

Governor's Council on Women and Girls  
Leadership Subcommittee  
Kick-off Meeting  
Tuesday, April 23, 2019

MEETING MINUTES

**1. *Call to Order and Introduction***

Meeting was brought to order at 2:07 p.m. by Co-chairs Secretary Melissa McCaw, Deputy Treasurer Linda Savitsky and Commissioner Katie Dykes.

The following members and staff were in attendance and introduced themselves: Sarah Cook (Department of Developmental Services), Linda Piotrowicz (Department of Agriculture), Shannon Wegele (Office of the Secretary of the State), Clare Kindall (Office of Attorney General), Commissioner Andrew Mais (Insurance Department), Cherie Phoenix-Sharpe (Office of the Lieutenant Governor) and Dyshanna Gilmore (Office of Secretary McCaw).

The following visitors were present and introduced themselves: Sharon Cappetta (The COMMUNITY Foundation for Greater New Haven, Tricia Hyacinth (Fairfield County Community Foundation), Cathy Zeiner (YWCA Hartford Region),

**2. *Public Comment***

Secretary McCaw opened the floor for public comment. No comments made.

**3. *Subcommittee Mission (Overview)***

The Leadership Subcommittee Mission was read to the members by Secretary McCaw.

**4. *Discussion of Subcommittee Priorities and Timeline***

Secretary McCaw opened the floor for discussion for Members to explain what their Agency is currently doing to promote the mission of this Council as well as observing the metrics/target and recommendations to elevate to higher level.

- Wegele mentioned the Office of the Secretary of the State will conduct a study on gender and racial representation on appointments made to State Boards and Commissions. A study will also be conducted of

women running for statewide offices since Governor Ella Grasso to see if there are any patterns, as well as reviewing the number of women leaders currently in our State offices.

- The group discussed changing the mindset of voters. It was brought to attention that civics is not being taught by students in schools. Phoenix-Sharpe advised working with the Education subcommittee to make sure civics is learned in school to promote education of state government to the youth.
- There was discussion about cultivating the youth and reaching out to young girls that partake in Girl Scouts, YMCA and Girls Inc., to identify what programs are being offered and types of recognition badges earned. This will be an opportunity for state government officials to get involved and encourage young girls about pursuing careers in state government.
- Dykes mentioned inviting women leaders to speak to groups of women and girls for encouragement. This will create an opportunity for women and girls to hear what it is like to be a leader. This will also create visibility and attract women and girls to work for state government.
- McCaw mentioned taking inventory of existing programs through the State. McCaw thought of a statewide momentum (partnering of state agencies, corporations and non-profit organizations) on the initiatives of women leaders to create a bridge for mentorship.
- The committee discussed reviewing a survey of women leadership via the International Women's Forum (IWF).
- There was discussion about appointee positions made by Governor and Commissioners and how at times it is difficult to find people to hire for leadership roles. McCaw mentioned creating a database wherein there is a list of all appointments, recruitments and recommendations. Dykes thought of creating a website to encourage people to submit their resumes for those interested in serving on State Board and Commissions.

- Savitsky mentioned summer internship opportunities at State Agencies. Are there any opportunities available? Department of Administrative Services has information on internship programs. Phoenix-Sharpe stated the Education and Steam Subcommittee discussed that the Department of Transportation is one of the agencies that has a successful internship program that could be a model for other state agencies.
- McCaw mentioned “Women and Girls Day” in Connecticut wherein on one day a year women and girls can shadow women in leadership roles to get the exposure of what it is like to be a leader and what it entails.
- The group discussed a website showing women leaders across the State.
- Kindall mentioned inviting women to step up. Women do not invite themselves because they feel they are not qualified or because they have not been asked.
- Wegele mentioned 2020 marks the centennial anniversary of Women’s Suffrage. Office of the Secretary of State convened a group to hold a celebration for this event.
- Savitsky mentioned 2022 will be a big retirement year. We need to create a career pathway opportunity and encourage women to become state employees.
- There was discussion about working mothers and the tradeoff of being a mother and having a leadership role and having to take time from work for maternity leave. Women should be encouraged and gain confidence to become a leader although having the responsibilities and demands of being a mother. Phoenix-Sharpe advised reaching out to the Workforce Equity subcommittee.

##### ***5. Next Steps***

- McCaw asked the Members to send their Agency’s initiatives by email to Co-chairs and Dyshanna Gilmore by Thursday, May 2, 2019 which will be redistributed to the group.
- Provide feedback/thoughts to present at next meeting.

- Invite representation from community colleges to come and speak about what programs
- Invite various representatives from organizations with same goals to come and speak to the subcommittee about the practices and goals of their organization.

**Meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.**