

**BROOKLINE COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
MEETING THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2023
(ONLINE VIA ZOOM AND RECORDED)**

AGENDA

- I. (7 pm) Administrative details:
 - a. Welcome In attendance: Ms. Starr (administrator), Ms. Stillman, Ms. Caro, Ms. Stone, Dr. Chie, Ms. Garodia, Ms. Lee (left meeting early), Ms. Kaushik. Absent: Ms. Silver Robinson, Ms. McClelland, and Ms. Margolis.
 - b. Vote to approve minutes from meeting of (edited) Dec. 2022 and Jan. 2023
Dec 2022 Minutes – moved by Dr. Chie, seconded by Ms. Stillman.
Abstained – Ms. Garodia who was not present at the meeting.
Jan 2023 Minutes – moved by Ms. Stillman, seconded by Ms. Garodia.
Abstained – Ms. Stone due to not reading the minutes, Dr. Chie was not present at the meeting.

- II. (7:10 pm) Public Comment
 - a. We welcome 3-5 minute comments (depending on the number of speakers) from members of the public on issues not on the regular agenda. The public can raise hand and Ms. Starr will grant access.

- III. (7:15) Discussion of the Preliminary Gender Pay Equity Report, prepared by Ms. Gewirtz and Ms. Starr, from the Brookline Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations (previously circulated to commissioners).
 - i. Ms. Starr shared recording by Ms. Gabriel Gewirtz, who was an intern for the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Department last Fall. The recording was a summary report on the Gender Pay Equity in Brookline, data was from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.
 - ii. It was noted by a couple of BCW commissioners that the Function mentioned in the report were not clearly defined. Ms. Starr will make appropriate edits to the report.
 - iii. Ms. Stone shared that she was interested in seeing more analysis. Ms. Stone observed that what stood out for her was that it showed less of the gender pay equity within professions, but the inequity was in the different professions; women were concentrated in lower paying jobs. Ms Garodia and Ms. Caro provided examples where certain professions were gendered concentrated: protective services were dominated by men, librarians were dominated by women. Ms. Caro was curious to know what the Town can do to retain librarians. Ms. Stillman was interested in seeing whether there was a difference in the starting salary and middle profession salary range where the salary range will equal out over time. She noted that some jobs that were previously dominated by men, therefore women were unlikely to have experiences that allowed them to be as competitive. Ms. Stillman was interested in seeing if the report shows this data within the functions.

- iv. Ms. Stone strongly recommended that BCW present a letter to the Select Board, summarizing this report and this discussion on gender pay equity. BCW requests that Select Board to pay attention to this particular issue and ask the Select Board to come back to BCW with a plan on: How the Town will look into this subject. How it will be used in the salary discussion; what additional support the Town may need from BCW to move this forward to an investigation and analysis stage.
- v. Public Comment: Ms. Lesley Archabal, Town employee from Brookline Public Health, who had been asked to participate in BCW's conversation on Reproductive Rights efforts. Ms. Archabal presented the possibility of limitations of the data set, she inquired if BCW or ODICR have access to the raw data, which both commissions did not have. Ms. Archabal suggested that the raw data set can be analyzed in different ways to show more information. Deeper analysis, for example a Regression Analysis (statistical tool) may even show that there are gender pay gaps within the Functions (specific professions). Ms. Stone will add this point into the letter.

IV. (7:40 pm) Updates on working groups / subcommittees

- a. Planning for Woman/Women of the Year Celebration: report from subcommittee
 - i. The nomination form is live, and already have 12 nominations – mix of nominees with multiple nominations. Requesting the commissioners to help re-send this link to more people and groups. The last date to send in nominations is Feb. 24th.
 - ii. March 29th is a good date for this event within the Town calendar.
 - iii. Next BCW meeting will likely be the executive meeting to decide the winner(s).
 - iv. Organizers of the event will be: Tech person running the Zoom and monitoring the waiting room, Introduce women of the year, What we are giving to winners (plexi-glass award, certificate & orchid) – Dr. Chie. Volunteers to bring the awards to the winners – Ms. Caro and Ms. Garodia. The Leadership of Commonwealth of Massachusetts now consists of women, it will be meaningful to invite them. Ms. Stillman shared “it will be honorable to talk about Brookline’s Women of the Year, in the year of the Women.” Ms. Stillman will be reaching out to all the leaders: Ms. Maura Healey, Ms. Elizabeth Warren, Ms. Andrea Campbell, Ms. Michelle Wu, and/or the Lieutenant Governor’s office.
 - v. Working group (Ms. Stillman, Ms. Stone, Ms. Kaushik, Ms. Silver Robinson) will get together to coordinate this event. Ms. Garodia can create an edited version of this event and put on BCW’s website / Facebook page. For example, a highlighted moments of this event to be posted to the public.
- b. Warrant article on Reproductive Rights
 - i. Ms. Stone reported that a Warrant Article draft has been circulated and amended by the working group. The main focus is on codifying at the

local/municipal level (in a by-law, not a resolution) the protections against harassing litigation that are in place in State legislation passed last summer. It protects providers providing and patients receiving legal abortion or other pregnancy-related care from litigation that originates in a state that has outlawed abortion and/or gender-affirming health care. Once this draft is completed it will be distributed to the Town Counsel, Town Moderator, the Public Health Department, and Police department for review. Once submitted, it will be voted at May's Annual Town Meeting.

- ii. Ms. Stone explained that, in addition to the warrant article, the working group will continue working with the Department of Public Health to assist them in advancing, distributing, and amplying information about access to prescription and emergency contraceptives and to help residents/patients find and access legitimate pregnancy health care. This is not about providing those services, but about making sure the information and resources are more available and better distributed to everyone.
- iii. Ms. Stone asked if the BCW wants to be a primary petitioner for the Warrant Article described (and circulated). Dr. Chie shared that she was glad that this Warrant Article explicitly states the consequences of someone not following the state law; she felt it was a strong statement for Brookline to say it would also take actions against those who do not follow the state law.
- iv. Members of this working group are: Ms. Stone, Dr. Chie, Ms. Stillman and Ms. Garodia from BCW. There are about 20 individuals who are part of the group; physicians, lawyers, members of advocacy groups, residents who support reproductive rights, TMMs, members from the Temple Israel's Reproductive Rights committee, Sch Committee Member Val Frias and Director Ms. Sigalle Reiss of the Department of Public Health.
- v. Motion for BCW to be the primary petitioner of the Warrant Article (Ms. Stone will figure out if the BCW as a commission or individual commissioners' names would be listed) moved by Ms. Stone. Seconded by Ms. Caro. Roll call for votes: YES voted by Ms. Stone, Dr. Chie, Ms. Caro, Ms. Kaushik, Ms. Garodia, and Ms. Stillman – unanimous.
- vi. Dr. Chie brought to the commissioner's attention a legal case in Texas, where a group is suing the FDA to reverse their decision to approve the medication Mifepristone. This will affect national access to this medication. Ms. Stillman will look into the details of this case. She and Ms. Stone also mentioned that a free Legal Hotline for providers and patients was created by Beyond Roe Coalition – tons of attorneys are volunteering to be on this hotline.

- V. (7:55 pm) Discussion of and setting calendar for meeting day/time for 2023 meetings (noting that we must shift to partial in-person by March 31, 2023.)
 - a. Not enough commissioners present at this meeting to discuss this topic.
 - b. So far, Thursdays seemed to be a day that doesn't work for many. Ms. Garodia asked whether the meetings to be moved to Wednesdays. Dr. Chie and Ms. Garodia cannot make it to Thursday, March 2nd. Ms. Stone stated that since 2

commissioners already cannot make it to Thursday, therefore suggested to move the next meeting to Wednesday March 1st, this was agreed upon.

- VI. (8:00 pm) Old & New Business – No old and new business.
 - a. Next meeting – will be talking about Women of the Year.

Meeting ended at 8:22pm.

Please note that listed times are approximate