



The Commission on  
Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity

**CWCSEO**

Connecticut General Assembly

## **MINUTES**

### **CWCSEO ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2021**

**VIA ZOOM**

PRESENT: Alan Tan, Karen Jarmoc, Antonia Moran, Myron Genel, Leticia Colon de Mejias, Kim Oliver, Mui Mui Hin-McCormick, Alfonse Wright, Penny Young, Denise Cesareo, Nancy Heaton, Hilda Nieves, Diane Stone, Cynthia Cartier

STAFF/INTERNS PRESENT: Steven Hernández, Werner Oyanadel, Rosemary Lopez, Denise Drummond, Meg Stellini-Yale Fellow, TJ Nuccio- Fellow, Chrissie Deutsch-Yale Fellow and William Ollayos- Fellow and Zaria Smith-Yale Fellow

Meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM on Thursday, December 10, 2021.

### **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Co-Chairperson Tan welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending this meeting. He also reported that he continues to work with his other Co-chair Jarmoc and Mr. Hernandez on commission appointments. They have a meeting schedule for this afternoon with the Speaker of the House to address this issue and the other matters concerning the commission, including staffing.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE**

Mr. Hernandez just wanted everyone to know that the Commission staff is busy working during the legislative session, and wanted to thank them for all their hard work.

He also informed everyone that there were several Sessional Fellows that have joined the Commission and are helping in many different areas:

- Meg Stellini, Yale Fellow – working on housing issues and women's issues
- Zania Smith, Yale Fellow – working on health & wellbeing issue and Yogan in our city project.
- Chrissy, Yale Fellow – working on Social Emotional Learning and mental health issues



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- William Oyoles, Quinnipiac Fellow – working on LGBTQ survey and anything during the legislative session that arises
- Malaci, UCONN Fellow –working on civic engagement and conducting a some research

### **REPORT OF THE SUBCOMMISSIONS**

**Asian and Pacific Islanders Sub Commission** – Interim Chair Ms. Hin-McCormick reported on the following:

- Submission is holding monthly meetings on the 3rd Fridays of each month.
- Sub commission continues to work with the Asian Pacific American Coalition, African American and Latino & Puerto Rican and have joint meetings. To look at their goals and initiatives that really impact all their communities.
- They had a live stream that the Commission was able to host, it was a great event, well attended virtually. It had over 800 views and the participants were knowledgeable and passionate. it was more of a kind of sneak peek and advocating and trying to encourage people's interests for the Asian American identity and racism workshop that was taking place the following week.
- She has been contacted by Dr. Oliver Chang Associate Professor of History and Asian American studies at UConn regarding SB 678 which is to include Asian Americans Islander studies in the state's curriculum.
- There is a Polina video and panel discussion that she will be moderating on March 29<sup>th</sup>. Video is on a Cambodian family who is experiencing gambling issues. They will be viewing the actual video through virtual platform and then having a panel discussion with some API leaders that can really talk about gambling and the impact on the Asian community.

**Women's Sub Commission** – Interim Chair Ms. Moran reported on the following:

- During the month of March, the sub commission will be holding a series of meetings in which we honor the Sheroes, women who have made a real contribution to the state during the COVID crisis. They have been looking for women in various categories, nomination forms will be going out to legislators, and social service agencies. They will feature one nominee a week and at the end bring people together for a panel discussion on women 's issues and COVID.
- Reported on a couple of pieces of legislature that are being proposed:



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- Trafficking bill which excuses criminal acts committed by people who are trafficked.
- Crown bill, this is the one to prohibit discrimination based on hairstyle.
- Care for Kids, which explains eligibility to those in job training we need more childcare workers
- Domestic Violence looks like it's going to be an omnibus bill, one of the pieces of it that should move quickly is when restraining order are received to change the locks on the rental apartment.

**Seniors Sub Commission** – Interim Chair Ms. Stone reported on the following:

- The COVID vaccine access rollout for people 65 and older are eligible to sign up for vaccine now. There's a little chaos due to the lack of appointments, and the rush of everyone wanting the vaccine. They are promoting patients and vigilance to all the measures that we've taken so far to keep everybody safe.
- In terms of policy issues, a lot of the aging issues take place in the Aging Committee, but also in other committees like, Public Safety or in Human Services. a lot of the initial legislation that are coming forward, are bills that are picked up from last year. Such as:
  - Age Discrimination bill which really the effect of that bill is to make it illegal to ask somebody for the year of their graduation, because if you ask somebody what year they graduated you can figure out their age. AARP is leading on the advocacy.
  - Three bills that come through frequently that all have a fiscal note, and they're really budget issues are the following:
    - Expand Access to the Alzheimer's Respite Grant
    - Provide retroactive approval for Medicaid
    - Expanding funding for grandparents raising grandchildren, as well
    - Funding long term care system

**African American Sub Commission** - Interim Chair Mr. Wright reported on the following:

They have several things scheduled for the month in February, for Black History

- February 16<sup>th</sup> Black Business and Entrepreneurship 5:00 pm.
- February 19<sup>th</sup> Mental Health in the African American community 5:00pm.
- February 22<sup>nd</sup> Adversity in Blackness 5:00pm.
- February 26<sup>th</sup> Ceremony Honoring Community Heroes for the outstanding service for the COVID-19 at 5:00 pm.



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- Scholarship for the Young Civic Leader will be given up \$1,000.00 to 3 high school seniors male or female.
- They will also be supporting the Crown Bill

**Latino & Puerto Rican Sub Commission** – Interim Chair Ms. Colon de Mejias reported on a following:

- The Latino and Puerto Rican meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of every month.
- They circled back this month to Dr. McKinney 's testimony regarding the need for a disaggregated disparity study in our state. So, they are now looking to draft a formal request and get something out in relationship to the collection and reflection on the disparities in our state currently. Specifically, are really focused in on ensuring that setting is funded completed and that the information is disaggregated. so that it accurately reflects information to help us make policy decisions and planning decisions.
- Scholarship update - scholarship included 17 applicants from a diverse group of applicants: New Haven, Waterbury, Manchester, Windsor, Hartford, New Canaan, West Haven, and East Hartford.
- Hosting a Housing and Equity Public Forum sometime in March, which is being organized by the Yale School of Public Health Fellow Meg Stellini. Inviting the National Urban League, the National Center for Homelessness and Poverty and potentially the new secretary of HUD.
- Their focus on legislation is on the basic needs; employment, food, shelter, because of COVID.
- Also interested in ensuring that there's proper supports for minority and Latino businesses.
- Education - lack of science and communities of color environmental education and environmental justice issues.

**Children's Sub Commission** – Interim Chair Mr. Genel\ Ms. Oliver and Mr. Nuccio reported on the following:

- They had their first meeting last week Thursday.
- 2 Gen Initiatives
- Flavored cigarettes, which they understand is likely to pass and come out of committee shortly.
- Medical exemptions for immunizations which is a hot controversial issue.
- They mentioned all the following bills they are following:



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- HB 5798 AC Addressing Education Funding and Racial Equity in Connecticut
- AC Concerning Virtual Learning
- HB 6235 AC Establishing The "Learn Here, Heal Here" Program
- HB 5895 AC Establishing a Task Force on The Reduction of Student Loan Debt
- HB 6227 AA Establishing a Task Force to Study Work Based Learning Opportunities in Industries with A Hiring Need in The State
- SB 193 AAC Workforce Development Issues at Public Institutions of Higher Education Related to The Insurance Industry
- SB 2 AAC The Safety Education and Social Equity of Children in Response to The Pandemic

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting of February 10, 2021, adjourned at 11:35am.