



Somerville Commission for Women
Monthly Meeting Minutes
May 15, 2013



Attended by Commissioners: Nancy Bacci, Rachelle Snyder, Melissa Alfone, Alicia Byrd, Katherine Wallace, Marlena Erdos, Keri Lorenzo, Daisy Monsalve, and Michelle Albert.

Also Attended by: Mary Marshall (resident) and Sonja Darai (City of Somerville, Office of Somerville Commissions).

The meeting was held at the City Hall Annex at 7:00 p.m.

Office of Somerville Commissions Report

The director of the OSC answered questions from the submitted monthly report.

Policy Update

The Earned Sick Days Coalition has merged with the Minimum Wage Coalition. They will work collaboratively moving forward. There are two hearings in June.

June 11 at 10:00 State House Hearing on the Minimum Wage legislation (Gardiner Auditorium).

- Senate President Murray will be testifying for the bill.

June 25 at 10:00 State House Hearing on the Earned Sick Time bill (Room A-1).

- 580,000 would benefit from the minimum wage legislation and 1 million from Earned Sick Time legislation.

The Coalition is looking for businesses that will publicly support the Earned Sick Time bill as well as people who have experienced the lose of a job or issues around sick time from work.

March Women's History Event Follow-up and Review

It was good to have the Mayor give the opening remarks and present awards. Event went well. Commissioners felt it showed a great partnership opportunity with the library.

April Women's Data Event and Report Follow-up and Review

The data from the Women's Commission Status of Somerville Women were presented at a community event in April. The following were responses and comments during the discussion.

Somerville Commission for Women 2013 Needs Assessment Report Review

Discussion Notes

- Would like to see more about the future in the report.
- How does this compare to the prior assessments?
- 30-35% of people in the city are new—is this an opportunity for focus?
- We should be more mindful of making events family friendly to encourage more women to get out. Programs need to accommodate women's schedules.

- Regarding women in the Nepali community: “They know there is a Women’s Commission, but they do not know what is inside.”
- It’s important to make resources available to women, especially immigrants. More than one person commented on the lack of awareness of resources.
- We need to identify how the system is inadvertently preventing people from participating.
- How can we use technology to support wellness? Is there a way to connect people through the cell phone? How can we leverage technology to be more inclusive?
- Overall, communication was a big theme.
- There is a desire for us to help address specific issues, like the problem of too few girls’ bathrooms at the high school on each floor.

At the monthly meeting, commissioners discussed the above comments especially the bathroom issue at the Somerville High School. Commissioners felt the next steps could be to have a meeting about the bathroom issue, have a survey with students, and brainstorm solutions.

Additionally, commissioners discussed

- Family Friendly activities and programming to be more inviting,
- Increasing Awareness of Commission and its activities,
- Develop Resource Sharing and Communication, and
- Examining How System Inadvertently Eliminates Some Participation.

Assigned tasks for action items and events

- Michelle would send the Somerville Commission for Women 2013 Needs Assessment Report Review “Discussion Notes” to all commissioners via Google Documents
 - Sonja is available to aid anyone who cannot access or to visit to instruct how to access.
- Sonja will distribute the Status of Women report and data review presentation PowerPoint
- Commissioners should sign up for Art Beat time slots (July 20, Davis Square)
- Ongoing:
 - Promote event and bring friends
 - Recruit prospective commissioners to attend Women’s Commission meetings

The Commission meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

The next monthly meeting of the SCW will be **Wednesday, June 19** at The City Hall Annex (50 Evergreen Avenue) from 7:00pm to 9:00pm.

The Somerville Commission for Women is supported by the City of Somerville's Health Department through the:



Office of Somerville Commissions

- Somerville Commission for Women
- Human Rights Commission
- Multicultural Affairs Commission
- LGBT Community Outreach and Issues



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