

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
MEETING SUMMARY**

Wednesday August 22, 2012
City Hall, Room 401 – 6:00 p.m.

Attendees:

ACSW Members: Chairperson Marianne Sarkis, Chantel Bethea, Sarah Gruhin, Kristen Lemire, Kathleen Linton, and Elizabeth Tomaszewski

ACSW Members Absent: Daisy Reeves.

Others Present: Abby McCabe, City Manager's Office, and Sonya Atherely.

Welcome

There being a quorum the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:11 PM.

Approval of Minutes:

On a motion made by Ms. Bethea, seconded by Ms. Gruhin, the Committee voted to approve the minutes from August 22, 2012 as written by a vote of 6-0-0.

2012 Project and Themes – Brainstorming

As assigned at the previous meeting the Committee members discussed and reviewed suggested projects and knew areas to focus on for the upcoming year that help the Committee reach the mission as stated in it's charter to "formulate, encourage, promote and monitor programs and policies relating to the status of women in the city".

Some of the ideas suggested were to look at women in technology and sciences, adult education programs, resources available to senior women, work place policies, programs and services for young women, domestic violence, pay equity, women's health and education. Many of these topics would need to be thoroughly researched and then the Committee would prepare the annual report to the City and make recommendations based on the findings. The Committee discussed the possibility of no longer hosting the Women and Young Women of Consequence awards because it takes a lot of time for most of the year and often does not allow the Committee to focus on other areas and projects more closely aligned with the Committee's mission. It was also suggested to maybe have a smaller award or certificate that can be provided to a Woman of Consequence but not as part of a major event possibly just some sort of recognition. Since the City Manager has been involved in this event for a number of years the Committee asked staff to check in with the City Manager to learn his thoughts about the Committee no longer hosting the Women of Consequence Awards. The Committee also asked staff if an intern position would be possible to help with research.

The Committee voted and ranked the topic areas as follows:

- 1 – Women's Health Education
- 2 – Domestic Violence
- 3 – STEM Education (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math)
- 4 – Services to Women
- 5 – Pay Equity

The Committee decided to do a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis of the top three priority items for the next meeting in September. The Top three topics are women's health education, domestic violence and STEM education.

Other:

The Chair, Ms. Sarkis, announced that she would not be reappointed to the Committee and that this would be her last meeting and a certificate from the City Manager was presented to Ms. Sarkis.

Ms. Lemire also announced that the September 26th meeting would likely be her last meeting because she is moving out of Worcester. Ms. Tomaszewski is also not able to attend the meeting in September.

The Committee discussed the composition of the Committee and came to consensus that the number of members should be reduced to help preserve the Committee because of the current quorum problems experienced from low membership.

On a motion made by Ms. Gruhin, and seconded by Ms. Linton, the Committee voted to recommend to the City Manager that the Advisory Committee on the Status of Women membership be reduced from nine (9) members to seven (7) full members and two (2) associate member positions. Vote was 6-0-0 to approve the motion.

Ms. Sarkis said that she would be willing to continue as an associate member if this option becomes available. The Committee asked staff to discuss their recommendation with the City Manager and to investigate if this is possible.

On a motion that was duly made the Committee adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Abby McCabe