



London N. Breed
Mayor

City and County of San Francisco
Commission on the Status of Women



San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, October 23, 2024 | 5:00 PM
San Francisco City Hall, Room 408

COMMISSION ROSTER

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|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Commission President | Sophia Andary |
| Commission Vice President | Ani Rivera |
| Commissioner | Sharon Chung |
| Commissioner | Diane Jones Lowrey |
| Commissioner | Dr. Shokooh Miry |
| Commissioner | Dr. Anne Moses |
| Commissioner | Dr. Raveena Rihal (Excused) |

I. CALL TO ORDER: *DISCUSSION*

President Sophia Andary called the meeting to order at 5:10pm.

Ms. Dominique Blakely performed roll call and confirmed 6 of 7 Commissioners present (quorum). Ms. Blakely read the land acknowledgement.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: *DISCUSSION and ACTION*

The Commission reviewed and approved the minutes from the regular Commission meeting on September 25, 2024.

Explanatory document: Draft Minutes from the regular Commission meeting on September 25, 2024.

No Public Comment.

(Roll Call Vote) Miry/Rivera – 6 ayes, 0 nays – Unanimous

III. DIRECTOR'S REPORT: *DISCUSSION*

Director Ellis provided a brief highlight of the Director's Report, which included the Department's effort to conduct research on a pilot program for a women owned business marketplace. She expressed that this initiative aligns with the Department's commitment to support women entrepreneurs and to create opportunities for their increased participation in the city's economic landscape.

Additionally, Director Ellis talked about how the Department continues to support the current portfolio of health and safety grantees, including partnering with SF Safehouse to bring a series of mental health pop-ups throughout the city through their initiative, Free Your Mind SF. Director Ellis shared that the first pop-up would take place on October 25th at Bayview Opera House.

Finally, as part of the Department's Bay Area Abortion Rights Coalition (BAARC) work, the Department was pleased to introduce Dr. Nancy L. Cohen from the Gender Equity Policy Institute who was presenting on the Bay Area Regional Landscape Analysis Report.

No Commissioner Comment.

No Public Comment.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Black Women Revolt Against Domestic Violence Grant Amendment: *DISCUSSION*

Director Ellis presented to the Commission a request to approve an amendment to a grant agreement with Black Women Revolt Against Domestic Violence (BWRADV), fiscally sponsored by Young Community Developers, Inc., to increase their grant by \$200,000, for a total budget of \$300,000. The Department intends to increase the current grant funds and update the grant plan to allow the additional funds to cover new operational costs not previously funded under the original grant agreement, including staffing and personnel expenses, office and program operations, and expanded outreach and education efforts aimed at increasing community awareness and engagement with BWRADV services for domestic violence survivors in crisis.

Commissioner Comment:

Commissioners voted to approve.

(Roll Call Vote) Rivera/Chung — 6 ayes, 0 nays — Unanimous

Public Comment

Dr. Pamela Tate, BWRADV Executive Director, thanked the Commission and introduced her staff.

Mary Martinez, Co-Director of Woman Inc., expressed strong support for BWRADV, which is part of the Dream Keepers Initiative. She explained that this initiative sponsors programs and services for Black communities in San Francisco; however, the funding for Dream Keepers was currently frozen. She expressed disappointment, noting that the freeze halted the efforts of organizations supporting Black communities, and she thanked DOSW and the Commission for their support.

Emberly Cross, with the Cooperative Restraining Order Clinic (CROC), spoke on behalf of CROC and the SF Consortium, expressing gratitude for the support of BWRADV.

Rebecca Jackson, Vice President of Reentry and Public Affairs with Community Forward, thanked the Commission for its support of women in the city. She stated that BWRADV is an institution in the Bayview and complimented Dr. Tate's trainings, noting that her organization implements Dr. Tate's practices.

Commissioner Ani Rivera expressed support for in-person public comments, highlighting recent research from Candid. The statistics revealed that Black-led organizations earn 300% less revenue than their white-led counterparts, and over 60% of Black-led nonprofits operate on budgets of less than \$100,000. Overall, Black-led nonprofits face significant resource challenges.

Commissioner Diane Jones Lowery asked Commissioner Rivera to repeat the percentage of Black-led nonprofits. Commissioner Rivera repeated the information with disappointment and offered to share the report with the Commission.

President Andary agreed that organizations supporting women are already underfunded and emphasized that those specifically supporting Black women face even greater funding challenges. She expressed frustration over the inadequate financial support for these organizations.

Commissioner Shokooh Miry inquired if grants requiring waiver forms are public information and was informed that they are public. Commissioner Miry thanked the team for the clarity of the report.

B. PRESENTATION FROM GENDER EQUITY POLICY INSTITUTE (GEPI): *DISCUSSION*

Dr. Nancy L. Cohen from the Gender Equity Policy Institute discussed the BAARC report with the commissioners. The report focused on three key points: abortion care, human rights, and reproductive justice.

Dr. Cohen presented data on the number of abortion care clinics and crisis pregnancy centers in the Bay Area by county. She also discussed inequities in access to abortion care within the community. A pie chart displaying the population of women of reproductive age and information on the median income of reproductive-aged women in San Francisco were shared.

Dr. Cohen made the first recommendation to expand access to high-quality, affordable, and equitable care. Her second recommendation was to protect and expand rights, access, and freedom. She provided a summary of five areas of action: (1) regional systems coordination and information sharing, (2) coordination of care and access logistics, (3) security, privacy, and legal protection, (4) outreach, education, and communications, and (5) policy coordination and advocacy.

Commissioner Comment:

Commissioner Sharon Chung confirmed the number of abortion clinics that had closed. Dr. Cohen stated that five labor and delivery units had closed. When Commissioner Chung inquired about the reasons, Dr. Cohen explained that it may be due to general consolidation within the healthcare industry.

Commissioner Anne Moses asked about the growth of crisis pregnancy centers (CPCs). Dr. Cohen confirmed there was no current information on growth but stated that there were 79 CPCs in the state.

Commissioner Rivera inquired about the legal operations of CPCs. Dr. Cohen responded that CPCs are funded by the anti-abortion movement, receiving funding for certain services but not others, creating a gray area. She emphasized the importance of providing scientific data rather than opinions.

Commissioner Moses raised concerns about CPCs' lack of HIPAA compliance and women's lack of awareness regarding this issue. Dr. Cohen suggested that private-public partnerships, including a public education campaign, might help address this problem.

Commissioner Shokooh Miry noted that California's private insurance covers abortion services and asked if reimbursement issues affect access to these services and if there was a way to address it. She also pointed out that some OB/GYNs have cited low reimbursement rates as a reason for not performing abortions. Dr. Cohen confirmed that California has the lowest reimbursement rates. Additionally, the CCRF and FAB Council are both focused on questions of reimbursement and cost, including securing continued funding from the state and exploring ways to influence agencies and policies to improve reimbursement rates.

Commissioner Miry then expressed curiosity about how much emphasis would be placed on issues of safety and security, even in a progressive state like California. She raised the concern of whether California could serve as a central hub for providers willing to do this important work, while also ensuring their safety from harassment or threats.

Dr. Cohan acknowledged that safety concerns are significant and affect providers even in progressive areas like San Francisco and Los Angeles. She noted that the current systems meant to protect providers' security are not effective.

Director Ellis highlighted Supervisor Catherine Stefani's ordinance aimed at addressing violence at San Francisco's Planned Parenthood, highlighting the increase in protests and instances of doctor impersonation. Planned Parenthood has requested additional funding for security measures.

No Public Comment.

V. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 6:19pm.