



Legislation Text

File #: 18-273, **Version:** 1

Receive a presentation and consider adopting a resolution establishing the Solano Commission for Women and Girls as the Board of Supervisors advisory board on issues pertaining to women and girls

Published Notice Required? Yes ☐ No ☒
Public Hearing Required? Yes ☐ No ☒

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board receive a presentation and consider adopting a resolution to establish the Solano Commission for Women and Girls (SCWG) as the Board of Supervisors advisory board on issues pertaining to women and girls.

SUMMARY:

At the April 3, 2018 Board of Supervisors meeting, Supervisor Erin Hannigan requested an item be brought forward to discuss establishing a commission for women and girls in Solano County and the other Board members agreed to place the item on the April 24, 2018 agenda as requested. Establishing a commission for women and girls is consistent with the statewide California Commission on the Status of Women & Girls as well as other counties in California including Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo and Sonoma Counties; all situated in the heart of the northern California megaregion.

The Purpose of the SCWG is to provide community education and advisement to the Solano County Board of Supervisors and other entities as necessary on issues relating to the changing social and economic conditions of women and girls in the County. The Commission shall work to increase awareness of women's issues, celebrate the achievements of local deserving women, champion opportunities for women and girls, and recommend legislative solutions at the city, county, state and federal level. The SCWG focus areas will include, but not limited to socio-economic conditions, workplace issues, social treatment of gender issues, education, and health and safety for women and girls.

Several organizations support establishing a commission for women and girls in Solano County including National Association of Commissions for Women, The Association of California Commissions for Women, Partnership Health Plan of California, Solano Advocates for Victims of Violence (SAVV), Solano Community Foundation, Solano County Office of Education, Solano Family and Children's Services, Soroptimist International of Central Solano County, Soroptimist International of Vacaville, Soroptimist International of Rio Vista, Solano Land Trust, Solano Partnership Against Violence, Child Start Inc., and League of Women Voters Benicia. Attachment A includes letters of support from these organizations.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Adoption of the above recommendations will have no fiscal impact on the FY2017/18 County Budget. Future impact will be determined by Board action in the FY2018/19 budget and in subsequent fiscal years.

The SCWG will establish a non-profit fundraising arm "Friends of the Solano Commission for Women and Girls" as a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation. Its purpose is to raise awareness and funding for activities and initiatives of the SCWG.

The SCWG will utilize less than 15 hours of staff time per month, including the participation of a staff member in attendance at the commission meetings. The purpose of staff time is to ensure legal and appropriate noticing of commission meetings, help secure a conference room for the regularly scheduled meetings and provide support and guidance in terms of county policies and expectations.

The SCWG requires meeting space for bi-monthly meetings and will not require office space.

DISCUSSION:

For more than 50 years, the California Commission on the Status of Women & Girls has identified and worked to eliminate inequities in state laws, practices and conditions that affect California's women and girls. Established as a state agency with 17 appointed commissioners in 1965, the Commission regularly assesses gender equity in health, safety, employment, education and equal representation, the military, and the media. The Commission provides leadership through research, policy and program development, education, outreach and collaboration, advocacy and strategic partnerships. Since its inception, 25 Commissions have been formed in California including counties in the heart of the northern California megaregion such as Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo and Sonoma counties.

In pursuit of a similar model for Solano County, a committee of 14 women, under the leadership of Jennifer Barton and County Supervisor Erin Hannigan, held its first meeting on January 7, 2018 to discuss forming a commission for women and girls.

The committee recognized that the Board of Supervisors has shown outstanding support for women and girls in Solano County, and noted that although the Board of Supervisors receives input from a number of advisory boards, no such venue exists for the sole purpose of addressing issues affecting women and girls. The Commission also noted that while there are non-profits, organizations, and groups in Solano County that support/educate/fund/uplift issues related to women and girls, none comprehensively address issues or serve all of Solano County. A commission on women and girls would address this gap and provide leadership and a collaborative venue to focus on this issue.

Therefore, the committee continued to meet and develop the purpose and intent of the SCWG and created an Enabling Mandate (Attachment B) and the Purpose, Mission, and Goals which includes a list of the founding members (Attachment C).

The committee utilized successful models from various commissions throughout California including the State of California's Commission on the Status of Women and Girls, and the Solano County's Advisory Board Principles and Policies document in the creation of the aforementioned.

The Mission of the Commission is to "Improve the economic status, social welfare, and overall quality of life for women and girls in Solano County."

The SCWG will educate the community and advise the Solano County Board of Supervisors and other entities as necessary on issues relating to the changing social and economic conditions of women in the County, with particular emphasis on the economically disadvantaged.

The SCWG will serve as an advocate for women and girls in Solano County on matters that affect them, including socio-economic conditions, workplace issues, social treatment of gender issues, education, and health and safety for women and girls.

The SCWG will facilitate interagency collaboration and communication among women's organizations and maintain a working relationship with other commissions throughout the United States, as well as the National

Association of Commissions on Women.

The Goals of the Commission are to:

- Provide a focal point for issues related to women and girls in Solano County
- Educate and advise the Board of Supervisors and the public on issues relating to the changing social and economic conditions of women and girls in the county, with emphasis on the economically disadvantaged.
- Legislatively advocate on behalf of women and girls through County procedures.
- Advocate for full equality in all areas of life for women and girls and promote their rights and opportunities
- Organize and co-sponsor conferences, forums, and public hearings which address issues related to women and girls

The Commission will engage in a number of key activities. The activities will be determined and prioritized at a future planning session of the SCWG.

Potential activities may include, but not be limited to:

- Collect and analyze data of women and children in poverty
- Host events to support the empowerment of women and girls
- Conduct a Gender Analysis of Boards and Commissions
- Promote Women's Political Leadership Development
- Conduct a Women's Clothing Drive
- Raise awareness on Human Trafficking and the need for prevention
- Advocate for gender responsive programming options at the Women's Correctional Center
- Legislative Advocacy through County procedures
- Hold a Women's Hall of Fame or Women Making History celebration
- Hold a Women's Art Exhibit During the month of March (Women's History Month)
- Create a permanent Women's Hall of Fame Exhibit
- Develop a social media platform (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)
- Develop a Website
- *Develop a Women in Leadership Program* - A series of panel and roundtable discussions presented by the SCWG aimed at supporting gender equality and opportunities for women in the workplace. The goal is to raise awareness in Solano County, provide a call to action to organizations and businesses to close the leadership gap, and to encourage and empower women.
- Develop an "Expanding Women Entrepreneurs" program
- Create an annual Report on the Status of Women and Girls in Solano County

Political Activities:

The SCWG will serve at the direction of the Solano County Board of Supervisors and adhere to all County policies and practices in the execution of its duties. Advice and legislative recommendations will be directed to the County through the appropriate channels such as the County Legislative Committee. The SCWG will not endorse legislation or ballot measures that are not in alignment with the County Legislative Platform. Moreover, the SCWG is non-partisan and non-political. The SCWG will not endorse candidates for political office, endorse nor participate in any campaign related activities.

Board Oversight and Participation

An annual written report will be provided to the Board of Supervisors per the County Advisory Board Principles and Policies document (Adopted June 7, 2005; Amended November 9, 2010). The report will list the activities, accomplishments and strategic priorities of the SCWG.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board of Supervisors could choose not to recognize the SCWG as an advisory board on women's issues. However, that is not recommended as it provides the County an opportunity to address inequities surrounding women and girls.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

County Counsel has been consulted in developing this item.

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION