

**North Carolina Council for Women
Quarterly Meeting
Public School Forum
June 10, 2011**

Location: 3739 National Drive, Suite 100
Raleigh, NC 27612

Time: Grant Review Portion 9:00 AM- 11:30 AM
CFW Board Meeting 11:30 AM – 2:00 PM

Attendees: *Meena Ahuja, Beth Briggs, Robin Coates, Kate Deiter-Maradei, Valerie Johnson, Meenal Khajuria, Dr. Julie Lapham, Karen LeVert, Jane Martin, Mary Peterson (Chair), Melissa Reed, Robin Robinson, Laura Wallace, Jenny Ward and Amber Koonce*

Absent Members: *Minnie Forte-Brown, Ann Gerhardt, Muriel Offerman, Lisa Piñero, Jenny Ward and Amber Koonce*

NC CFW Staff: *Executive Director Jill Dinwiddie, Assistant Director Mary Williams- Stover, Jacqueline Jordan, Todd Moore, Nicole Vanacore and Tanya McGuire*

Guests: *Deputy Secretary June Michaux, Tracy McPherson (Grant Reviewer), Laura Gonzalez (Intern), Christy Agner and Zeke Creech.*

I. Welcome/Introductions – Mary Peterson, Chair

- Chairperson Mary Peterson welcomed everyone to the meeting as soon as the Grant Review Session was completed.

II. Approval of Minutes- Mary Peterson, Chair

III. Minutes were accepted and approved.

IV. Executive Director's Report Highlights - Executive Director Jill Dinwiddie

- The Council has lost the North East office located in Greenville and is now down to four regional offices. The two staff in that office are now in RIF status with the State.
- In addition, the Council has also lost the position that worked most closely with the CFW Board. This position had been vacant since July, 2010, but has now been removed from the books.
- There has been a 5% reduction in the Sexual Assault and displaced homemaker grant funds.
- Ms. Dinwiddie introduced temporary staff member, Nicole Vanacore and intern, Laura Gonzalez.
- The Council hosted two foreign groups recently, one group of Latinas from

a variety of countries in Latin America. Valerie Johnson and Beth Briggs were part of the presentations to this group and Ms. Dinwiddie expressed appreciation for their time and participation.

o The other group was from Turkey.

- Ms. Dinwiddie, along with the NC Coalition Against Domestic Violence participated in a television show for WRAL that focused on domestic violence and sexual assault.
- Jenny Ward arranged for Ms. Dinwiddie to speak at a Duke Energy Corp. Leadership Award Luncheon. Ms. Dinwiddie expressed appreciation to Jenny Ward for this invitation.
- Ms. Dinwiddie met with a group of women from the National Democratic Institute, an organization that helps emerging democracies around the world. They are interested in putting their women leaders together with the leadership of NC CFW while they are in North Carolina.
- Ms. Dinwiddie visited a women's work release program in Mecklenburg County. The women are still considered to be incarcerated but are transitioning back into society. She had the opportunity to spend an hour with one of the women learning about her experience in prison and the impact the experience had on her and her family.
- Outreach to under-served communities- Ms. Dinwiddie and Mary Williams-Stover have been meeting with the Commission on Indian Affairs and NC Coalition Against Domestic Violence to discuss collaborations on providing better services to American Indian women who suffer two times the abuse of any other population. However, they are under-represented in our statistical data, meaning they are not being served by our programs. We hope to initiate something similar for the Hispanic community.
- Planning meetings for the Governor's Conference for Women are underway. Ms. Dinwiddie will be sending out brochures through the mail to each Board member. The theme this year is education. There is already a roster of terrific speakers. The date is 11/2/11 in Charlotte. The conference will be returning to Raleigh in 2012.

V. Legislative Update Highlights- *Christy Agner, Legislative Liaison*

- Ms. Agner thanked and congratulated Board Chair, Mary Peterson on doing such an outstanding job communicating during the legislative session and being an advocate for the Council.

- One page impact statements were done this year for the legislative members which proved very helpful in giving the new members a brief overview.
- DOA has been working with Justice for Sterilization on a bill to ensure privacy for people who were involuntarily sterilized-.
- The Budget:
 - Women's Health Access was affected
 - Many State worker layoffs- a large number of whom are women, It remains to be seen how many of the persons experiencing layoffs will have access to other jobs with the state. There was also a clause inserted that if a person is laid off after July 1, he/she will no longer have the protection of having "preference" when applying for another state job. All things have now been made equal.
 - Community colleges may see some tuition increases. The Legislature is mandating that community colleges no longer have to offer low interest loans that are federally backed to students. This may impact access for some of the CFW's Displaced Homemaker programs.
- One House bill proposed merging the Council for Women and the Domestic Violence Commission as well as merging all three of the grant funds. That fund would be allocated to County Commissioners for decisions on how the funds would be assigned locally. The Bill still lives, but instead of actually doing these mergers, it has become a study of the earlier version of the bill.
- Several Bills for discussion talked about nonprofits and the percentage of state funds they would be allowed to spend on administrative costs. It was thought that this conversation was done, but it lives for further continuance.
- Melissa Reed spoke about the threats to women's reproductive health and the cuts to Planned Parenthood. She suggested that in looking at the votes, one might think that we are losing, but victories are being achieved differently. For example, there were enough votes to sustain a veto on the mandatory ultrasound Bill. When the veto was sustained, another abortion Bill got pulled. That's another victory. "We are not losing, just winning differently."
- Ms. Dinwiddie and Chair, Mary Peterson thanked everyone for their hard advocacy work during the legislative session.

- Chair, Mary Peterson closed this portion for lunch and committee work with a quote from the late Eleanor Roosevelt: *“A woman is like a tea bag; put her in hot water and you’ll find out her strength.”*

VI. Committee Work

- Everyone split up into their groups and continued with the conversations, plans and discussed the progress on the objectives set at the previous meeting. The Groups consisted of the following members:
 - Advocacy and Empowerment
 - Melissa Reed, Robin Coates, Julie Lapham, Jane Martin, Robin Robinson and Karen LeVert.
 - Self Sufficiency
 - Ann Gerhardt: Meena Ahuja, Kate Deiter-Maradei, Lisa Piñero,
 - Health and Well Being
 - Valerie Johnson: Mary Peterson, Meenal Khajuria, Beth Briggs and Laura Wallace

VII. Committee Report outs

- Health and Well Being- Valerie Johnson
 - Discussed mental health as a need currently not being met.
 - The group wants to invite the director of NAMI to speak at our next meeting to address some of the issues and how we could better respond to mental health issues. We would like to include the Region Directors to hear from them about the kinds of mental health services they know are being provided in their areas.
 - This may provide a platform for something bigger, like inviting a panel to include the director of BCBS to elaborate on what they offer for mental health coverage.
 - Want to have a session with the grantees so they can have an opportunity to draw on the expertise of the Council Board members. This is not directly linked to health, just opening up the Council to be more hands on.
 - Ms. Dinwiddie suggested that this could be done as a Webinar. An explanation of how a webinar would work was provided by Assistant

Director Mary Williams-Stover. She also spoke of the possibility of Council members attending Region meetings.

- Advocacy and Empowerment- Robin Robinson
 - We still want to update the report on the Status of Women, using the most recent report done in 1996 with updated, new information. We propose an executive summary printed on a card. It could include graphs or bullet points highlighting the statistics on the status of women today, compared to earlier days, using 2010 census data to help update that information. The general goal is to do a short version, more like a report card on the status of women.
 - Who can we get to do the research? Not sure if we can, but would like to have this done and ready for distribution by the Women's Conference in November.
 - Would like to get help on the research and an update on the statistical information. We would have to seek help with the graphic design and printing. Want to work towards getting something done via email as well as working with the NC CFW staff to get the card done.
 - Robin Coates- We really had a sense of urgency since this is an election year coming up in 2012. Having this card might be a call to action.
 - The previous report was conducted by the Institute for Women's Policy Research in Washington, DC in 1996.
 - Board members made recommendations regarding contacts at various organizations and universities to get the needed research accomplished.
 - Karen LeVert will contact a group in the Department of Commerce that did research for her agency before and the Women's study program at Duke.
 - Dr. Valerie Johnson will contact the Women's study program at Bennett College.
 - Someone will contact the Women's study program at UNC Chapel Hill and UNC Greensboro.
 - These people will be emailing Jill Dinwiddie.
 - Ms. Dinwiddie will speak with Jenny Ward about resending the 1996 Status of Women report out to the entire Board electronically.

- Self Sufficiency- Kate Deiter-Maradei
 - Conversation focused on highlighting for the legislature, as well as others, the financial benefit the volunteer work of the Council Board members brings to the state of NC.
 - We looked at some data of the number of Displaced Homemaker clients served last year, a total of 5,000. We want to look at the reason that number is so low. Is it that people are uncomfortable with the title or term “Displaced Homemaker”? Looking at possibly using a diff name; perhaps using terms like “women in transition” instead of “Displaced Homemaker”- even though the statutory definition uses that term. We just want to look at using different wording, not trying to amend the statute at this point.
 - We are looking at partnerships and funding outside of the state. As mentioned before, Wachovia and Bank of America have small \$5,000 grants at a lot of regional banks. We want to disseminate that information to all of our programs to encourage them to go after that money.
 - We want to look at financial literacy workshops, perhaps partnering with the Public Library systems to do some work with that.
 - We talked in a previous meeting about doing a legislative reception. Would like to do that prior to the previously mentioned bill on the merger study to talk to legislatures about how the work the Council Board members do on a volunteer basis saves the state of NC money. We want to take something that could be a negative and turn it into something positive.

VIII. Plans for the Regions- Assistant Director *Mary Williams-Stover*

- The two employees impacted by the reduction in the budget were given an official 30 day notice. We also contacted the programs affected by this adjustment.
- A work plan has been implemented in preparation for the closure of the Greenville office on 6/30/11.
- A press release will be issued notifying the community about the office closure.
- We are in the process of realigning the responsibilities of the region offices, possibly streamlining some of their duties.

- We believe we can maintain the monitoring function and ensure accountability with perhaps a different approach. Some ideas include desk or phone audits of programs that historically have performed well, while focusing other efforts on programs that need more development or have staff transitions in place.
- This is challenging, but we are dedicated to being effective. The Raleigh office will also be looking at what we can do to help out, using webinars and conference calls when possible.
- Comment from Valerie Johnson
 - Ms. Johnson stated that she saw a Region Director, Bernetta Thigpen at an event on a Saturday. She was there connecting with program staff and others. How is that documented? It is invaluable work that raises the profile of our agency. It was her time, but she was on point and available responding to work related issues. How does that get elevated so that it's documented (the unpaid labor hours)?
 - From Mary Williams-Stover: All of the Region Directors are very active in their communities and most, if not all of them serve on various boards.
 - Comment from Laura Wallace: It would be great if we could quantify, financially their outreach efforts. This goes back to the Self Sufficiency committee report, showing the benefit of the volunteer hours of our agency.
 - Ms. Dinwiddie asked Laura Wallace if she could come up with a tool that could be used for this purpose
 - Laura Wallace said that she would help think about it, but it's a large task. She will try to come up with a one page sheet for the Region Directors and try to come up with a common system of measures. Then include the Council's hours. She will also send out ROI literature to the board members.
 - Ms. Johnson asked if there was a way to make this public.
 - An idea mentioned was to have a pop-up on the web site saying something to the effect of "CFW Staff donated 600 hours of service 2010-2011 which equates to this many dollars."

IX. Words from Deputy Secretary, June Michaux

- Though these are tough budgetary times, you have to be proud of the work that the CFW staff is doing. They understand what's happening and they are making adjustments to continue to be effective in working with the populations they serve.
- Thank you to the Council members who have served and will be leaving us.
- Thank you to Chair, Mary Peterson for all of her service, it is greatly appreciated.
- Looking forward to more good work coming out of the Council.

X. Announcements

- All Board members were asked to email Laura Gonzalez on how their work on the Council has affected women in their communities. To expedite the process, Laura is going to email the Board.
- The NC CFW nominee for the Women's Hall of Fame is Ms. Tibbie Roberts.
- The Governor's Conference for Women 11/2/11
- From Chair, Mary Peterson: Thank you so much for this opportunity. It has been a pleasure serving with all of you.

XI. The meeting adjourned at 2:05 pm.