentation:

Areas addressed include the following:

a. Availability of data

b. How to obtain data – must be specific, so she gathered data from 2018, violent crimes on females 0-99, more specifically violent crime codes or penal codes as every incident and every violent crime have certain codes. Ask by category, the information requires a charge. There are over 10,000 crime reports a year. The data presented is on violent crimes.

c. One victim can have multiple reports (for same incident or multiple) – There were a total of 391 violent crimes against women in Vacaville only; 66% or 258 child abuse and domestic violence which breaks down to 119 child abuse and 139 just domestic violence felonies, 34% or 133 were sexual assault, crimes using deadly weapons, robbery, carjacking and one homicide, and 77 were sex related crimes, 54 of which were lude acts. Twenty-three rapes, majority by people known to the victims. Note: some could be included in domestic violence. Some reporting could be duplicated as they would be included in two or more different categories. There were 23 robberies and three carjacking. If needed, demographics can be obtained.

Question: Is trafficking included? Yes, under sex assault crimes. There is no human trafficking code so are included in other statistics and must be examined by case. Codes are the same for each police department.

d. Domestic violence increased by 47% from years prior, which amounts to “a couple of cases”

In special victims unit, there was a huge increase in domestic violence cases. There as only been one part-time advocate to perform prevention work. The increase amounts to 20 more cases. For example, from 2012-2016, there was an average of 46 cases of domestic violence. In the past year the number increased to 63 cases. Sixty-nine percent were male suspects. Some reasons included meth and alcohol use of the batterer, and jealousy. Twenty-seven percent of cases were repeat offenders. In 17% of the cases, children were present, but maybe higher, as some are not reported. Five stalking cases.

Chair Sherlock posed a question as to whether the data reflects population change. Answer: No. Another question posed was regarding unreported cases. There has been a decline in reporting from Spanish speaking women. For example, in 2016, there were 76 cases, while in 2018, there were 23 cases. Last year, there were 15, possibly a reflection of political climate. Data is available.

Dr. McCollough posed a question regarding the 391 cases of violence against women, compared to men? Answer: Domestic violence data can be compared. Another question was of the 69 percent male suspects versus 31 percent female suspects, were they in same-sex relationships. Answer: Could be. Statistics were for relationships. In 69 percent of the cases, the male was arrested. In 31 percent of the cases, the female was arrested as the primary batterer, and could be in same sex, but Diaz did not have the data. Data analyzed was just domestic violence, as it was available. Another question was asked if some of the cases involved child battery. The data presented was between adults, domestic violence. Regarding child abuse, a question posed as to whether it included neglect/abandonment? Answer: Physical, strike by force under the age of eight, and willful cruelty, corporal punishment, felony cases, but not general neglect. Data will be sent to the Commission.

e. Services provided to victims of crimes (under First Unit)

In 2018, services were provided to 117 victims, majority, 79% were female (some male), and majority of services were for domestic violence and child abuse cases. Breakdown is seven sexual assaults, three elder abuse, five stalking. In terms of demographics, 49% White, 29% Hispanic,12% African-American, the average age was 31.

Services provided include mental health professionals, mental health advocates crisis intervention, safety planning. Help is also provided for restraining orders and the team also appears in court with the victims for support. Other services include parenting programs and basic needs including financial services.

A question was posed as to whether there are referrals to the social services in the county? Answer: Yes, services include family resource centers of which there are seven in Vacaville which are child abuse prevention, child welfare services. Additional data will be provided upon request.

Chair Sherlock would like the status committee to meet and inquire about data from other cities/jurisdictions. Vice Chair Petty stated that the Commission ought to consider how much to victims matter in the status report and how much those statistics matter in the status report and the current data and how much they inform the status report.

Chair Sherlock stated that the California Women’s Foundation provided a report revealing that in 2014, Solano County ranked 55 of 58 on worst violence against women. Data would reflect where we are now. An invitation was extended for Diaz to meet with the status committee.

1. SCWG Financial Structure and Practices

Jennifer Barton and Chair Sherlock reviewed, and the Commission discussed, Commission finances and practices, including the structure of the Solano Commission for Women and Girls Fund, which is held at the Solano Community Foundation (SCF). Alternative structures were also discussed. A handout on the financial structure was distributed. One of the areas discussed was the possibility of a 501C-3. Overview of the financial structure was addressed (see handout).

Solano Community Foundation is a separate entity from Commission and Solano County. Commission doesn’t own fund that was established to get the Commission started. The Commission does not own the fund and has different rules and regulations that maybe different from what the Commission may want to do. Setting up a non-profit would also be a separate entity which means that the Commission will not own the non- profit, but someone is going to be responsible for organizing and running it, and abide by the rules and regulations of a non-profit, and there is a fee.

Jennifer Barton, a founding member of the Commission, reviewed the creation and vision of the Commission that was brought to the Solano County Board of Supervisors for approval.

The baseline from the elected officials, administration, and County, was that there will be no funding from the County. In their research, they discovered that the majority of Commissions were self-funded through a non-profit.

One consideration was to take over a non-profit, change the name and maintain it. At one of the last formation meetings, each founding member contributed $100. They also considered other ways to raise money, such as other organizations. For example, Supervisor Hannigan and Barton, as part of a Soroptimist group asked for financial support from the Soroptimists of Solano County from which Central Solano, Vallejo and Rio Vista contributed $5000, $5000 and $1000 respectively.

In searching for somewhere to put the funds, the original non-profit decided not to dismantle, and the founders needed an alternative. The Solano Community Foundation, which is a non-profit stated that the Commission may start a fund under “Friends of the Commission” which charges five percent one-time year fee, of what is deposited. Funds were deposited in September, 2018 and were charged $100, September to December. Barton paid $100. In 2019, the foundation charged 3.5% fee. In order to write a check, it must go to a non-profit, county or city. Several soroptimist groups would not act as the fiscal agent. Rio Vista soroptimists of which Commissioner Kelley is a part, is considering being the fiscal agent, and Barton also spoke to the County.

When a vendor is tasked with completing the report and needs to be paid, the Commission votes to pay the vendor, the process is that the fiscal agent writes the check and then the funds go to the vendor.

Solano Community Foundation has created disbursement request form as to how to spend funds including the EIN number to ensure that the disbursement matches the purpose of the fund. Barton or Sherlock would sign off on the disbursement. A similar form was created by Chair Sherlock and Barton to ensure that the Soroptimists who donated funds are aware of where the funds were spent. In requesting funds, the Soroptimists were ensured that they were specifically for the report with some used for start-up such as a website, possibly a brochure, but minimal.

Vice Chair Petty thanked Barton and Sherlock for their work and explanation and inquired that, as some funds would likely be used for website and other start up costs, what would be considered too much? Chair Sherlock stated that $500 were set aside for start-up costs. Barton stated that the goal was for the Commission to focus on its task and not have be worried about money. Sherlock stated that the Soroptimists were concerned that the report may cost $20,000-$40,000. The Commission would do preliminary work to offset the cost.

Question: Solano Community Foundation is making money on our money and are taking from the principal, please elaborate.

Answer: It was a better deal than starting a non-profit which would have cost anywhere from $800-$1500. Therefore the 3.5% or $375 was worth it.

Follow-up question: The other option was to start a non-profit that would accrue interest.

Clarification: It’s not about interest, but that the Soroptimists would write a check to a non-profit. Donors writing checks to a non-profit would be a tax write-off.

Question: Eventually, will the Commission be/need a non-profit as more money will be raised.

Answer: Commissioner Kelley spoke to Phyllis who started two non-profits to run their money through. Non-profits are time consuming and cost-effective needing to write articles of incorporation, by-laws, etc. Kelley talked about her experience as a non-profit, self-incorporated and had to have a non-profit as a pass-through for her group. They hired a group in Berkeley that acted as a pass-through account. Money set up in a separate account, different bank account, funds never comingled. As president of Rio Vista Soroptimists, Kelley will write a proposal to present asking them to be the Commission’s fiscal agent at 1%. An organization already set up as a fiscal agent is more practical than the Commission starting its on non-profit.

Question: What’s the long-term goal? For example, responding to the data that is collected.

Answer: Chair Sherlock referred to her experience with the Senior Coalition which was an advisory board to the Board of Supervisors. There was a non-profit fiscal agent who took money on their behalf, and the Coalition got sponsors for their programs and events. They paid for costs, and funds went to the fiscal agent. The Commission can do something similar for events.

Question: Will there need to be a committee or person to get sponsors or write grants?

Answer: Establish “Friends of the Commission”. Committee could be friends of the Commission.

Question regarding Senior coalition. Were you able to write grants and agencies would provide funds without EIN numbers?

Answer: Grants were not written because it was a county entity. Instead, received sponsorships for events.

Question: Does it matter what kind of non-profit?

Answer: It has to be a 501C-3

If Rio Vista Soroptimists were the fiscal agent, then the account would be “Friends of the Women and Girls Commission” account. The Soroptimist’s name would not be on it. They would be strictly a hired agent to deposit and write checks, and provides reports on where funds were spent. The EIN number used will be that of the pass-through fund.

Question on process: Reimbursements?

Answer: Solano Community Foundation cannot disburse funds to an individual, only to a non-profit. However, that will not be the case with Rio Vista Soroptimists.

Commissioner Kelley clarified that if Rio Vista Soroptimists were the fiscal agent, they would set up a separate account i.e. “Friends of SCWG”.

Question: Should this be reflected in the Bi-laws?

Answer: No need, as SCWG is a county entity. That is why there was no “Treasurer”.

Question: Who does the bookkeeping?

Answer: Rio Vista Soroptimists’ treasurer will do booking keeping for both, but two separate accounts.

Sherlock asked what the Commission would like to do. Vice Chair Petty proposed that this issue be added to the September agenda. Commissioner Kelley will meet with her Board. Barton will meet with another non-profit.

Commissioner Ruiz has been reimbursed.

Vice Chair Petty suggested that practices and priorities be added as a future agenda item.

1. Committee Reports
2. Executive Committee

Vice Chair Petty: The executive committee met on June 10. Commissioner Petero was not present. Commissioner Sherlock presented an overview of history of financial issues, discussed future budget and protocol, built agenda and addressed the culture of group. Commissioner Sherlock asked that we check in if we will be tardy or absent. We need to work on execution so as to produce a quality status report.

1. Membership Committee

Chair Kelley conducted some research on Open seat and will have more at the August meeting.

1. Events Committee

Chair Gibson-events on hold in order to focus on other priorities—status report.

1. Status Report Committee

Thomas has data, but is postponed to the August meeting. Thomas will present at the August meeting, and handed out copies of data.

1. Communications Committee

Chair Vaughan distributed handouts regarding advertising the Logo contest. The Communications committed is stalled on projects. The Logo contest has been extended to September 8.

Question: Where has the Logo contest been distributed?

Answer: Schools primarily as well as committee contacts. The plan is to contact schools in August, write letters to the editor, radio ads via 95.3 radio. Ms. Thomas will also look into a radio ad. Commissioners Ruiz, Ali, and Petero will do a promotion at Solano College studio. Submissions need to be monitored. The website is currently stalled, as we need a person to maintain the website. Ms. Thomas offered to help.

Commissioner Petty stated that Sheriff Ferrara is providing training programs for women.

1. Future Agenda Items

No July meeting

Status report

Website

Logo contest update

Policies and procedures

Presentations

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:54 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 15, 2019, from 6-8pm.

Multipurpose Room (Room 1600) on the first floor of Solano County Administration Center located at 675 Texas Street, Fairfield, CA 94533