



## Monthly Women's Commission Meeting

February 9, 2022

### Minutes

**Attendees:** Marjorie, Sandy, Barbara, Pauline, Rhonda

**Staff:** Kimberly, Emily

### Programing Updates

#### Language Justice, Part 3: "Plain Language" Best Practices

**Thursday, February 10, 2022, 9:30-11:30am on Zoom**

Plain Language is clear, effective communication that is easy to understand. A powerful tool for inclusion and building community trust. The pathway to language justice!

#### **Unpacking the Shecession: Reimagining a new workforce for a new world**

March 8th, 2022

11:30am-1:00pm

*Zoom*

Over the past two years, women have left the workforce at an unprecedented rate. Women - women of color in particular – often occupy jobs that are labeled “essential” that require them to physically show up to work. Many are also parents with young children at home who need oversight and attention, are the caretakers of aging parents, or shoulder other non-paid, vital non-workplace labor. As a result, in the last quarter of 2021, as many as 1 in 3 women reported considering leaving their job, reducing work hours, or changing jobs. The Shecession has intensified and shed light on longstanding problems- the lack of policies that allow people to balance caregiving responsibilities and work responsibilities, pay inequality, and the outdated, but persistent, view of the expendability of women in the workforce. Now is the moment to reimagine an equitable workforce – What might that look like?

### Mapping Feminist Cambridge internship opportunity: Job description

**Mapping Feminist Cambridge** is a series of historic tours focused on the feminist movement in Cambridge from the 1970s–1990s. From the takeover of 888 Memorial Drive, to the formation of the first domestic violence shelter on the East Coast, to one of the earliest feminist bookstores, to the home of the earliest women's studies courses – Mapping Feminist Cambridge is a vibrant account of feminist organizing and politics. Each tour separately highlights three of Cambridge's vibrant Squares, spans several organizations, and provides context about the movement and its priorities, including: abortion access, racial equity, women in film and print, healing for survivors, lesbian and bisexual visibility, political collectives, and so much more.

With [Central and Inman Square tours](#) complete, the Cambridge Commission on the Status of Women is currently seeking a researcher to develop the third and final tour for the Mapping Feminist Cambridge series focused on Harvard Square.

Responsibilities include:

- Regular meetings with the Advisory Committee to gather ideas and feedback
- Visits to local archives (Schlesinger Library, Northeastern University, UMass Boston, The History Project, etc.) to research and document primary source materials
- Outreach to and conduct interviews with relevant community members
- Write a thoroughly-researched tour highlighting feminist historical sites from the 1970s-1990s throughout the Harvard Square neighborhood
- Host Harvard Square walking tours for community members

Skills and proficiencies include:

- Interest in feminist history
- Commitment to anti-racism, equity and inclusion in historical research
- Independent Initiative
- Written and verbal communication skills
- Manage time and prioritize deliverables
- Work well with Advisory Committee
- Attention to detail

Commitment and Compensation:

- 15 hours per week through June 2022
- Opportunity to continue from July 2022 - June 2023
- This is a paid internship opportunity. \$16.65/hour, per City of Cambridge internship compensation.

### **City Manager search: Update from Barbara**

Barbara attended the meeting 2/8/2022, 6-7:30 via zoom with the consulting group from Kentucky. Nineteen different Cambridge commissioners and board members attended the meeting. Each commission or board had 5 minutes to describe their commission or board and discuss their needs.

“A new City Manager should support the general mission of the Women’s Commission, including our anti-racism and anti-oppression efforts, our interrogation of anti-Black racism, and white supremacy.

We see the significance of our programs and policy involvement as part of the general success of the Cambridge community (working with the city’s youth, women in business, domestic violence, women’s history, City of Cambridge flexible work policies, etc.).

What is important for the next City Manager is to look at the BUDGET BOOK. It is a moral document of the City of Cambridge. It shows where Cambridge is prioritizing its money. Unfortunately, the Women's Commission does not receive much money.”

### **Commissioner Committees**

#### ***Update from Sandy and Marjorie on Somerville Women’s Commission***

On January 24, 2022, Sandy and Marjorie met with Denise Molina Capers, Director of Racial and Social Justice for the City of Somerville, and Lauren Spengler, from the Somerville Women’s Commission.

- In March 2021, Denise Molina Capers was appointed as Director of the RSJ. She heads the LGBTQ Services, The Office of Disabilities, the Women’s Commission and the Office of Human Rights
- Lauren Spengler, under Denise Capers, first full-time paid coordinator with responsibility to lend support and coordination to the Somerville Women’s Commission and Human Right’s Commission. The Commissioners are all volunteers.

- RSJ has a budget, but the Women's Commission does not. If there is need for funds, it would come out of the RSJ budget.
- There is a longstanding mission for the Commission and the goals for this year will be, according to Capers, to look at the strategic goals for the year that will be intimately connected to policy
- Capers would like to see a formalized Steering Committee that each month could steer issues to the Women's Commission. For example: reaching out to legislators on pertinent issues
- Capers sees the work of the Commission as updating ordinances and by-laws that are part of the strategic plan and continuing with the Domestic Violence Awareness Vigil
- Presently there are about 6-7 Women's Commission members and 2 co-chairs

### ***Decision Point***

- Commissioners discussed how to proceed with the idea of committees vs project-based involvement going forward. Barbara felt like it would be easier to move to a project by project; it would be less overwhelming.
- Rhonda is a project person as well. She wants us to be proactive rather than reactive on issues for women and girls. Pauline votes for project-based. Sandy is not interested in committees that require infrastructure; not interested in formalized committees. Interested in doing! Something. **The Commission voted to take on projects rather than form committees.**

### **Women's History Month, March 2022**

- For Women's History Month Programming Ideas: commissioners agreed with Barbara's idea to have a weekly or daily social/email that goes out to highlight notable or unknown women listed in the CWHP database for the month. Add on name: Medina Dixon, basketball player who recently died; Rachel Rolling; and Natasha Tidwell (Pauline contact) grew up in Cambridge, went to law school, US Attorney's Office. Suggestion to also add the young Arabic woman who's a graduate of CRLS who's going to NASCAR

Sandy offered to go through CWHP database to find 23 profiles of Cambridge women to highlight for each weekday during the month of March (so, M-F). They can go on FB.