

# MINUTES

## MORRIS COUNTY WOMEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE

November 21, 2013

Board Room, Morris View Healthcare Center

540 West Hanover Ave., Morris Township

**Members Present:** Patricia O'Dowd Donohue, Edith Frank, Elaine Muller, Pam Bennett-Santoro, Michelle Roers, Connie Ward, Deirdre Wheatley Liss, Aida Visakay

**Absent:** Tina Liu Jen, Carole Harper, Sibi Saenz-Williams, Ginny Lyttle,

Staff: Frank Pinto, absent

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM by Chair Michelle Roers

### Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Law

Co-Chairperson Michelle Roers announced that in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice of this meeting has been provided and filed with the public.

### Approval of Minutes

On motion of member Deirdre Wheatley Liss, seconded by member Aida Visakay, the committee approved the minutes of Sept. 19, 2013.

### Agenda

1. Call to order
2. Comments- Human Trafficking Awareness
3. Vacancies
4. 2014 committee plan discussion
5. Data Collection update
6. Other Notes
7. New business
8. Announcements

1.Human Trafficking Awareness- Freeholder Hank Lyons attended the October rally on the Morristown Green. Ask Ginny Lyttle about the Awareness Training for the Hotel Staff, specifically around the Super Bowl 2014. Patricia spoke about the Attorney General's office is also doing special training with local police, DYFS workers, partnering with the FBI on this issue. Elaine Muller said that we should recommend the Freeholders make a statement about this issue in Morris County.

2.Vacancies – Need for job descriptions so that members can decide if they can be the secretary or the Chairperson. Motion by Deirdre Wheatley Liss, seconded by Elaine Muller, and Committee nominated Pam Bennett-Santoro for Secretary 2014. Pam will also be acting Chairperson until elections in January

2014. Michelle Roers will call Ginny Lyttle and will contact Tina Liu Jen, will call Sibi Saenz-Williams to see if she'd like to be co-chair?

3. Michelle Roers then talked about the ebb and flow of the committee and the work we do. She suggested that we look at the committee's short term goals, as an example, how we helped raise awareness for the need for the sexual abuse center. Now we are helping to raise awareness about human trafficking.

Michelle Roers spoke about some of our previous long term goals, like our various conferences. She also suggested that perhaps we could clean-up our data collection for a press release by March 2014, along with our annual report for 2013.

Patricia O'Dowd Donnelly spoke about the change in our vacancy information, that we be sure that we've changed our by-laws to reflect our changes. Michelle Roers spoke about the project of 1,000 women where each contributes \$1,000, and puts the combined monies into a non-profit focused on women.

4. Michelle Roers then asked for suggestions on where our 2014 focus should be?

Aida Visakay suggested women, children and health care and we talked about the affect the job losses have on women and their ability to pay for health care for their children.

Deirdre Wheatley Liss mentioned we should look to see what we can do to help the Freeholders, especially focusing on budget cuts as they affect women.

Michelle Roers suggested we attend the Freeholders' working sessions and then stay for the public meeting so that we can learn what projects the Freeholders are working on. Deirdre Wheatley Liss suggested that we get the agendas for the Freeholders' meetings sent to us, and we will ask Frank Pinto to be a resource for us. Elaine Muller recommended that we rotate our attendance, so that we can observe what they are doing. We can ask Liz Kizatsky to send us information to let us know what are ceremonial vs. working sessions.

Next Step- be present and visible at Freeholder's work sessions. The committee members should sign up for the next 6 months and re-evaluate in June. We should be sure to meet Kathryn DeFillippo, from Roxbury, the new Freeholder.

Other questions- Why isn't the Women's Advisory Committee listed on the Freeholder's website? Only the commissions are listed?

Michelle Roers will ask Liz Kisatsky to send out schedule of Freeholders' meeting dates, agendas and locations. We can select the month and date to attend. We know that the public meetings on usually on Wednesdays, 8 PM, 5<sup>th</sup> floor of the Public Administration Building.

#### 4. Thoughts on 2014 Meeting

Michelle Roers suggested that we look at our January Meeting as a "retreat" to focus on our project and goals for the rest of the year.

- a. Look at the data collection and what we want to do going forward
- b. Set agenda for the year and urge people to attend meetings.
- c. Data collection so far, from Sibi Saenz-Williams.
- d. Annual Report= Review Minutes and note highlights of 2013.
- e. From previous meetings-
  - 1.Aida Visakay will check with the Chamber of Commerce to see if we could piggy-back with other programs that they have started. Connie suggested we “bucket” a project with a multidiscipline focus.
  - 2.Michelle Roers suggested that with the reduction of funding- how is this affecting women, especially the Alice population

Other notes-

- 1. Set up with Frank Pinto when the Freeholder meetings are being held, so that we can recommend that positions that need to be cut to balance budget, do not unduly affect the women in Morris County.
- 2. Investigate if the job losses in Morris County have affected greater numbers of women. Could we get data about public employees, union contracts?
- 3. How huge has the impact been on women of Morris County?

New Business-

Elections & Nominations - Michelle will stay on the committee but will be on maternity leave once the baby is born.

Pam Bennett-Santoro will be the temporary chairperson, until elections occur again in January 2014.

Contact Information update- see below

Announcements-Letters

Human Trafficking- The hotline – 1-855-END-NJ-HT (1-855-363-6548) –serves as a constant reminder of New Jersey’s commitment to end human trafficking in the state. The hotline is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week by detectives in the Human Trafficking Unit within the Division of Criminal Justice.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for January 16, 2014. Dinner served at 5:30 PM. Meeting begins at 6 PM.

Meetings scheduled for 2014- 1/16/14, 3/20/14, 5/15/14, 6/19/14, 9/18/14, 11/20/14.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, on motion of member Michelle Roers seconded by member Pam Bennett-Santoro, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
 Pam Bennett-Santoro, Committee Secretary,  
 Acting Chairperson

