



2017 ANNUAL REPORT

**MECKLENBURG COUNTY
WOMEN'S ADVISORY BOARD
APRIL 3, 2018**

Women's Advisory Board

The main focus of the Women's Advisory Board (WAB) in 2017 was to restructure and reorganize so as to be better positioned to move forward. The WAB has experienced significant turnover due in part to attendance requirements and other member work and personal commitments. A new chairperson was elected in April, 2017, as well as the WAB welcoming new members appointed by the BOCC to fill vacant positions. The new leadership along with existing and newly appointed members decided an immediate priority was to update and approve a new vision and mission statement which are as follows:

Mission Statement - To promote the critical and emerging needs of women in Mecklenburg County through education and service.

Vision Statement - Equality for all women in Mecklenburg County.

The next priority for the newly elected chair and leadership was to develop a new orientation and onboarding process including an orientation manual.

2017 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

All new board members are asked to complete the orientation within two weeks of receiving a "Welcome to the Women's Advisory Board" email from the WAB Chair. Upon successful completion of the orientation, the board member receives a Certificate of Completion.

The WAB orientation includes the following information:

- Welcome
- Orientation Instructions
- History of the Mecklenburg County Women's Advisory Board
- List of Do's and Don'ts of the board consistent with County Commission policies
- Board Purpose: Information regarding the board's purpose, mission statement and vision statement.

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- Board Members: Information related to meeting times, dates, attendance, quorum and County process for removal from the board.
- Leadership of the Board: Descriptions of the following board leadership positions: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Parliamentarian, County staff Liaison
- Board Committees: Information regarding the following Board Committees: Program Planning, Retreat, Marketing, Annual Report, Mission and Vision Statement

Some of the other accomplishments towards building the board foundation included updating the bylaws for approval by the County Attorney and BOCC, developing a process so that all members can review and provide input to documents under development. The goal is to obtain approval to include approved documents with other Women's Advisory Board information on the Community Support Services County webpage. WAB members are provided an updated and current member list with contact information for all board members, a Women's Advisory Board manual, and a new email based absence notification form for monthly meeting attendance documentation and records. Lastly, the board focused on developing and establishing committees (listed above) and appointed committee leaders to assist in moving the board forward in its goals.

In addition to restructuring the Women's Advisory Board, the board also hosted in partnership with the UNCC Women + Girls Alliance a key event, the 2017 Women's Equality Day. In accordance with our mission, the board chose for 2017 to focus this event on bringing awareness to issues related to body shaming rather than the traditional theme of the right to vote celebration. The 2017 Women's Equality Day event was titled, Overcoming Body Shame: How to Deal with Body Image. The topic of body shame was selected because:

- 55–59% of girls say that the bodies they ought to have are thinner than their current body
- 26% of 5-year-olds recommend dieting behavior as a solution for weight gain
- 78% of 17-year-old girls have issues with how their bodies look
- 48% of girls wished they were as skinny as the models they saw in fashion magazines

The speakers for the 2017 Women's Equality Day event were:

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- Dr. Heather Brown, UNC Charlotte Women + Girls Alliance
- Dr. Simone Hunter, Clinical Psychologist
- Dr. Keisha Smith, Clinical Psychologist
- Beckie Saupé-Kohler, Co-Founder of Fight Club For Women
- Chantia Carter, Licensed Clinical Social Worker
- Ann Kreindler-Siegel, Licensed Clinical Social Worker

It was our intent and goal not only to raise awareness of the various issues relating to body image facing women and girls in Mecklenburg County with this event, but to also provide useful information and tools to help them overcome body image issues they are having.

83 people attended the 2017 Women's Equality Day event. Highlights from the event were also recorded and can be viewed at:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC85K_hmbWvILE7JiAjCLLVg

To make this event a success the board formed a partnership with the UNC Charlotte Women + Girls Alliance and Dr. Heather Brown, their Director. During the event the WAB Chair was interviewed by Spectrum News on the importance of the event and the topic of Overcoming Body Shame: How to Deal with Body Image.

To promote the event, the board members sent out invitations, radio ads were run, and Zhivi Williams (Committee Chair and Board Chair) Dr. Heather Brown announced the event on WBTV.

CHALLENGES

Challenges faced by the Board in 2017 included the fact that the Board had high turnover. Board members had always been willing to participate in 2017 but due to personal and work conflicts, some Board members struggled with the County's attendance policy. This resulted in the loss of several members at the end of 2017 and after the January, 2018 attendance report to the County Manager's Office. Maintaining a full board structure proved to be an ongoing challenge.

Another challenge the board faced was not having an orientation process in place to welcome and prepare the members to serve on the board. A board orientation manual and procedure was created to address this challenge.

LOOKING FORWARD: 2018

The Board held an all-day retreat in February at the Dorothy Waddy Pavilion where the group strategized for 2018: setting board goals, how to be more impactful with women's issues in our community, identifying strategies for having a larger visibility in the county, and methods to gather information and how to disseminate it. One of the projects for 2018 is to participate in Habitat Women's Build. Another goal for the board in 2018 is to build a partnership with League of Women Voters, Women + Girls Alliance at UNC-Charlotte and North Mecklenburg County Women's Club.

The Women's Advisory Board appreciates the support and guidance received from the Board of County Commissioners.

MECKLENBURG COUNTY WOMEN'S ADVISORY BOARD

2017 BOARD MEMBERS

Zhivi Williams

Marci Briar – Vice Chair*

Kim Caldwell – Secretary

Linda Carr - Parliamentarian

Samantha Abt-Bumgarner

Allyson Dunlap

Simone Hunter

Lashonda McGregor

Joy Marshall

Ruth Pierce

Arlene Love

Barbara Thomas

Lahari Jones

Charlene Henderson

*The 2017 Vice Chair resigned from the Board in late 2017 due to out of town job requirements limiting her availability.