

**St. Mary County Commission For Women
Minutes
March 21, 2005; 5:30pm**

Attendees: Ceandra Scott, Katie Werner, Norma Pipkin, and Pat Friend.

Staff Support: Cynthia Brown, Division of Community Services.

Guest: Maureen Johnson, A Better Life

The meeting was convened at 5:40pm

State Commission for Women: Cynthia Brown informed members she had followed up with the guest speaker from the last meeting, Ms. Frances Eagan, St. Mary's County representative on the State Commission for Women. Ms. Eagan reported on recent State initiatives and offered her support to this local commission. Cynthia sent a hand written note thanking Ms. Eagan.

Website: Discussion was tabled until next month. Susan Wolf, who is leading this project, was unable to attend the meeting.

Women's History Month: The Board of County Commissioners awarded a proclamation to the CFW acknowledging March as Women's History Month. The CFW members presented female veterans at the Charlotte Hall Veteran's Home with flowers and certificates. There was discussion about other activities for Women's History Month and ways to recognize "unsung heroes" in our community, as well as mentors and students. Ways to get the base involved was also discussed. Norma Pipkin provided some history on the Women's History Banquet, which was last held about four years ago. There appears to be interest among the members to revive the event.

Domestic Violence Forum: Maureen Johnson from the organization, A Better Life, spoke about her efforts to organize a domestic violence forum. She has already started contacting agencies but has had no responses, so far. She spoke about the need for a task force to address all the facets of this problem and to make sure services are well coordinated. The commission members agreed to work with A Better Life in organizing the forum and authorized Cynthia to request the County Commissioners endorse a letter from the two organizations asking for agency cooperation.

Election of Officers – tabled until next meeting.

Fiscal Report – The account balance was \$850, which can either be spent by June 30, 2005 or returned to the County Commissioners. Member discussed responsible ways to utilize the funds like purchasing materials for the domestic violence forum. A decision will be made at the April meeting. Another suggestion was to have a Saturday retreat to establish a plan to make the commission fully functioning and effective (subcommittees, goals, activities, etc). Cynthia agreed to start preliminary plans for a retreat.

Additional Business: Members requested an updated roster.

The meeting adjourned 6:40pm

Next meeting: April 18, 2005; 5:30pm, Russell Room, Carter State Office Building in Leonardtown

Minutes respectfully submitted by Cynthia Brown

