

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMISSION FOR WOMEN**  
**111 N.W. 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Suite 1034, Miami, FL 33128**  
**Minutes of Meeting of September 17, 2014**

**Present:** Leah Blumenfeld, Marie Eloi, Monica Interian, Viviana Jordan, Sharon Kendrick Johnson, Michelle Dunaj Lucking, Beverly Nixon, Kit Rafferty, Phyllis Sloan-Simpkins, Mara Zapata, and Dona Zemo

**Excused:** Nordis Alvarez, Noreen Lagault Mendoza, Francesca Menes, Eveline Pierre, Linda Robinson, Rhonda Wimberly, and Marie Woodson

**Staff:** Laura Morilla

**Guests:** Sherry Thompson Giordano, Dr. Meridith Gould, Alejandra Moreno and Marta Martinez-Aleman

Chairwoman Mara Zapata commenced the meeting at 5:45 p.m. Mara welcomed everyone and introduced two of the guests, Alejandra Moreno from the Doral Commission for Women, and Dr. Meridith Gould. The meeting was held at the PACE Center for Girls Miami.

Leah moved to approve the minutes of the CFW meeting of 07/30/14 and Monica seconded the motion. The motion passed and the **minutes were approved.**

First there was a **Public Forum:**

The first person to make remarks was Dr. Meridith Gould, who has extensive experience and expertise in programs and curriculum for girls- conflict resolution, intervention, social and emotional well-being, etc. Dr. Gould recently spent time in Africa working for an international organization and she has also done programs for the County's Juvenile Justice Center and Girl Power. Per Dr. Gould, there are three areas of particular need for services/programming for girls now: teen dating violence/healthy relationships; increase in crime and physical violence by girls; mentoring and life skills. Dr. Gould stated that mentoring increases health, academic achievement, and social and emotional well-being; there is a decrease in drugs, abuse, and other risk factors. Often times girls are an "add-on" for the focus of women's groups, and we should start earlier to address girls issues. She encouraged the CFW to do more for girls and young women. Dr. Gould said that other areas/cities in the U.S. seem to do more and have more programs for girls than in the Miami area. Perhaps this is because there are less non-profits and less universities to do this.

Then Marta Martinez-Aleman from Commissioner Audrey Edmonson's office made brief welcoming remarks.

**There were no more comments from the public and the public forum ended.**

The **Committee Reports** were presented.

**Event and Fundraising Committee.** Sharon reviewed the written report regarding the October 1<sup>st</sup> event at the Young Women's Preparatory Academy. Chairwoman Sosa is donating 200 tote bags and the bags will have goodies. The speakers are confirmed and all CFW members are encouraged to attend. The next committee meeting is September 23<sup>rd</sup>. The lunch caterer is confirmed and the CFW needs to vote on payment for the caterer. Michelle moved that the CFW, through Friends, pay the catering in an amount up to \$2000. Sharon seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

**Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Issues Committee.** Monica said that she would be calling a meeting after October 1<sup>st</sup>. Monica talked about the Committee's tour of the Coordinated Victims Assistance Center (CVAC). Most victims walk in and are referred by other agencies, the police, and the courts. Services at the CVAC are well-coordinated; 39 community partners deliver an array of services there - mental health, legal assistance, financial assistance, etc. The CVAC welcomes volunteers.

What role could the CFW play? The CFW is not a service provider. The CFW could refer victims to the CVAC and help with education and information to the community. There are legal and privacy concerns with the CFW getting involved.

**Human Trafficking Committee.** Mara reviewed the written report. Mara explained that the Committee heard from various women doing meaningful work in the community and that the Committee will meet again to determine what to do going forward. Leah also attended the committee meeting and said that there were lots of things going on but that there seemed to be a lack of coordination of the different services. Marie Eloi said that she would like to see more awareness of the issue in different communities and more organizations willing to do the outreach.

Alejandra Moreno, Chair of the Doral CFW, mentioned the screening of the "Tricked" documentary that was held last night. It was presented by StopSexTraffickingMiami.org and the purpose was to create awareness.

Under **Old Business**, Laura reported that the "Brave Miss World" movie screening is on November 20<sup>th</sup> at FIU. Mara explained that the CFW is a co-sponsor of the movie screening at the request of Lorna Owens. Laura will follow up on her email to Rene Diaz requesting information about any programs that the Airport and Seaport may have to combat human trafficking.

Regarding the In the Company of Women 2015 awards and event, Viviana explained that she attended a planning meeting last week. Nominations are now open and the deadline is October 10th; nominations are being accepted both online and in hard copies. The category for Young Professionals was eliminated for 2015 because no nominations were submitted in 2014 and donations for the silent auction will be needed.

At this point Michelle talked about her recent lunch meeting with Thom Collins, the Director of the Perez Miami Art Museum (PAMM). Laura also attended that lunch meeting. Mr. Collins stated that he would be happy to donate a membership or some other item for the silent auction. They also talked about how PAMM and the CFW can work together.

Under **New Business**, Mara announced that the November meeting will be an on the road meeting in Palmetto Bay. Linda is looking for a venue.

Laura explained the item regarding the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce's Sports Hall of Champions. The Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce is reviving its South Florida Sports Hall of Fame/Champions and is looking for a permanent venue to house it. The Chamber first started the Hall in 1990 but for the last three years or so has not inducted anyone, so the Chamber wants to resume with the inductions. Of the 82 inductees, only five are women so Laura suggested that the CFW monitor the process and advocate for the inclusion of more women. Some suggested names are Chris Evert, Venus and Serena Williams, Lauryn Williams, and Diana Nyad. Leah moved that the CFW monitor the process and advocate for the inclusion of more women by gathering information, making calls, sending letters and emails, and other means necessary to accomplish this goal. Michelle seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Mara and Laura talked about “The Envelope Please” initiative proposed by Maria Shriver and her A Woman’s Nation organization. The initiative aims to help increase the wages of hotel room housekeepers, who are mainly women, by providing envelopes in rooms to remind guests to leave a tip. Marriott is the first hotel that has signed on to the initiative. The CFW should advocated that Miami area hotels do the same thing. Viviana moved that the CFW send a letter to the Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Greater Miami and the Beaches Hotel Association urging them to participate in the initiative and also send a letter to the County Commissioners requesting a resolution on this matter. Phyllis seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

**Attendance at community events.** Mara reported that the CFW held a great Women’s Equality Day event at the Women’s Park.

Michelle was the guest speaker at a new citizenship naturalization ceremony dedicated to Women’s Equality Day and she wanted to especially thank Andrew Davidson and Dixie Cueto for the invitation. Michelle mentioned that she recently met Nicole Stott, a NASA astronaut who lives in Florida and would be a good speaker in the future. Michelle also talked about her recent visit to the Aquarius underwater research station where NASA astronauts train. She suggested that this would be an great partnership for the Young Women’s Preparatory Academy- internships, speakers, live feed to the school, etc.

Beverly reported that she attended the Girl POWER luncheon. There was an 11 year-old girl there with a special project who was collecting handbags to give to young women who are going on job interviews.

Phyllis mentioned that she went to various summer camps to talk about fire safety.

Leah said that she will be teaching “Feminist Theory” at Barry University starting in the spring. The course was just approved.

Under **Announcements**, Mara announced that this Friday Sharon and Eveline are receiving the award for Legacy Miami’s 25 Most Influential Black Women in Business and Leadership.

Viviana announced that People en Espanol is having an event on October 16<sup>th</sup> for the 25 most powerful women. She will send the information to Laura to forward to the CFW members.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Laura Morilla, Recorder