

Governor's Council on Women and Girls
Leadership Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes

February 26, 2020 – 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Board of Regents
61 Woodland Street
Hartford, CT

1. Call to Order

Secretary McCaw called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

2. Women and Girls Day at the Capitol

Mildred Melendez, Paralegal, OPM, was introduced as lead for the planning committee for the Women and Girls Day at the Capitol scheduled for March 6th, 2020. Ms. Melendez announced a verbal agenda for March 6th consisting of registration, welcome remarks, house hall sample voting session, health and safety fair, career tables set up for attendees to explore, followed by bagged lunches for high school girls. The afternoon portion of the day is directed towards women and college attendees. There will be a Women of Leadership panel followed by a sample voting simulation. The day will end by remarks from the Women Business Development Council. At this time, the program is at maximum capacity with 150 high school attendees. Approximately 40 college students will be attending, and we are expecting increasing attendance as the week progresses. Logistics such as coordinating will continue to be arranged via email. Several members mentioned contacting local news to inform them about the event which will bring awareness for participation for the day.

3. Legislative Proposals Update

Secretary McCaw, OPM, discussed SB 85, An Act Deterring Age Discrimination In Employment Applications. Secretary McCaw shared a brief summary of her testimony submitted February 18, 2020 asking the legislature to vote in favor for this bill. Secretary McCaw asked Erin Choquette, Policy and Legislative Advisor, DAS, to share a summary of Commissioner Josh Geballe's testimony for SB 85 also submitted on February 18, 2020. Ms. Choquette shared that Commissioner Geballe is also recommending full support in passing this bill. Ms. Choquette shared that she was not able to attend the public hearing for SB 85 but that all were in support and in favor of the bill. Secretary McCaw highlighted one other bill in relation to the Women and Girls Council. SB 5213, An Act Concerning The Creation Of A Pilot Program For An Early Childhood Business Incubator Model, which would authorize the Commissioner of Early Childhood to issue a license to a person or group of people to operate a family child care center in a space that is not a private home. Secretary McCaw mentioned this bill would potentially remove the childcare cost barrier to the average working citizen. It would also help women grow their careers as women tend to be a large portion of the childcare workforce.

4. Corporate Governance Update

Christine Shaw, Assistant Treasurer for Policy and Senior Advisor, OTT, introduced the ongoing work being done at the Treasurer's Office for gender and racial diversity. Ms. Shaw mentioned the Northeast Investor's Diversity Initiative is made up of state treasurers from Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, Vermont and the New York City Comptroller. The coalition rallied one dozen investors to advocate for companies interested in long term diversity. Twenty companies are seeking to target diversity within their corporation. One woman has been appointed to the board of her company as a result of this initiative. Four companies have amended their charter rule on nominees to their board. Five companies are in the process of conveying the diversity request to the board to approve women in leadership roles. Ms. Shaw mentioned that companies with more diversity on their board will outperform their peers. Connecticut filed two resolutions to resolve gender pay gaps in hopes to press boards to more effectively manage gender

diversity. The Office of the Treasurer says it is much better to promote collaborations with in state companies to practice this initiative. Secretary McCaw added that in order to promote gender and racial diversity we must expand our effort as a Leadership body. Ms. Shaw added procurement is a compelling opportunity because in order to bid for services, there is a team to pitch to. Ms. Shaw mentioned lots of times a company will consider themselves “diverse” while only having one woman or man of color on the board. The goal is to promote leadership roles to senior management and next tier positions to promote success and diversity. Secretary McCaw added there may be tension within state agencies to achieve goals for diversity. The Office of the Treasurer is an agency with strong leadership and have consistently been proactive with diverse hiring. The question is how can we legally implement this into the procurement process. Several steering committee members mentioned their organization has a model in place they must follow to adhere to gender and racial diversity within leadership positions. Those organizations were the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and Community Foundations of Fairfield and Hartford Counties.

All members of the meeting mutually agreed that procurement will be a future topic discussion at the next meeting. Erin Choquette, Legal and Policy Advisor, DAS mentioned there is a tier of procurement under a certain dollar amount (\$50,000) that allows agencies to purchase using their own discretion if no contract is put in place. Secretary McCaw mentioned that could be difficult because procurement services with no contract could be expensive such as mental health services. Secretary McCaw mentioned the likelihood of RFP’s increasing as the percentage of procured services increase with the guidance from DAS and OPM legal prospective. Secretary McCaw added that the volume of vendors can be impactful as we would be able to broadly send the message of extending the composition of workforce beyond state business. Several subcommittee members mentioned creating a database of women who are interested in very specific jobs or subject matter so that a company can locate the correct fit for their company to promote diversity. Secretary McCaw believes an access to talent network could possibly be what the state needs to achieve success in this mission. Ms. Shaw, OTT, mentioned the Northeast Investors diversity program has a tool kit of firms sourcing for women candidates to pipeline women in mid level

management. Overall, women and girls in leadership needs to look beyond the procurement process to achieve overall state success.

5. *Upcoming Agenda Topics*

Secretary McCaw, OPM, informed the committee that procurement discussions will be continued at the next meeting. Folks with additional future agenda topics can email Alexis Aronne.

6. *Public Comment*

No public comment was made.

7. *Adjourn*

Meeting was adjourned at 10:57 a.m.