



Santa Cruz County Women's Commission

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Santa Cruz County Women's Commission 2018 - 2019 Biennial Report

1. The Role of the Commission

The Women's Commission is an advisory body to the Board of Supervisors on issues affecting women and girls in Santa Cruz County. The Commission was established to:

- a. Advise the Board of Supervisors on matters affecting any current inequalities suffered by citizens of this County
- b. Make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors to rectify any such inequalities;
- c. Make available to the public information and resources concerning equal rights and opportunities. The Commission shall also maintain a current file of services and resources useful to the community;
- d. Review Santa Cruz County's equal employment opportunity plan and policies and recommend to the Board of Supervisors and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission any revisions which may be necessary to eliminate employment discrimination against women;
- e. Review Santa Cruz County's rules and job descriptions and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors and to the Civil Service Commission, as necessary, to assure that any unnecessary barriers to the employment of women are removed;
- f. Study the present and projected needs of women. Develop comprehensive goals to achieve present solutions and effective future planning;
- g. Review pending Federal and State legislation which would impact upon women and, where appropriate, advise the Board of Supervisors of its recommendations;
- h. Exercise any other responsibilities related to the needs and concerns of women and as set forth in the Commission's bylaws as approved by the Board of Supervisors.

2. Meetings Dates, Time, and Location

Women's Commission meetings are scheduled for the third Thursday of every month except July and December, from 6:30 until 8:00 PM at the County Government Building (701 Ocean Street, Coastlines Conference Room, Santa Cruz, CA 95060).

In 2018, the regularly scheduled meeting for August was canceled, and a Commission retreat was held on August 26, 2018. One regularly scheduled meeting was held at the Corralitos Women's Club (33 Browns Valley Rd., Watsonville, CA 95076).

In 2019, two regularly scheduled meetings were canceled for lack of quorum, and one regularly scheduled meeting was held in Watsonville at the Watsonville County Government Building (18 W. Beach Street, Watsonville, CA 95076).

3. Commission Structure

The Women’s Commission is composed of ten voting members; two appointed by each of the five County Supervisors. New officers are elected each year during the April regular meeting.

On December 31, 2019, the Women’s Commission membership was as follows:

District	Commissioners
1 st District	Theresa Cariño (Co-Chair) Jillian Ritter (Co-Chair)
2 nd District	Carrie Beaton Laurel Schonfield
3 rd District	Vacancy Vacancy
4 th District	Luci Basor Jenny Sarmiento
5 th District	Sheila De Lany Vacancy

The Commissioner(s) who completed their terms, resigned, or were replaced during the reporting period were Maria Barranco, Marissa Fullum-Campbell, Laura Cross, Melanie Martinez, Carole McPherson, M. Miller, and Margaret Barr.

Commissioners who were appointed during the reporting period were Carrie Beaton, Luci Basor, Jillian Ritter, Laurel Schonfield, M. Miller, and Jenny Sarmiento.

In April 2018, Laura Cross and Theresa Cariño were elected Co-Chairs, and Commissioner Barr was elected to the Executive Committee. In September 2018, Jillian Ritter was elected Co-Chair after Co-Chair Cross resigned.

In April 2019, Jillian Ritter and Theresa Cariño were re-elected Co-Chairs. In December 2019, after Commissioner Barr’s resignation, Commissioner Schonfield was elected to the Executive Committee.

4. Commission Staff

The role of *Commissions Coordinator* experienced some turnover during the reporting period. Britt Harmssen, EEO Officer, temporarily staffed the Commission until the position could be filled. In July of 2018, Kaite McGrew was hired as *Commissions Coordinator* and staffed the Commission for the remainder of the reporting period.

Between Commissions meetings, County Staff was available by phone, email, or in person for information and referrals. The County EEO Commissions Office is located in the County Government Center (701 Ocean Street, Room 510, Santa Cruz).

5. Attendance

Please see attached *Santa Cruz County Women’s Commission 2018-2019 Attendance Report*.

6. Commission Activities and Accomplishments

The Commission’s priorities and subsequent activities are determined by the Commission’s mandate and emerging needs as expressed by the community and identified by the Commissioners.

During the reporting period, Commissioners conducted the following business:

- Held seventeen regular meetings, including two meetings at alternate sites
- Increased Commission social media outreach via Facebook and Instagram
- Maintained a current, informative Commission website to support Commission outreach and advocacy efforts
- Designed and implemented new logos for both the Commission and the Trailblazers project
- Developed a community partner database for future outreach and collaboration efforts
- Implemented a new strategic action plan aligned with mandated scope and purpose of the Commission
- Reviewed new County position descriptions as they became available
- Received reports and reviewed correspondence from members of the public with concerns of interest to women in Santa Cruz County

During the reporting period, Commissioners monitored the following emerging issues:

- Services, resources, and challenges for Santa Cruz County women experiencing homelessness
- Senate Bill 826 which establishes quotas for female members of organization boards
- Voting procedure changes to enhance security and accessibility
- County sexual assault response team processes and the availability of Sexual Assault Forensic Exams (SAFE) in Santa Cruz County
- The status of reproductive health education for girls in Santa Cruz County and its potential impact on teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease rates
- Santa Cruz County's new *Lactation Accommodation Policy*
- The scarcity of changing stations and toddler high chairs in County restrooms

During the reporting period, Commissioners participated in the following events/activities:

- A public meeting regarding the proposed Dominican – Dignity merger
- A community healthcare providers meeting regarding the impact of current administration healthcare policies on reproductive rights for women in Santa Cruz County
- Women's Reproductive Rights Breakfasts and Women's March Rallies
- A Santa Cruz County community partner meeting to address homelessness issues
- A talk by Jennifer Weiss-Wolf on menstrual equity
- The *Municipal Management Association of Northern California* (MMANC) hygiene drive supporting the *Homeless Services Center*
- The *Santa Cruz City Commission for the Prevention of Violence Against Women* "Transforming Together Conference"
- A *Monarch Services #StandWithUs* fundraiser
- *Girls, Inc.* events
- *International Women's Day* activities
- *Sexual Assault Awareness Month* outreach
- *Breastfeeding Awareness Month* outreach
- *Salud y Cariño* events
- Watsonville Film Festival's *Women for Women Film Series*
- The *Women and Leadership Forum*
- The "100 Women Who Care" event at the Museum of Art & History
- The Democratic Convention in San Francisco

During the reporting period, the Commission heard reports on the following community agencies, County programs, and other organizations of interest to women:

- Co-Chair Cariño served on the *Justice and Gender Task Force* and reported regularly on task force activities.
- Co-Chair Cariño reported on a review board convened in response to an allegation of sexual assault in the County Jail and the implementation status of their subsequent recommendations to the County.
- Commissioner Barr reported on *Bay Area National Women’s History Alliance* planned activities and events in celebration of the 100-year anniversary of the 19th Amendment.
- County EEO Officers Britt Harmssen and Mitsuno Baurmeister reported on:
 - The *Equal Employment Opportunity & Cultural Competence Plan* (EEO & CC) update
 - Legal developments in the areas of equal employment opportunity and non-discrimination
 - County training procedures in the areas of equal employment opportunity, non-discrimination, gender sensitivity, and sexual harassment.
 - The County’s new lactation room and *Lactation Accommodation Policy*
 - The County’s Administrative Review process to address potential underutilization of women and minorities in departmental hiring practices
- Ajita Patel, County Personnel Director, reported on the County Operational plan.
- Co-Chair Cariño reported on Salud y Cariño’s leadership surf camp for girls.
- Co-Chair Ritter reported on County Budget hearings.
- Arielle Miller (Homeless Services Center) reported on the *Point in Time* (PIT) Count of persons experiencing homelessness.
- Suzanne Doty, Former President of the Association of California Commissions for Women, reported on the Association’s upcoming 2019 Spring Conference.
- Bev Strand, Former Santa Clara Status of Women and Girls Commissioner, reported on the disparity between US and Cuban women’s benefits, including reproductive health care, maternity leave and daycare services.

7. COMMISSION MEMBERSHIPS & AFFILIATIONS

During the reporting period, Commissioners served on or were affiliated with the following commissions or organizations:

- Justice and Gender Advisory Task Force
- Valley Women’s Club
- Women’s Council of Realtors - Santa Cruz Network
- Watsonville Women’s Club
- Salud y Cariño
- Girls, Inc.
- Women in Philanthropy
- Volunteer Center of Santa Cruz County
- Rights Network of Santa Cruz County
- Democratic Women’s Club of Santa Cruz County
- Coalition Against Human Trafficking
- National Women’s History Alliance
- Santa Cruz County Community Coalition to Overcome Racism (SCCCOR)

- 100 Women Who Care
- Boulder Creek Business Association
- California Women’s Agenda
- Expanding Your Horizons
- Pajaro Valley Federation of Teachers
- Positive Discipline Community Resources
- Reproductive Rights Network
- Santa Cruz County NOW
- UCSC Women’s Career Board
- Planned Parenthood
- Indivisible

8. COMMISSION SUBCOMMITTEES

During the reporting period, the Commission heard reports from the following ad hoc subcommittees on business within their subject matter jurisdiction:

- Public Awareness Subcommittee on community outreach efforts
- Women & Homelessness Subcommittee on the *Women and Homelessness Speaker Series*
- Status of Women and Girls Healthcare Subcommittee on updates to the healthcare section

9. COMMISSION ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND SPECIAL PROJECTS

During the reporting period, Commissioners took the following actions to address emerging issues:

- Initiated the *Status of Women and Girls Report: Healthcare Section* update by recruiting two Santa Clara University student interns to assist with community outreach, data collection, data analysis and technical writing
- Toured the newly re-opened Blaine Street Women’s Facility
- Wrote individual letters to District Supervisors regarding the potential impact of the Dignity-Dominican merger on the availability of women’s reproductive healthcare in Santa Cruz County

During the reporting period, the Commission participated in the following special projects:

- Initiated the *Women & Homelessness Speakers Series* featuring speakers from community partners providing services to women experiencing homelessness to speak on homelessness issues through a gender lens
- In 2018, presented Trailblazers awards to Heidi Boynton, Kristen Petersen, Susan Greene, Maria Campos and Linda Skeff
- In 2019, presented Trailblazers awards to Casey Coonerty-Protti, Clara Minor, Nicole Keadle, and Margaret Cariño-Condon
- Hosted a luncheon celebrating Trailblazer awardees at the Watsonville Women’s Club
- Designed and installed two community art walls celebrating Trailblazers awardees
- The Santa Cruz County Arts Council approved a proposal to create a special exhibit in the County building in 2020 to celebrate 100-years of women’s suffrage and encourage women to vote. The Commission will be working with local women artists and consulting with the Museum of Art & History to design the exhibit.
- Assembled and delivered 25 mini-backpack care packages to women at the *Housing Matters Shelter*

10. FUTURE GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the coming year, the Women's Commission will endeavor to accomplish the following:

- Actively recruit for Commissioners to fill vacant seats
- Present the updated healthcare section of the SOWAG report to the Board of Supervisors
- Present Trailblazers Awards to community members who advance the interests of Santa Cruz County women and girls
- Design and install an exhibit to celebrate women's suffrage and encourage voter participation
- Continue and complete the *Women and Homelessness Speaker Series*
- Update Commission Bylaws to reflect changes in procedure and changes to Brown Act notice requirements, as well as consistency of language where appropriate
- Promote participation in the 2020 Census, particularly with difficult-to-count groups
- Promote civic engagement and voter participation for women in the 2020 elections
- Continue to monitor development of the County EEO & CC Plans
- Establish a Policy Review Subcommittee to review policies and legislation
- Establish a Public Service and Civic Engagement Subcommittee to encourage youth voter participation and promote a greater presence of women in leadership roles
- Further develop our community partner outreach database and develop an easily accessible database of resources for women

In the coming year, the Women's Commission recommends that the Board of Supervisors take the following actions:

- Continue to actively recruit to fill the vacancies in District 3 and District 5
- Provide policy leadership requiring that all County data and data provided by County-funded organizations (as a condition of grant-funding) be disaggregated by gender so that gender disparities in services and outcomes can be identified and addressed
- Address the scarcity of changing stations and restroom stall high chairs in County restrooms
- Continue to provide policy leadership and funding support for programs tasked with 2020 Census outreach to difficult-to-count community members
- Continue to provide policy leadership and funding support for County programs designed to ensure that the 2020 elections are accessible and promote voter participation

Approved by the Women's Commission on January 16, 2020 at their regularly scheduled meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,



Theresa M. Cariño
Co-Chair, Women's Commission

January 16, 2020

Date



Jillian Ritter
Co-Chair, Women's Commission

January 16, 2020

Date

**WOMEN'S COMMISSION
2018 - 2019 ATTENDANCE REPORT**

District/ Supervisor	Commissioner	Jan 2018	Feb 2018	Mar 2018	April 2018	May 2018	June 2018	July 2018	Aug 2018	Sept 2018	Oct 2018	Nov 2018	Dec 2018		
1st District Supervisor John Leopold	Theresa Cariño Co-Chair	P	P	P	P	P	E	NO MEETING SCHEDULED	RETREAT	P	P	E	NO MEETING SCHEDULED		
	Maria Barranco	P	P	P	P	-	-			-	-	-			
	Jillian Ritter Co-Chair	-	-	-	-	-	-			P	P	P			
2nd District Supervisor Zach Friend	Laura Cross Co-Chair	P	P	P	P	P	P			P	-	-		-	-
	Carrie Beaton	-	-	-	-	P	P			P	P	P		P	P
3rd District Supervisor Ryan Coonerty	Carole McPherson	P	P	P	P	P	P			P	P	P		P	P
	Marissa Fullum- Campbell	A	A	A	A	A	-			-	-	-		-	-
	M. Miller	-	-	-	-	-	-			P	P	P		P	P
4th District Supervisor Greg Caput	Melanie Martinez	E	-	-	-	-	-			-	-	-		-	-
	Ari Parker	P	P	P	P	E	P			P	E	E		E	E
	Luci Basor	-	-	P	P	E	E			P	P	P		P	P
5th District Supervisor Bruce McPherson	Sheila De Lany	P	P	P	A	P	P			P	P	P		P	P
	Margaret Barr	P	P	P	P	P	P			P	P	P		P	P

Attendance: P=Present A=Absent E=Excused (-) = Not Seated

District/ Supervisor	Commissioner	Jan 2019	Feb 2019	Mar 2019	April 2019	May 2019	June 2019	July 2019	Aug 2019	Sept 2019	Oct 2019	Nov 2019	Dec 2019			
1st District Supervisor John Leopold	Theresa Cariño Co-Chair	P	P	P	MEETING CANCELED - LACK OF QUORUM	P	E	NO MEETING SCHEDULED	P	MEETING CANCELED - LACK OF QUORUM	P	P	RETREAT			
	Jillian Ritter Co-Chair	P	P	P		P	P		P		E	E				
2nd District Supervisor	Laurel Schonfield	P	P	P		P	P		E		P	P		P	P	
	Carrie Beaton	P	P	P		E	P		P		P	P		P	P	
3rd District Supervisor Ryan Coonerty	Carole McPherson	P	P	P		P	P		P		P	P		E	-	-
	M. Miller	P	P	P		P	P		P		P	P		P	E	E
4th District Supervisor Greg Caput	Ari Parker	E	E	-		-	-		-		-	-		-	-	-
	Jenny Sarmiento	-	-	-		P	P		P		P	P		P	P	P
	Luci Basor	P	P	P		P	E		P		P	P		E	E	E
5th District Supervisor Bruce McPherson	Sheila De Lany	P	P	P		P	P		P		P	P		P	P	P
	Margaret Barr	P	P	P		P	P		P		P	P		E	P	P

Submitted by:



Kaite McGrew
Commissions Coordinator

January 16, 2020

Date