

Commission for Women



**MICHIGAN CITY
INDIANA**

**MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 16, 2021 MEETING
OF MICHIGAN CITY COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
5:30 pm via Zoom and Facebook**

Meeting was called to order at 5:36 by Chair Faye Moore. Present for roll call Faye Moore, Bonnie Schaaf, Jo Ann Engquist, Veronica Martin, Kristina Isabelle, Sarah Jones, Albertine Allen

Also present: City Council Liaison Angie Nelson-Deutch and guest speaker Rechelle McCray

Absent: Sharlene Livesay and Nicole Coleman

Approval of Minutes of August 19, 2021. Correction to LWV report that Angie Nelson-Deutch will speak at a League meeting, motion to accept Minutes as corrected by Jo Ann Engquist, second by Bonnie Schaaf. Roll call vote was unanimous to accept.

Commissioner Shar Livesay emailed the Treasurer's Report to the Commission as she was unable to attend this meeting. Balance remains unchanged from last month at \$15,224.75, with no deposits or disbursements in the past month. Motion to accept by Jo Ann Engquist, second by Kristina Isabelle. Roll call vote was unanimous to accept.

Our Guest Speaker, Rechelle McCray from LaPorte Family Advocates, explained the programs they offer – Court Appointed Youth Advocates (CAYA) which matches adult mentors with youth in the juvenile justice system, a supervised visitation program, and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA). CASA volunteers are adults who advocate in school and court for children in need, always looking out for the best interest of the child. Volunteers are needed in the CASA program, with 72 children now on the waiting list for volunteers. Volunteers apply, are interviewed, and if chosen go through several weeks of training before being sworn in by the Court. Case managers supervise the volunteers. Volunteers submit reports to the Court about the child every three months. Donations to Family Advocates can be made at www.lpfamilyadvocates.com.

Under Old Business, we discussed plans for the Annual Retreat. Kristina Isabelle moved that the Retreat be held on Zoom on Thursday November 18, 2021 from 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm, second by Jo Ann Engquist. Roll call vote was unanimous to accept.

There was no New Business to report.

There were no public comments.

City Council Liaison Angie Nelson Deutch left before she gave her report. Faye Moore reported that Angie will notify Faye of the next community meeting to discuss the American Rescue Plan funding, and Faye will notify the Commissioners. City Council is seeking community input on how to spend the money.

Commissioners' Comments and Reports:

Minority Health Advocates representative Albertine Allen announced they are having a Breast Cancer Walk on October 2nd, starting at Pentecostal Church at 2722 Wabash Street at 9:00 am. Vaccines and boosters will be available. They will also have a fundraiser at Fiddlehead on October 26th from 6:00-9:00 pm.

Education Representative Sarah Jones explained the Aps available through Michigan City Area Schools for parents, students, and community members with a wealth of knowledge about the schools. Sarah also reported that this is Homecoming Week and the homecoming game is this Friday September 17th. Sarah also reported about a Construction Education Certificate program now available at AK Smith Center.

Jo Ann Engquist reported for the League of Women Voters that the speaker at a Dinner with the League program earlier this week was Heather Stevens, County Clerk, who spoke about election issues. Bonnie Schaaf also reported that a current focus is on the Redistricting process, advocating for transparent and fair maps that are not as gerrymandered as those made ten years ago. Leigh Morris, a member of the Indiana Commission for Redistricting, will speak at Lunch with the League on October 12th. Also, Angie Nelson-Deutch will speak at a League members meeting later in September, talking about unconscious bias for our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion program.

Mental Health representative Veronica Martin reported that September is Suicide Awareness Month. The Suicide prevention Hotline is 1-800-273-TALK, the Crisis Text Line is 741 741, and the Veterans Crisis Line is 1-800-273-8255, press 1. We must all learn the warning signs of suicide, such as a person saying they want to die, or they feel hopeless, trapped, have no reason to live, or a person putting their affairs in order. We must ask them directly if they are okay, or are they thinking about hurting themselves. Every family is affected by suicide either in their family or in the community.

NAACP representative Mrs. W. Faye Moore reported they will register voters on September 28th, National Voter Registration Day, at Al's on Franklin Street from 8 am to 8 pm. They need volunteers for 2 hour shifts.

Kristina Isabelle reported that a Monarch Tagging Workshop is being held this Saturday afternoon at Tryon Farms, followed by a showing of the film Fantastic Fungi.

Bonnie Schaaf reported that the Celebrating Naomi Anderson project has received strong support from the community in monetary donations as well as in-kind donations. She thanked

the Commission for their donation of \$5,000.00. The installation of the sculpture is now set for the end of October rather than September, and the unveiling will be held in November.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:40 pm on motion by Albertine Allen seconded by Jo Ann Engquist. Roll call vote was unanimous to approve motion.

Next meeting date is October 21, 2021.

Submitted by Bonnie Schaaf, Secretary Pro-Tem in absence of Secretary Nicole Coleman