



# WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE CENTENNIAL COMMISSION

## FIRST PUBLIC MEETING: DECEMBER 7, 2018

### SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

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#### I. INTRODUCTION

The Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission (Commission), with Rebecca Kleefisch presiding as the Commission Chair, convened their first public meeting on Friday, December 7, 2018, at Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument in the Allender Gallery, (2nd Floor) located at 144 Constitution Ave, NE, Washington DC 20002. The meeting was called to order promptly at 8:00 am EST.

The purpose of the meeting was to receive Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), ethics, and records briefings and receive overviews about the history of the women's suffrage movement and the National Park Service's 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment commemoration planning efforts. Additional discussion topics included establishing a Commission mission and vision, ideas for commemoration, education and celebration, and the 2019 meeting schedule.

#### II. SUMMARY OF KEY DECISIONS AND ACTION ITEMS

##### A. Key Decisions

- The Commission agreed that when Members have FACA or ethics questions, they will work through the Commission Chair or the Executive Director.
- The meeting minutes from the Commission's October meeting were approved by the Commission.
- Subcommittees were established and membership was agreed upon as follows:

##### **Capitol City Commemorative Subcommittee**

Colleen Shogan  
Debra Steidel Wall  
Julissa Marengo  
Karen Hill  
Sen. Barbara Mikulski (ret)

##### **50 States Commemorative Subcommittee**

Cleta Mitchell  
Heather Higgins  
Jennifer Siebel Newsom  
Marjorie Dannenfelser  
Nicola Miner

##### **Multi-media, Education, and Engagement Subcommittee**

Heather Higgins  
Jennifer Siebel Newsom  
Nicola Miner  
Sen. Barbara Mikulski (ret)  
Susan Combs

##### **Leaders Subcommittee**

Cleta Mitchell  
Colleen Shogan  
Debra Steidel Wall

Karen Hill  
Marjorie Dannenfelser  
Susan Combs  
**Partnership Subcommittee**  
Karen Hill  
Rebecca Kleefisch  
Susan Combs

-The Commission voted on and adopted the following mission statement, *“To commemorate and coordinate the nationwide celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 19th Amendment and to educate the American people about the history and the leaders of the women’s suffrage movement in the United States in a nonpartisan fashion.”*

- The Commission voted on and adopted a logo. 

-The Commission voted on and agreed to *August 26, 2020*, as the date for the official Federal Suffrage Centennial Celebration.

#### **B. Action Items**

-The Chair will email the Commission an updated contact list with the correct spelling of member’s names and titles.

-The Chair will set up email accounts for Commission members and secure a website for the Commission. The website may be set up initially as a “.org” and transition to a “.gov” later.

Website Options discussed:

- Womensvote100.org or womenvote100.org
- 19for100.org
- Womenssuffrage.org

-The Commission did not discuss the schedule for future meetings and decided to finalize the 2019 meeting schedule through email correspondence.

- Colleen Shogan will check on the availability of office space for the Commission’s administrative team at the Library of Congress.

-Kay Coles James will review the resumes received for the Executive Director position, conduct interviews, and make the final selection.

### **III. PRESENTATIONS, KEY DISCUSSIONS AND COMMISSION VOTE**

#### **A. Opening Remarks – The Honorable Tammy Baldwin, U.S. Senator, State of Wisconsin**

*“I am delighted to join you especially in this historic place. I’ve actually only been on the ground floor here, so I’m really excited to have you meeting here and to join you. I just wanted to share a few reflections on how the original resolution to form the Commission and to have this celebration and recognition of the Centennial of Women’s Suffrage came about, because we’re joined by my former colleague and now Commissioner, Barbara Mikulski, who had led for many many years a tradition in the Senate. Which is that pretty much on a monthly basis the women of the Senate have met for a social event where we can discuss anything. In fact, we often get questions from our male colleagues, “What do you discuss?” I know this is familiar to many, like they think we’re talking about them, but not necessarily. In this case, we had been noting that this very significant anniversary was coming up, and over the course of several months on a bi-partisan basis, we talked about the appropriate recognition, educational efforts that should go on throughout the country, and started to form this idea that we should have a Commission and here you are! And*

*it's wonderful to see that. We also recognize that elements of the struggle for suffrage took place in every part of this country and this shouldn't be something that is necessarily "DC centric" as a recognition, but to allow each state, each community to recognize their own role and not to just look at one discipline. This isn't a history lesson necessarily. Let's have it come alive in many different ways.*

*The Commissioners here who represent Federal agencies are probably experts in what has happened to commemorate this already and what more can happen in their own agencies, and those who are appointees of the leadership of the House, and the Senate, and the President recognize what a big job this is, but how we're all embracing your success. I want to say that through my work with Senator Mikulski when we drafted this resolution we kicked it around among the women of the United States Senate, and then in strong partnership with Senator Mikulski who was then the Vice-Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, and Senator Lisa Murkowski who is Chair of the Interior Subcommittee of Appropriations. There was a very strong belief among the women of the Senate that this should be a funded Commission. That you shouldn't be doing bake sales in order to raise the funds sufficient, and we looked at the models of the U.S. Bi-centennial and the recognition of major anniversaries of events in the United States that have great historical and educational significance.*

*I just wanted to brag for two more seconds about the state of Wisconsin. As Chair Rebecca Kleefisch said, we were the first state to ratify the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, and I had a great set of visions of what that must have looked like racing to be the first, and it turns out that it was more of an accident than purposeful. We beat Illinois because they passed it first, but they had an enrollment error. Those of us who serve in legislative bodies know exactly what that means. They made a boo boo and had to do it again, and therefore Wisconsin will forever in history be the first, but that's just a conclusion of a long story what happened in our state.*

*I commend you on this mission. I am so excited to participate in many of the events that you promote, that you fund, that you celebrate, and thank you for your willingness to serve. I think I speak for all of the women in the Senate that we are here to support you and cheer you on."*

Following Senator Tammy Baldwin's opening remarks, former Senator Barbara Mikulski shared that in the 1970's when the Hart Building was constructed, it was actually the women of the House of Representatives who saved the Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument which might have been torn down and replaced with a gym and tennis courts.

**B. FACA Briefing – Christian Furey, Attorney-Advisor, Department of Treasury**

Christian Furey introduced himself and acknowledged this is the second FACA briefing the Commission received. He addressed public participation, specifically that the Commission can allow oral comments at the public meeting or by soliciting written comments in the Federal Register Notice announcing the meeting. The Commission should have a process in place to respond to press inquiries as a best practice. He added that the Commission may establish subcommittees that must be approved by the Commission. They are not subject to the rules of FACA, but they should report to the Commission and not a Federal agency or a Federal official. All Commission records are subject to public inspection. He further specified the requirements to keep meeting minutes which must be certified by the Commission Chair within 90 days of the meeting and then posted on the FACA database website. This Commission is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) because of FACA, so records must be kept and available for

public inspection. For the purpose of this Commission, the responsibility to maintain Commission records rests with the Designated Federal Officer. If the Commission has FACA questions, Department of Treasury is the agency to consult. Mr. Furey estimated the Commission will sunset on or around April 15, 2021.

**C. Ethics Briefing – Seth Greenfeld, Senior Assistant General Counsel, General Services Administration**

Seth Greenfeld introduced himself and acknowledged that his attendance was pursuant to an administrative support agreement the Commission signed with General Administrative Services (GSA) for administrative services for human resources, payroll, and legal services. Seth first shared that GSA made the determination that this Commission is a legislative branch entity, not executive branch. However, the House Ethics disagreed and concluded the Commission is an executive branch entity. Sitting members of Congress cannot appoint people to run a Commission in the executive branch. The good news is that both entities say their ethics regulations do not apply to this Commission, however, the Federal criminal statutes laws do. Seth advised the Commission to follow the Office of Government Ethics rules and the 14 principles of ethical conduct. Additionally, he shared the Commission is exempt from the competitive hiring process, OMB has no oversight, and the Federal Acquisition Regulations do not apply. If the Commission has ethics questions, GSA is the agency to consult.

**Discussion:**

Following Seth’s presentation, a Member asked whether or not the Commission could co-sponsor an event with a private company and the answer was “yes”. Another question was asked if press releases should be approved by GSA for ethics considerations. The answer was “no” unless the Commission was endorsing private entities or organizations. However, Seth shared that he is happy to review any press release to make sure it will not raise an ethical question. Additionally Seth shared the commission is not subject to the Hatch Act.

On the topic of how “partnership” is defined, the example was given that the Commission could enter into a contract or partnership agreement where there are no costs or monies exchanged, but both parties are getting something out of it. A cost benefit analysis would need to be weighed to determine whether or not exclusive contracts or partnership agreements are worthwhile.

Another question was asked about the rules the Commission must follow to hire staff. Seth responded the Commission could hire whoever they want, they do not have to advertise vacancies on USA Jobs. However, optics and ethics should guide hiring and contracting decisions.

**D. Records Briefing – Lauren McHale, Office of the Chief Records Officer for the U.S. Government, National Archives and Records Administration**

Lauren McHale introduced herself and began her presentation by sharing the Commission’s record responsibilities for both documenting meetings and maintaining public accessibility to records, so that the public can look back for future celebrations to know what was previously done. Lauren shared the Commission must abide by the Federal Records Act, FACA, and FOIA. Lauren recommended the Commission establish a record keeping protocol right away, and also set up one standard email account and advised that members could forward email correspondence to that email. Lauren provided a packet of how long records need to be kept which will be managed by the Commission’s administrative support. As long as the Commission sets up a protocol and follows the protocol the Commission will be fine. As far as written notes

goes, individual notes are not actionable, but the official note takers notes should be retained as a record. Subcommittee meeting notes must be taken and kept as official records. If two to three members meet to discuss matters related to the work of the Commission, notes should be taken and retained for the official record.

**Discussion:**

A question was asked, which agency will offer administrative support to the Commission? The Chair responded that it would be the Executive Director and Commission staff, GSA, the Committee Management Officer and the Designated Federal Officer.

Senator Mikulski commented that her name was misspelled on Commission materials dating back to the original press release. In response, the Chair passed around the Commission list of Members for all the Members to note any corrections to their name or title or email address. The Chair agreed to get an updated contact list out with the correct spelling of everyone's names and titles.

**E. Shall Not be Denied: Women Fight for the Vote - Janice E. Ruth, Assistant Chief of the Manuscript Division, Library of Congress**

Janice began by thanking everyone for the opportunity to share insights on the American Woman Suffrage Movement. She continued with an overview of the suffrage movement from a thematic and chronological perspective. Her presentation flowed with related images from the Library's collections, many of which will be used in the forthcoming exhibition titled "Shall Not be Denied: Women Fight for the Vote" which opens June 4, 2019. Janice shared that some of the collections in the exhibit include the personal papers of prominent leaders like Susan B. Anthony, Lucy Stone, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Mary Church Terrell and many others. There are also scrapbooks kept by members of the two major suffrage campaigns. Her presentation included records of the National Women's Party and numerous photographs, motion pictures, documentaries, and organizational records that were carefully preserved by suffrage participants and their sons and daughters. Janice shared the exhibit will touch on issues of race, class and international influence. For instance, African American women, such as Harriet Tubman, actively campaigned for women's suffrage but was not well received by all white women suffragists, and American suffragists were greatly influenced and inspired by other countries especially England. It is also important to note that women won the right to vote in several States prior to the signing of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, and that friendship and family played an important role in the suffrage movement as generations would pass the torch on the movement that lasted more than 70 years.

**Chronological events of the Suffrage Movement:**

The American Revolution – Former colleagues rewrote their constitutions and redefined voting rights. In 1776, the New Jersey State constitution granted suffrage to all inhabitants meeting certain age, property, and residency requirements for 30 years until in 1807 when the state restricted the right to vote to free white male citizens owning a certain amount of property.

Well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, women remained "civilly dead". Women were unable to sign contracts, own property, access education, obtain divorces, or gain custody of children after a divorce.

Seneca Falls – In 1848, the first women's rights convention was held in Seneca Falls, NY. Elizabeth Cady Stanton assisted with organizing the event, which was attended by Frederick Douglas who

supported the suffrage resolution. The suffrage resolution mimicked the Declaration of Independence and demanded suffrage for women.

After Seneca Falls, women's rights conventions became annual events followed by campaigns such as abolition, temperance, and efforts on dress reform to include pants and bloomers. Women learned how to raise money, hold public meetings, conduct petition drives, and deal with hostile audiences. These are all skills women needed as the suffrage movement progressed.

The First National Woman's Rights Convention, organized by abolitionist Paulina Wright Davis in October 1850, was held in Worcester, Massachusetts, and was attended by former slave Sojourner Truth who delivered her famous "Ain't I a Woman" speech.

Throughout the 1850's, woman's rights conventions received unsympathetic reports in the press. There were anti-suffrage songs, sketches, and mock burlesque shows lampooning the suffrage movement.

The suffrage campaign was suspended during the civil war (1861-1865).

The American Equal Rights Association was formed in 1866 after the civil war and supported universal suffrage which included suffrage rights for blacks and women.

In 1868, the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment which added the word "male" into the constitution.

In 1869, suffragists split into two camps, The National Woman Suffrage Association, established by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, opposed the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment and supported a federal suffrage amendment. The American Woman Suffrage Association, established by Lucy Stone and other reformers, focused on a state-by-state strategy that was solely focused on women's right to vote.

In 1870, the 15<sup>th</sup> amendment was adopted allowing black men the right to vote.

In 1872, when travel was extremely difficult, Susan B. Anthony documented that she had criss-crossed the country approximately 13,000 miles to recruit leaders and members for the suffrage movement. In that same year, Elizabeth Cady Stanton addressed the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee and argued that suffragists already had the right to vote under the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment as "citizens" of the U.S. This "New Departure" argument was taken all the way to the Supreme Court by Minor, and the court reaffirmed it was the right of the states to establish suffrage. In 1872, numerous women attempted to vote in Vineland but were unsuccessful.

In 1873, the Women's Christian Temperance Union was created. This organization consisted of women who were devoted to social reform based on applied Christianity. This group eventually split into white and black segregated branches and played an important role in spreading the message of women's suffrage across the west. This group also supported the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

In 1878, U.S. Senator Aaron Sargent of California crossed paths with Susan B. Anthony at a train station on his way to Washington D.C. The two became friends, and it was Senator Sargent who first introduced the proposed federal amendment in the Senate, which was rejected in 1887.

In 1886, was the first time the proposed amendment emerges from Committee and is defeated and not voted on again until 1914. Major opponents included mid-western liquor interests, southern conservatives, and eastern business leaders who relied on child labor. By the end of the 1880's the women's rights movement was becoming more conservative and racist. Some suffragists believed their higher morals would uplift the nation. This widened the racial gaps of suffragists.

As the 19<sup>th</sup> century came to an end, the two competing national suffrage groups reunited as the National American Woman's Suffrage Association. The women understood they were stronger united.

Throughout the first decade of the 1900's, women suffrage groups continued to organize, protest, and gain support among states.

In 1916, the first woman, Jeanette Rankin of Montana, was elected to Congress and was formally seated in 1917. During the same period, leader of the National Women's Party, Alice Paul, was arrested and charged with obstructing traffic as patience had grown thin with picketing. Alice was placed in solitary confinement in a mental ward of a prison in attempt to break her down. At that time, suffragists were charged with longer and harsher periods in prison. Women demanded treatment as political prisoners. Those not treated well soon went on hunger strikes.

In 1918, the suffrage amendment passes in the House but fails in the Senate. President Woodrow Wilson announces his support for women's suffrage and requests the Senate approve the amendment.

In 1919, the Senate passed the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

On August 26, 1920, the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment was ratified and women won the right to vote.

**Discussion:**

A question was asked if the term "suffragette" is a term we should be using when discussing the U.S. suffrage movement. The response given was that the term "suffragette" is derived from the British suffrage campaign, but the term "suffragist" is the term we have historically used in the U.S.

A comment was shared that women's temperance and alcohol was also an attempt to address domestic violence in the home.

**F. Women's Suffrage in Congressional Records - Martha Grove, Center for Legislative Archives, National Archives and Records Administration**

"In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, the National Archives will launch a nationwide initiative and major exhibition that explores the generations-long fight for universal woman suffrage."<sup>1</sup> Martha Grove, a representative from the National Archives and records Administration, presented to the Commission the following list of what the records of Congress can tell us about the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment:

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.archivesfoundation.org/women/>

- The 19th Amendment proposal passed June 4, 1919 and ratified August 18, 1920.
- Petitions from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that are preserved which address major topics of national concern. Some so big they were recorded by weight.
- Petition for Universal suffrage on Jan 29, 1866 submitted by Robert Dale Owen, sent to Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, and presented on the floor of the house by Thaddeus Stevens.
- Petition to Congress for Women’s Suffrage Dec 2, 1871 sent asking Congress to recognize the mishandling of her trial and rescind her fine and it was ultimately reduced to \$1.
- Another petition “Appeal for a 16<sup>th</sup> amendment from the national women suffrage association” on Jan 19, 1877
- A Petition from May 1916 submitted from Minnie Fisher Cunningham of the Texas Woman Suffrage Assoc.
- Memorial from Alice Wadsworth, President of the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage, Dec 11, 1917. Used constitutional language to argue against the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment. Not in favor of 19<sup>th</sup> amendment. Believed it was a state right, not a federal right.
- Political cartoons are included in the records of the senate including “April First” by Berryman.
- State ratifications; each state had their own way of ratifying their vote.

On March 8, 2019, the “Rightfully Hers” exhibition is scheduled to open to the public and will run through September 2020. The layout of the exhibition was shared with the Commission, as well as, an overview of exhibition highlights including the immediate effects of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment such as women running for office, woman as voters, and new vote restrictions.

In addition to the exhibition “Rightfully Hers” exhibition, National Archives is offering free public programming, classroom displays, educational materials, and digitization of women’s records. There will also be a traveling exhibition titled “One Half of the People” which highlights the ways women’s roles have been re-defined. This exhibition opens in March 2019 and will travel across the country. Relevant photographs and key state ratification documents will travel to the states. For more information about the two exhibitions mentioned above visit: <https://www.archivesfoundation.org/women/>

**G. Votes for Women: A Portrait of Persistence - Kate Clark Lemay, Historian, American Women’s History Initiative, Smithsonian**

“Votes for Women: A Portrait of Persistence” is an upcoming exhibition set to launch on February 28, 2019 (open to the public on March 1, 2019) at the National Portrait Gallery that celebrates the centennial of women’s right to vote. Ms. Kate Lemay, the exhibition curator, began her presentation by sharing some facts about the upcoming exhibition such as there are four scholarly essays, 63 portraits, and 123 objects displayed that were collected from all over the country including private collections. The exhibition is thematic, chronological, and provides animated context of actual happenings of women suffragists, many who have never been heard of throughout history.

Although the Smithsonian has plans to digitize the exhibit, there was a suggestion made following the presentation for a travelling exhibition. More information about the “Votes for Women: A Portrait of Persistence” exhibition can be found online at: [www.womenshistory.si.edu](http://www.womenshistory.si.edu)

**Discussion:**

A question was asked if there is a master calendar for events planned by the National Archives to celebrate the centennial for Women’s Suffrage. Page Harrington, a member of the public, shared that the “2020 Centennial Vote” website has a master calendar that she would be willing to share with the Commission.

A Member added that the Commission should find ways to access the Archives curriculum and make their website super searchable. Additionally, the Commission’s website should serve as a clearinghouse or “one stop shop”. Essentially, the Commission doesn’t need to reinvent the curriculum because the groups presenting today already have it.

Another comment shared was that commemorating the centennial should give the public visibility and truth to the suffrage movement and this exhibition does that. There are no hidden voices. The Archives exhibition shows the work that progressed, the setbacks, and the issues of race, ethnicity, class and immigration. The nation needs this now.

Following the presentation, the Chair, Rebecca Kleefisch announced that Coline Jenkins, the great great grand daughter of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, was in attendance. The entire room gave a warm welcome and round of applause to Ms. Jenkins.

**H. Summary of National Parks Service (NPS) 19th Amendment Commemoration Planning - April Slayton, Assistant Director for Communications, National Park Service**

April Slayton began her presentation by sharing that many National Park sites already tell the story of women’s suffrage in the places where specific events occurred. This is evident not only throughout the parks but in the Belmont Paul House and the Women’s historic site in Seneca Falls.

In 2017, the NPS created a working group to start planning for the women’s suffrage centennial. They engaged people from the NPS in parks and programs to make sure these efforts reach as many people as possible. They are currently working to prepare a calendar now, and in June 2019 the NPS is planning a “Race for Ratification” which will be a 5K for families. There will be booths, opportunities to learn, and opportunities for other partners to participate. The NPS centennial celebration will kick off in Washington D.C. and NPS will offer communities “A Race in a Box” toolkit so that races can be held throughout the year in all the states that ratified. Registration fees collected for the 5K race will go towards helping the National Women’s Party preserve artifacts at the Belmont Paul House during the upcoming renovation.

Some of the other commemorative efforts that NPS is taking on include:

- A virtual race where people can sign up where they live.
- A partnership with Girl Scouts, a Girl Scout ranger badge, and curriculum.
- Public outreach to increase awareness and promotion of philanthropy.
- A women’s history website developed online at [www.nps.gov/womenshistory](http://www.nps.gov/womenshistory)
- Social media outreach to encourage parks to join in the commemoration effort.

- Development of multi-media and video educational materials.
- Connecting existing programs to this initiative.

**I. Establishment of the Commission Vision and Mission**

The following Commission mission statement was proposed by the Chair, Rebecca Kleefisch: *“To commemorate and coordinate the nationwide celebration of the 100th anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment and to educate the American people about the efforts and undertakings of the women’s suffrage movement in the United States in a nonpartisan fashion.”*

**Discussion:**

One Member recommended to exchange the words “efforts and undertakings” with “history and leaders.” After which the Commission voted on and adopted the proposed mission statement with the proposed change.

**J. Group Discussion - *Ideas for Commemoration, Education, Celebration***

The following ideas were shared by Members, and the Commission agreed these ideas would be further fleshed out in Subcommittees:

- The Commission will need to develop some protocols and ideas for the State celebrations, and perhaps the States can be provided with some artifacts so they can develop their own celebrations and tell their own stories.
- The Commission should consider celebrating suffrage leaders on their birthdays or at their burial location.
- White, purple, and gold are the national women’s party colors. Gold is the common thread throughout all the different suffrage organizations and could perhaps be the official color for the Centennial.
- Coordination to light up state capitols and other iconic other national buildings and bridges like empire state building, sears tower, etc.
- June 4, 1919 is when Congress finally passed the resolution and August 26, 1920 is the day it became part of the Constitution. A recommendation was made that Congress does something on June 4, 2019 to commemorate the passing of the resolution, and that will lead up to the big celebration on August 26, 2020.
- A Member proposed August 26, 2020, as the official date of the Federal suffrage centennial celebration. The Commission voted on and adopted this date.

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Pat Wirth:

Ms. Wirth shared that the Turning Point Memorial Suffrage Association has been working for two years to build the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial that will be a visual symbol and educational tool. The first goal is to build the memorial and then the Association will establish a Turning Point Institute for high school and middle school girls to learn about leadership, how to be an advocate to get things done. The location, Occoquan, VA, was chosen because that is where the history took place. The Association would like to partner with Commission to establish this as a national monument. For more information visit: <https://suffragistmemorial.org/>

Page Harrington:

Ms. Harrington shared that she currently serves on the advisory committee for National Votes for women Trail, a nationwide trail of suffrage sites. She was previously the executive director at the Belmont-Paul House. There are resources that this Commission can begin to scratch the surface of. There are databases available and people who can meet with the Commission to make sure we jump-start this centennial. Celebrating the leaders and a lot of foot soldiers that criss-crossed the country is incredibly important. Historians would be willing to share their resources. She thanked the Commission for service.

Bonnie Nelson Schwartz:

Ms. Nelson Schwartz shared information about the 2020 One Woman One Vote Festival, established by a coalition of women in film, media, and arts in order to empower women. Additionally, the idea for the festival originated from a PBS special made in 1997 titled "One woman One Vote" which will be rebroadcast in 2020. Ms. Nelson offered to send the Commission a DVD or digital link to the program. The festival will present theater concerts, film screenings, and pop up magazines with the idea of activating. There are 50 women from 50 states on the festival committee and 25 national partners. They also plan to send out a "festival in a box" which that will include films from all of the screenings. For more information visit: <https://2020owovfest.org/>

Megan Springate:

Ms. Springate is the National Coordinator for the National Park Service Centennial for the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment. She shared that she is happy to be at the meeting and hear about all the work that is going on.

Zakiya Thomas:

Ms. Thomas reminded the group that the Belmont-Paul House is the only national monument dedicated to women in the country. The first public Commission meeting was hosted at Belmont-Paul House because of the National Women's Party partnership with the National Park Service. The National Women's Party is looking forward to working with the Commission.

Elaine Wise:

Ms. Wise thanks the Commission for allowing her to observe the meeting. She is involved in projects and initiatives in different states, for example, in Nashville, TN, they are building a permanent women's rights exhibit in the library.

Denise Baer:

Ms. Baer reminded the Commission that they have a very special platform and shared the following points of advice:

- Be as public and as transparent as possible because there is very little awareness of this Commission.
- A national office is critical because most Americans are not active on social media.
- Go beyond girls, so educate all people, sexes and all ages. Not all little girls play with dolls so think about branding. Use the Lois and Clark Commission as your model for achieving new parks and statues.
- This is an advisory commission – include all races.
- Go global.
- Expand partnerships and partner with ancestry.com

- Be a rising tide that lifts all boats.
- There are only three women that have national commemorations. The Commission has an opportunity to address this issue.

Jenny Kaplan:

Ms. Kaplan shared that the “Women Belong in the House” podcast was released this past September 2018. Wonder Media Network is also working about creating a podcast on the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to education both students and adults. Anyone with access to a smartphone or computer can access the podcast. Wonder Media Network is currently partnering with the National Women’s Party and would like to also partner with the Commission.

Lucy Beard:

Ms. Beard shared that she is with the Alice Paul Institute, a non-profit located in Mt. Laurel, NJ, at Alice Paul’s home that is dedicated to honoring Alice Paul’s work and keeping it alive. Ms. Beard is also a board member of the National Collaborative for Women’s History Sites noting that less than 5% of historical sites honor women. She also shared that people trust historic sites and we need to keep the history of women’s suffrage alive for informing our future. For more information visit:

<https://ncwhs.org/>

Nancy Tate:

Ms. Tate share that she is the Co-chair of the Women’s Vote Centennial Initiative, which she co-founded with Page Harrington. They are working to bring it all together, share info and encourage groups and teachers to do things about the women’s right to vote, what it took, how we can learn from that, and how has it influenced history since. They created a logo of a stylized torch of freedom based on the notion of 1,000 lights. They have also created pins sold in bulk that anyone can purchase on the website where there is also a tool kit and information about local activities and what local communities can do to celebrate. Ms. Tate urged the Commission to work with a diverse range of organizations and give grants to organizations that will leave a lasting mark such as memorials, landmarks, and curriculum. This expressed that the Commission is a golden opportunity to lift up the importance of women in history for another 100 years and beyond.

Heather Height:

Ms. Height, a historian of women’s history, encouraged the Commission to make sure they talk about the specific days/events in women’s suffrage history, but also what happened afterwards. She voiced her concern that the contributions of women of color are not adequately addressed, so many stories that haven’t been told must finally be told. She also asked the Commission to think about the men’s stories that helped and those that did not help. The Commission should reach out to men and tell their part of their story. She concluded her comment by encouraging the Commission to be inclusive and partner with scholars and all kinds of people. She also shared the link to the Organization of American Historians at: <https://www.oah.org/>

## V. WRAP UP/CLOSING

During the final wrap up and closing of the meeting, the Chair, Rebecca Kleefisch, shared with the Commission that she proposed to step down as the Committee Chair and apply for the position of the Executive Director. The Members collectively agreed that the Vice Chair, Kay Coles James, would review all resumes received, conduct interviews, and select the Executive Director.

A Member inquired about office space for the Executive Director and other administrative staff. Colleen Shogan offered to check on space for the Commission's administrative team at the Library of Congress that the team could use free of charge.

Another Member inquired about the budget. The Chair responded that the Commission has an overall budget of \$3,000,000 to fund operations. She added that funds are not currently available, but should be available soon once GSA issues the Commission a purchase card.

The Commission agreed to decide on future meeting dates and locations via email correspondence.

The meeting adjourned early at 3:30 pm EST.

Interested States and organizations who would like to collaborate with the Commission in planning suffrage commemorative events may contact the Commission's Executive Director, Rebecca Kleefisch, at [Rebecca@womensvote100.org](mailto:Rebecca@womensvote100.org)

Interested parties with any questions, comments, or concerns regarding the content of this meeting summary may contact the Designated Federal Officer's, Kim Oliver or Kelsey Brantley at [kmoliver@blm.gov](mailto:kmoliver@blm.gov) or (202) 912-7510 and [Kelsey\\_brantley@ios.doi.gov](mailto:Kelsey_brantley@ios.doi.gov) or (202) 208-4122.

## **VI. MEETING PARTICIPANTS**

### **A. COMMISSION MEMBERS**

Barbara Mikulski, Former U.S. Senator, State of Maryland  
Cleta Mitchell, Partner and Political Law Attorney, Foley & Lardner, LLP  
Colleen J. Shogan, Deputy Director, National and International Outreach, Library of Congress  
Debra Wall, Deputy Archivist of the U.S. Wall, National Archives  
Heather Higgins, President & CEO, Independent Women's Voice  
Jovita Carranza, Treasurer, Department of Treasury  
Julissa Marengo, Assistant Secretary for Communications and External Affairs, Smithsonian Institute  
Karen Hill, President and CEO, Harriet Tubman Home – a National Historic Park  
Marjorie Dannenfelser, President, Susan B. Anthony List  
Rebecca Kleefisch (Chair), Lt. Governor, State of Wisconsin  
Susan Combs, Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget, Department of Interior

Attended by phone:

Kay Coles James (Vice Chair), President, The Heritage Foundation  
Jennifer Siebel Newsom, Filmmaker, Actress and Public Speaker  
Nicola Miner, Assistant Professor of English, College of San Mateo in California

### **B. PRESENTERS & SPECIAL GUESTS**

April Slayton, Assistant Director for Communications, National Park Service  
Christian Furey, Attorney-Advisor, Department of Treasury  
Janice E. Ruth, Library of Congress  
Kate Clark Lemay, Historian, American Women's History Initiative, Smithsonian  
Lauren McHale, Office of the Chief Records Officer for the U.S. Government, National Archives and Records Administration

Martha Grove, Center for Legislative Archives, National Archives and Records Administration  
Patricia Wirth, Executive Director, Turning Point Suffragist Memorial Association  
Patricia Trap, Superintendent, National Park Service, National Mall and Memorial Parks  
Seth Greenfeld, Senior Assistant General Counsel, General Services Administration  
The Honorable Tammy Baldwin, U.S. Senator, State of Wisconsin

**C. STAFF SUPPORT**

Alicia Daly, Support Staff, National Women's Party  
Anna Laymon, Director of Public Programs, National Women's Party  
Brent Everett, Acting Chief Communications (impromptu photographer), National Park Service,  
National Mall and Memorial Parks  
Connie Tipton, Support Staff, National Women's Party  
Jennifer Krafchik, Support Staff, National Women's Party  
Julie Grace, Support Staff, Office of Wisconsin Lt. Governor  
Kelsey Brantley, FACA Support Staff, Department of Interior  
Kelsey Millay, Support Staff, National Women's Party  
Kim Oliver, Designated Federal Officer, Department of Interior  
Louise Flavahan, Senior Advisor to Barbara Mikulski  
Margaret Triebisch, Committee Management Officer, Department of Interior  
Samirra Felix, Intern, Department of Interior  
Susan Carter, Support Staff, National Women's Party  
Zakiya Thomas, Support Staff, National Women's Party

**D. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

Amy Battaglia, Environmental Protection Agency  
Beth Stern, Strategic Communications Advisor, National Park Service  
Bonnie Nelson Schwartz, Co-Festival Director, 2020 One Woman One Vote Festival  
Brett Zonker, Office of Communications, Library of Congress  
Catherine Turton, Community Planner, National Park Service Northeast Region  
Cindi Malinick, Vice President, Cultural Assets, Girls Scouts of the USA  
Coline Jenkins, Elizabeth Cady Stanton's great-great granddaughter  
Denise Baer, Political Science Scholar  
Elaine Weiss, Author, "The Women's Hour"  
Heather Huyck, Retired Historian, National Park Service  
Janice Lilja, Volunteer Historian, Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument  
Jenny Kaplan, Co-founder & CEO, Wonder Media Network  
Krista Niles, Director of Marketing and Civic Engagement, Alice Paul Institute  
Lucienne Beard, Executive Director, Alice Paul Institute  
Margaret Hawkins  
Mary Baumann, U.S. Senate Historical Office  
Megan Springate, National Park Service  
Nancy Tate, Co-Chair, 2020 Women's Vote Centennial Initiative  
Page Harrington, Page Harrington & Company  
Sylvea Hollis, National Park Service  
Tara Mobaraki, Juris Doctor, American University: Washington College of Law

**APPENDIX A: MEETING MATERIALS**

## APPENDIX B: WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENTS



Kim Oliver, Designated Federal Officer  
Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission  
1849 C Street, NW, Room 7313  
Washington, DC 20240

To Ms. Oliver & Members of the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission,

I am writing in my capacity as both the Executive Director of the Alice Paul Institute in Mt. Laurel, New Jersey, ([www.alicepaul.org](http://www.alicepaul.org)) and as the Treasurer of the National Collaborative for Women's History Sites ([www.ncwhs.org](http://www.ncwhs.org)). We are very pleased that the Suffrage Centennial Commission is meeting to consider how best to commemorate the anniversary of this important milestone for American civil rights.

Women's history is commemorated at historic sites across the country, where the stories of women's achievements and contributions can be shared with the public. Many of these small, private organizations go beyond their physical borders and the story of the individual/s commemorated at their site to explore a larger context. For instance, in 2003 the Alice Paul Institute created the first comprehensive, statewide survey of women's history sites in the country. The New Jersey Women's Heritage Trail connects over 100 physical places in the state where women made history. Other trails in other states have been developed since to bring to life the vital role that women play in our history and present.

Further, the Alice Paul Institute has taken a lead role in planning for New Jersey events and educational initiatives to support the 2020 centennial of women's suffrage, including teacher's training, curriculum development, voter education and registration, plus public celebrations.

The National Collaborative for Women's History Sites is creating a National Votes for Women Trail, supported by a database of close to 1000 sites across the country that contribute to the story of women's suffrage. The Alice Paul Institute has proposed 36 New Jersey entries to the database. Every state will be represented on the Trail. In the next year, the Collaborative will install some 250 roadside markers so the public can learn more about sites on the Trail.

This is just a small sampling of the activities taking place across the country to shine a brighter light on women's contributions to our nation. We welcome the Suffrage Centennial Commission's help to support and advance all of them. Please reach out if I can provide any further information.

### **Lucienne Beard**

Executive Director, Alice Paul Institute  
Treasurer, National Collaborative for Women's History Sites



Mattel, Inc.  
333 Continental Boulevard  
El Segundo, California 90245

December 7, 2018

Via Electronic Mail

The Honorable Rebecca Kleefisch, Lieutenant Governor of Wisconsin  
19 East, State Capitol  
P.O. Box 2043  
Madison, WI 53702

Dear Governor Kleefisch:

Again, congratulations on your appointment to the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission, celebrating this special anniversary of the 19th Amendment and on your election to lead the effort! It is a testament to your leadership both in the state of Wisconsin and on the national stage and your voice on behalf of women leaders everywhere. You make us all proud.

Thank you so much for considering Mattel and American Girl to partner with you as part of this commemoration of the Suffrage Centennial. We certainly look forward to recognizing the important role Wisconsin played as the first state enabling women to vote in 1919. We are honored you approached Wisconsin-based American Girl first with this opportunity. American Girl is committed to helping build young girls of strong character reach their full potential and it makes this even more special.

We also look forward to continuing the dialogue to explore further how we can support you and the important work ahead on the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission, with American Girl and perhaps with other Mattel brands such as Barbie, for example, who for 60 years has been empowering girls and inspiring them to be anything they want to be.

Our American Girl communications team is already brainstorming on creative ideas to help broaden the reach of the Suffrage Centennial message. We are looking forward to a collaborative and creative process that truly celebrates the one-hundred-year anniversary of Women's Suffrage and continues to inspire girls and women of all ages.

Thank you, again. We wish you much success with the Commission's work going forward, as well all the best to you and yours at the Holidays!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Corinne Murat".

Corinne Murat  
Director, Government Affairs  
Mattel, Inc./American Girl

[mattel.com](http://mattel.com)

December 7, 2018 Washington, D.C.

To the Commission

Statement by Heather Huyck, Ph.D. Public Historian; specialist, American women's history

We veterans of the fight over ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment saw the visceral anger directed at women and girls who wanted their full rights and humanity recognized and supported. Decades later in spite of major changes we still see primordial anger towards, and fear of, females. Today, we now understand a great deal more about white patriarchy, its mentality and operations. Power is not given; it needs to be taken. Political success is won when self-interest matches other people's interests.

Women without the economic and political rights and tools we take for granted formed a mass movement that became focused on suffrage. Historic suffrage era cartoons showed drowning women crying for help from suffrage while women wrapped in furs ignored their pleas.

In recent years, we have learned that some of those who advocated voting rights for women embraced racist views, arguing that educated white women deserved enfranchisement because they were superior to the black and immigrant men who already cast ballots. We do not condone their racism but seek to repair that now, in part by highlighting the courage and sacrifice of women from all races and classes who battled for women's first-class citizenship.

It's important to remember the suffragists' courage, sacrifice and dramatic re-visioning of gender roles. One powerful example from the 1910s involved dozens of white women who protested their enfranchisement by chaining themselves to the White House fence and thereby courting arrest. After a month of imprisonment in the Occoquan workhouse, where the suffragists were beaten and force-fed, when their husbands visited their imprisoned wives did not recognize their own wives. Black, American Indian, Puerto Rican, and Asian-American women as well as *Hispanas/Latinas* fought for enfranchisement before and after ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment. They worked with and parallel to white suffragists to get the Amendment ratified, but had to organize independently or alongside men of their community in its aftermath to ensure that the nation fulfilled its democratic promise.

Moreover, suffrage as part of the bundle of citizenship rights and responsibilities needs to be recognized as a doorway rather than a goal. Women could not (finally!) become 20% of the House of Representatives without suffrage, yet the vision of gender equality remains distant and too often female politicians are under siege from those who should be their allies. Look at the ways female leaders are portrayed as destructive forces, or are silenced, their gifts derided all to undermine their potency. We must not reduce a huge and complex cultural shift to ballots alone. The arguments our foremothers used to gain suffrage show that they intended voting rights to be a first step to gaining a political voice and political power.

We must also recognize the struggles, inconsistencies, and tactics of the suffrage battle in its larger context. 1920 was the constitutional landmark, not the actual fulfillment of suffrage and the bundle of citizen rights supposedly attendant upon it. It did not guarantee enfranchisement for black, Latina, Native American, or Asian American women, nor did it ensure jury service or equity under the law for any women. These goals took many more decades to reach, and some remain unsettled as debates over voter suppression, LGBTQ rights and sexual violence rage, and battles for equal rights to credit, insurance, and access to education and jobs continue.

One of the ironies of the suffrage movement is that women had to convince men that they should change men's attitudes towards women voting (and by extension women having a more direct voice in democracy). Only men could decide whether women should gain federal suffrage. Men had to vote for women's enfranchisement, and to

believe it was in their self-interest, in order for women to gain that fundamental right. Historians have studied this decades-long change in attitudes. Embedded in Anglo-American common law was the fundamental belief that a husband/father represented and governed his wife/daughters in public and in private so that females had no direct linkage to the government (married women were "dead" in the law). Gaining suffrage was a key aspect of the major cultural transition to an understanding and legal reflection that women were their own representatives. Marriage has increasingly been recognized as a partnership of two people with each individual legally "alive."

At the same time, communities—whether of elite whites, working-class immigrants, middleclass African Americans or others—had to believe that women's political rights would be beneficial to their well-being. The large numbers of immigrant and black women who led campaigns for voting rights in the 1910s helped to ensure the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, even though many of these women had to continue their battle for full suffrage for another four decades. Moreover, even after suffrage was won, the equal rights of all women were still contested daily. For instance, for many years American-born women who married non-US citizens instantly lost their US citizenship and had to be naturalized to reclaim their birthright nationality.

The double helix of private/public rights—how political policies shaped individuals and families and visa versa—needs to be appreciated if we are to understand suffrage as part of a larger reconfiguration of gender roles and rights. Public actions are much more visible than the many private ones that shift attitudes and behavior, yet both must be considered. For example, when women fought to become priests, one Bishop remained on the sideline before taking decisive action. His wife told me she had cornered him behind their shower glass door and told him he needed to support women priests. How many other private actions were involved in the struggle for gender equality? In the historic sites and museums across this country many such actions are documented—in ways both subtle and obvious—and made accessible to a broad public. Women's history is everywhere as is the story of women gaining their rightful place as full US citizens.

One of the best ways to celebrate the federal suffrage centennial in the amazing human experiment that is this country is to fully recognize, appreciate, and include all women in its history. As we gratefully celebrate the constitutional recognition, we thus need to do two things. First, we need to recognize the heroic efforts of the diverse women who championed women's rights before and after ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment as well as the stain of racism and elitism that marked the labors of some of the most well-known activists. Second, we need to find ways to share our stories with men, in part by acknowledging their crucial role in gaining women's right to vote. These two issues are as crucial today as they were in previous centuries as we continue to seek ways to incorporate all women's stories into the history of women; to recognize the micro aggressions and major travesties black women and other women of color experience daily; and to develop interpretations that fully incorporate women and men as critical players in all aspects of America's history.

In the past 40 years historians have built a knowledge base of scholarship and research at museums and historic sites we could have barely imagined when second wave feminism began. Now we need to celebrate American women *inclusively*—those we are naturally comfortable with those and those we struggle to understand so that the whole story of American women is appreciated and empowered. I am fully aware of the challenges American women confront today, in and beyond the political arena, but our foremothers faced and overcame much greater obstacles.

National parks (as well as other Public Lands), National Historic Landmarks, and National Register of Historic Places together are a repository of amazing examples of Women's History. The best gift we can give the nation is to recognize, preserve, and empower those stories so that women's struggles and accomplishments are fully appreciated for this generation and for generations to come. The tangible resources of parks, landmarks, and national register properties and museums of all kinds are educational and research tools that need to be self-

consciously used in this process. Current historic places need to be recognized for the women's history they contain and additional sites need to be added.

If we don't place the suffrage movement into its larger context, we miss the point and underestimate the challenges women faced—and still do. For instance, many Americans don't realize that until the 1960s, women were not, or only rarely were allowed to serve on juries in most states. People often complain about serving jury duty, but when they are refused the right to be judged by their true peers, including women, a range of experiences and insights are lost to the criminal justice system. Similarly, the large number of women who won Congressional seats in the 2018 mid-term elections has been applauded on many fronts, but they still represent slightly more than 20% of all 535 Senators and Representatives. We have come far, but we still have much farther to go to achieve gender parity.

In summary, I recommend that this Commission

1. Give the gift of the **full** interpretation and preservation of American women's history in all our locales.
2. Interpret men's involvement in fight for suffrage both pro and con.
3. Support the full exercise of our rights and responsibilities as US citizens
4. Recognize that the Equal Rights Amendment remains to be ratified.
5. Connect with the large community of academic and public historians expert in women's history who can assist in this project.

Heather Huyck, Ph.D., 10450 Lottsford Road, Mitchellville MD 20721.