

## **MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF APRIL 28, 2003**

The regular meeting of the Los Angeles County Commission for Women was held on April 28, 2003 in Room 830, Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, California.

In absence of a quorum, President Jernigan called a meeting of the Committee of the Whole to order at 10:10 a.m., followed by introductions. The following Commissioners were present for the roll call:

President Jernigan  
Commissioner Duba  
Commissioner Morgan  
Commissioner Rodriguez

President Jernigan asked for a moment of silence for Commissioner Mummey and her family in memory of her granddaughter, Amanda Seraphin.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Jernigan reported the following:

- She and Commissioner Duba attended the Northrop Grumman 2003 Community Service 'Spirit of America' Awards at the Beverly Hilton Hotel on April 21, where the Los Angeles County Commission for Women was given a \$25,000 community service grant for the Fifth Annual 5K Run/Walk for Girls-at-Risk.
- On April 25, she and Commissioners Cooperman, Creary and Rodriguez attended the Cedars-Sinai Second Annual Women's Health Conference.
- On April 26, she attended Creating the Pipeline for the Future 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Luncheon.
- She shared with Commissioners an article about Gladys Castro, Health Committee member.
- She commented on the April 27, 2003 Los Angeles Times article regarding Los Angeles County's plan to cut 2,475 health care jobs in June 2003.
- She appointed Commissioner Morgan to chair the Nominating Committee in Commissioner's Mummey's place.

### **STAFF REPORT**

Staff reported the following:

- Supervisor Burke will present a scroll to Barbara Oliver, Administrator of Women's and Children's Hospital, recognizing the hospital during Women's Health Month for May 2003 for the exemplary dedication and commitment to providing women's health services to the citizens of Los Angeles County.

- On recommendation of Supervisor Burke, she will move to proclaim May 2003 as “Women’s Health Month” throughout Los Angeles County and encourage employees to participate in and support women’s health activities, including the 2003 Revlon/Run Walk on May 10.
- Supervisor Molina will recommend the Board of Supervisors to support Sheila Kuehl’s SB 921, which would provide health insurance coverage to all Californians through a single payer insurance plan offered by the State.

**PRESENTATION ON REFLEX SYMPATHETIC DYSTROPHY AND WOMEN IN PAIN  
PETITION BY CYNTHIA TOUSSAINT**

Cynthia Toussaint, Vice President of the non-profit organization, For Grace, reported the following:

Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy (RSD), also called Complex Regional Pain Syndrome, is a chronic neurological disease affecting 1.5 million to 6 million people. RSD is a malfunction of a part of the nervous system. RSD develops in response to an event the body regards as traumatic such as an accident or medical procedure. Minor injuries, such as a sprain or a fall, frequently cause RSD. Nerves misfire, sending a constant pain message to the brain. If not treated properly and promptly, nerves begin sharing information and the pain amplifies and spreads to other parts of the body. Women are at a higher risk for this disease.

Symptoms include constant burning pain, loss of motion, muscle spasm, swelling, and changes in skin temperature and color.

RSD suffers from lack of awareness on the public’s side, and a lack of early diagnoses on the medical community’s side. Early diagnosis is crucial to successful treatment and recovery from the disease. Suicide is commonplace with victims of advanced, undiagnosed RSD because of the unbearable, constant pain. Ms. Toussaint’s RSD went undiagnosed for 13 years. A common diagnosis by the medical community to those with undiagnosed RSD is that it is “all in their head” due the lack of any existing physical injury to the body to correlate with the existing pain. The constant mis-hits in diagnosis is that the source of pain is neurological malfunctioning, rather than evident diseases or apparent physical injuries.

“For Grace,” Ms. Toussaint’s nonprofit organization, is devoted to raising awareness for increased medical intervention and increased medical research funding for RSD diagnosis.

After a question and answer period, President Jernigan thanked Ms. Toussaint for her presentation, and informed her that the Commission will consider endorsing the Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy petition at its next meeting.

(Commissioner Creary joined the meeting.)

**RECOMMENDATION TO SUPPORT LEGISLATION ON WOMEN IN ACTION LOBBY DAY IN SACRAMENTO ON MAY 15, 2003**

Staff informed the Commission that the only bill supported by the Board that is appropriate for the Commission to lobby for at Women in Action Lobby Day is Gloria Romero's "Five for Life" SB 108. Staff further informed the Commission that Supervisor Molina will recommend the Board support Sheila Kuehl's SB 921, The Health Care for All Californians Act, which would provide health insurance coverage to all Californians through a single payer insurance plan offered by the State. If this item is approved by the Board, staff will forward the information to the Commission delegation.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Health Committee**

Commissioner Creary reported the following:

She, President Jernigan and Commissioners Cooperman and Rodriguez attended the Cedars-Sinai Second Annual Women's Health Conference. She shared the Federal Office of Women's Health Home Front daybook that was given out at the Conference, which gives daily health tips for women. She encouraged Commissioners to turn in their sign-up forms for 2003 Revlon Run/Walk. The Commission's official team partner is the Charles Drew Medical Auxiliary.

Commissioner Rodriguez reported the following:

She passed out the survey that the Domestic Violence Committee participated in with the Mid-Wilshire Domestic Violence collaborative. She will be meeting with Congresswoman Hilda Solis to discuss domestic violence issues in her district.

**Media/Public Relations Committee**

Commissioner Morgan reported that she was asked to serve as Honorary California Chair of President Bush's U.S. Business Advisory Council. She will compose the three 5K Run/Walk press releases. She will also complete the press release for the July 26<sup>th</sup> Older Women's Conference in Cerritos.

**5K Run/Walk Subcommittee**

Commissioner Duba reported that Northrop Grumman donated \$25,000 to the 5K Run/Walk at the company's 2003 Community Service 'Spirit of America' Awards at the Beverly Hilton Hotel on April 21.

The Commission also received an anonymous donation of \$1,000; the Silver Factory, a bronze sponsor, donated 400 admission tickets; the Comedy House of

Pasadena donated four admission tickets; Clif Health Bar Company donated 800 Luna Health Bars; Promax Health Bar Company donated 1,000 sample size health bars; In & Out Burger donated 20 meals gift certificates; Total Massage will participate; and L.A. City Councilman Alex Padilla secured the stage.

The Mayor of Pasadena, Bill Bogaard, Olympian Eveyln Ashford, and athlete Ruth Wysoki confirmed their attendance.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was none.

### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Commissioner Rodriguez passed out an informational sheet on heart disease and women from the Cedars-Sinai Second Annual Women's Health Conference.

### **MATTERS NOT ON THE POSTED AGENDA**

There were none.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the Commission adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **COMMISSIONERS**

Ruth Jernigan, President  
Ruth Creary, Ph.D.  
Reiko Duba  
Lila Morgan  
Olivia Rodriguez

### **EXCUSED**

Yolanda Becerra-Jones  
Susan Carpenter McMillan  
Roslyn Cooperman  
Charlotte Lesser  
Yvonne Mariajimenez  
Janet Mummey, Esq.  
Barbara Perkins

### **UNEXCUSED**

Sophia Esparza  
Brenda C. Smith, M.D.

### **COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES**

Khanh Nguyen, Executive Office  
Jim Corbett, Executive Office  
Twila Kerr, Executive Office  
Cheryl Diaz, Executive Office  
Audra Galang, Executive Office

### **GUESTS**

Cynthia Toussaint, For Grace  
John Garrett, For Grace