

VENTURA COUNTY COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

MINUTES
DECEMBER 3, 1983

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Mary Baird
Raymond Clayton
Ginny Connell
Louise Grethel
Brook Hubbell
Mary Jane Johns
Jo Anne Le Fils-Moore
Erin Sheffield

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Lauren Anderson
Alicia Ramirez-Brewer
Dorothy Engel
Tila Estrada
Lupe Gonsalves
Ida Richardson
Sandra Ryder

The regular December meeting of the Commission for Women was held in Santa Barbara as a joint meeting with the Santa Barbara County Commission for Women and the San Luis Obispo County Commission on the Status of Women. It was held at the Santa Barbara Savings & Loan Association at 1704 State Street at Valerio St. The joint session began at 10:00 a.m.

Each of the Commissioners and guests were welcomed by Ruth Schaffer, Chair of the Santa Barbara Commission.

Discussion of Projects:

The Santa Barbara Commission (SB) reported their involvement in several projects, one of which is the printing of a survival card with information on women's organizations, resources and phone numbers. They also are working on a community survey of their county. Another of their on-going projects is in the area of child support. The Ventura County Commission is interested in learning more about this project and just how the SB Commission is involved.

Noelle Norton, Chair of the San Luis Obispo Commission (SLO) reported on past and current projects of her Commission. Two of the most successful projects have been the printing of a Directory of Women's Organizations and Services and a Women's Crisis Card which gives information and phone numbers for women who are in a crisis situation. Both of these projects were done at the request of their Board of Supervisors. Each of the projects is being repeated in order to print more copies of each item.

Another successful project has been, and is, the Community Survey which began 4 years ago and is now in its second update. The Survey tracks women's employment in various public and private areas such as school staff and administrative positions, elected officials, corporate executive positions, law firm partnerships, etc., keeps records of the numbers of women in different positions and watches trends in women's employment in SLO County.

The SLO County Commission is planning a public forum on the

Feminization of Poverty to be held in February. There will be panel discussions, presentations and public testimony. The proceedings will be taped, transcribed and given to the Board of Supervisors and service providers. The data collected will be analyzed to determine what action should/could be taken by the Commission and others.

For National Women's History Week '83 the SLO Commission held a week long celebration with a different program in a different location each day. On International Women's Day they hosted the showing of the film "The Salt of the Earth."

Ginny Connell of the Ventura County Commission gave a report on the various activities of this Commission in support of NWHW over the last three years, including information for plans for the '84 celebration. There was enthusiasm among the other Commissioners on hearing of plans for the women's history workshop planned for January 27 & 28, 1984, in Camarillo. This workshop may be taken for credit and is designed to develop an awareness of the portrayal of women in history and of the need to study women's history. There will be an extensive slide presentation of American women, a chronological overview of women in American history, specific lesson plans and implementation techniques. The workshop leaders are consultants to the State Department of Education and are the founders of the National Women's History Project, Molly MacGregor and Bette Morgan. The workshop is given in conjunction with California Lutheran College.

The SB Commission designed and distributed to each school classroom a poster about seven famous American women. They also hosted a banquet to honor county women for their contributions to their own communities.

Mary Baird and Brook Hubbell, VC Commission, gave a presentation on the Child Care Project which has been the focus of this Commission's work since its beginning.

Some statistics cited by Mary Baird are:

- . in 1981, one out of 5 women who was unemployed was unemployed because she could not make satisfactory child care arrangements.
- . 93% of American families are not the traditional, nuclear family with male breadwinner and full-time homemaker wife.
- . in 1981, there were 10 million latch-key children.
- . in 1982, 58% of working women had school aged children.
- . in 1982, 55% of working women had a child under 6.
- . a projection for 1990 indicates that at that time, 77% of all women with children under 6 will be working outside the home.

The problem of satisfactory child care is a serious problem and must be addressed.

The Child Care Project had 3 phases in its progress: fact finding, analysis of data and the development of an appropriate plan of action.

The primary focus of the Committee was to educate and encourage business and industry leaders to become involved in providing child care for their employees' children.

The Committee developed a presentation book with applicable information for various types of presentations, a copyrighted brochure called "KISS: Kids & Industry-Success Story" which details the various options available to an employer, information on costs and benefits to the company in different types of involvement in child care.

The Committee, along with the Private Industry Council and other interested volunteers, presented "Working Parents: An Employers' Symposium on Child Care", at which information from the KISS brochure was presented along with many other presentations by recognized experts in the field of employer-assisted child care. A Proceedings of that Symposium is in process at this time and will be available soon.

A needs assessment for child care for county employees has been approved by the Ventura County Supervisors and the Committee is waiting for that process to begin.

The success of the Child Care Project and Symposium is in large part due to the support of the Board of Supervisors in backing such a project, and that support is greatly appreciated.

There was discussion of community response to the initial child care needs assessment sent out by the VC committee. It was found that many women were reluctant to let their employers become aware that they had problems with child care, so it was stressed that any company or government agency which conducts a needs assessment must make it clear that the information will be kept confidential and will not jeopardize anyone's job.

There was a brief discussion of Commissioner attendance at regular meetings. Erin Sheffield read the proposed by-laws changes which deal with attendance. These by-laws amendments will be presented to the VC Commission at the January 21st meeting.

Commissioners from the other two counties reported that when a vacancy occurs on their Commission, their Board of Supervisors seem reluctant to fill it quickly or at all. The VC Commissioners reported that our Supervisors have acted immediately to fill any vacancy that occurs and that the Commission greatly appreciates this show of respect and support by the Supervisors.

Erin Sheffield reported on the process involved in the VC Salute to Women awards and banquet and the role played by the Friends of the Commission.

It was suggested that one way in which a Commission for Women could be effective in each of our counties is to stay informed on the make-up of other county commissions and agencies, to know

when there is a vacancy and to be able to relay that information to women who would be prospective appointees/employees, and to support the idea of having government be more representative of the population.

There was a discussion of Rep. Robert Lagomarsino's having stated that he would vote for the Equal Rights Amendment when it came up in the House and then proceeding to vote against it. Jo Anne Moore showed a newspaper ad which had appeared in the Ventura County Star-Free Press which took him to task for that action.

It was agreed to set up a committee to do some preliminary work investigating the need and benefits of having a tri-county Commission for Women conference and workshop in the spring of 1984.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon, and was followed by an informal lunch at The Second Story Restaurant in Santa Barbara.

The next meeting of the Ventura County Commission for Women will be:

Saturday, January 21, 1984
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Camarillo Public Library
3100 Ponderosa Drive
Camarillo, CA 93010

All interested persons are invited to attend this and all monthly meetings of the Commission.

Submitted by
Martha Baskerville