



Governor Kim Reynolds
Lt. Governor Adam Gregg
San Wong, Director

MINUTES

Iowa Commission on the Status of Women meeting
February 28th, 2019, 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Room 422, Lucas State Office Building, 321 E. 12th St, Des Moines, Iowa

Commissioners present (in person or by phone)

Beth Coonan (Chair)
Rachelle Hunt Russian (Vice-Chair)
Sherill Whisenand
Wendy Musgrave
David Gudenkauf
Tom Carnahan

Commissioners absent

Sean Bagniewski

DHR/ICSW staff

Kristen Corey, Program Planner, Office on the Status of Women (Office)
Sonya Streit, Public Information Officer/Legislative Liaison, Department of Human Rights (Department)

Members of the public (present for all or part of meeting)

Jennifer Tibbetts, Iowa Task Force for Young Women
Roy Kobnak, Juvenile Justice Advisory Council
Sarah Madojemu, Juvenile Justice Advisory Council
Jace Baker, Iowa Youth Congress

Call to order

Called to order by Chair Beth Coonan at 10:06 a.m.

Approval of agenda

Motion to approve February 28th agenda made by Gudenkauf; seconded by Carnahan.

Vote:

Aye: all

No: 0

Motion carried.

Approval of previous minutes

Iowa Commission on the Status of Women

Minutes from February 1st, 2019

Motion to approve minutes from February 1st (as presented) made by Musgrave; seconded by Hunt Russian.

Vote:

Aye: all

No: 0

Motion Carried.

Public Comment

Jennifer Tibbetts mentioned she is interested in being involved with the activities of the 19th Centennial Commemoration Committee, and in being involved with the Commission in whatever capacity is needed.

Recap of DHR Day on the Hill

The commissioners debriefed from the Iowa Department of Human Rights Legislative Day, which took place immediately before the meeting. Several commissioners mentioned that it gave commissioners a chance to interact with each other and also talk with legislators about issues of importance to the Commission.

Hunt Russian mentioned that she was very impressed with the activities of some of the youth programs that the Department has, and liked that the youth members had condensed their legislative agenda to a card to hand out.

Whisenand mentioned that she liked the comradery of all of the different commissions and divisions, so that attendees were able to see what the Department does.

Guest Jennifer Tibbetts mentioned that she would like to see females mentioned more and hopes that in future planning there will be more emphasis on all of the work that takes place within the Department.

DHR update

Corey gave an update for the Department and mentioned several of the projects that the Office has been working on over the past several months, including:

- Planning for the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame
- The Women in Iowa: 2019 Data report (Corey offered to send this out once it is final)
- Iowa Talent Bank
- 19th Amendment Centennial Commemoration
- Sexual Violence Prevention work with the Iowa Department of Public Health
- The Iowa Women at Work project

Corey also updated commissioners on several Department-wide projects that are going on, such as a Department-wide data report and a new Youth Leadership Academy, which is in its beginning phases.

Proposed 2019 legislation

Streit gave a presentation on the bills to date that were introduced in the Iowa House and Iowa Senate that directly affect women in the state of Iowa. Corey put this list together with the help of Streit, and both have been tracking these bills.

Of the bills presented, there was discussion about HSB 214, which was proposed by the Governor. This bill would require pharmacists to dispense oral birth control pills to patients over the counter. Commissioners discussed possible unintended consequences of this bill, including the potential for the increased cost of birth control. Commissioner Carnahan mentioned that when some allergy medications, such as Claritin, were able to be purchased over the counter, it raised the cost for many who were previously able to cover the cost of the prescription with their health insurance. Commissioner Carnahan also suggested putting in wording about including all types of birth control, and not just hormonal oral contraceptives.

Iowa Constitutional amendment: gender neutral language

The Commission discussed changing the language in the Iowa Constitution to use gender neutral language to discuss the leadership of the state of Iowa. Coonan stated that a change to the Iowa Constitution would take at least two years.

Hunt Russian mentioned that there would be supporters in addition to the Commission that would support this change.

Carnahan suggested the Commission should mention a move to change the Iowa Constitution at the 2019 Iowa Women's Hall of Fame.

Gudenkauf suggested that the Commission submit a letter to the Governor's office about the Commission's support of changing the Iowa Constitution. Hunt Russian agreed that this would be a good idea.

Coonan added that she would like to add commissioner's perspectives to the "Language Matters in Iowa's Constitution" letter/article that Corey drafted.

Hunt Russian recommended that the Commission come up with a call to action and suggested that commissioners:

1. Call their representatives/senators and let them know that the Commission wants gender neutral language in Iowa's Constitution
2. Build a list of supporters from around the state
3. Begin to reach out to supporters across the state to build momentum for the change

Tibbetts suggested that when the Commission makes its list that the Commission also includes local agencies and the Iowa Task Force for Young Women.

Motion to make changing the Iowa Constitution to include gender neutral language a priority of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women.

Motion by Carnahan; Second by Gudenkauf.

Vote:

Aye: all

No: 0

Motion carried.

Discussion:

Coonan asked commissioners for quotes on why it is important for Iowa's Constitution to be gender neutral. She added that she thinks people need to hear what commissioners are thinking.

Decision by consensus:

By consensus, commissioners agreed that the information from the one-pager Corey drafted and the "Language Matters in Iowa's Constitution" article could be disseminated to the general public, adding in language about the fact that two Resolutions were introduced to make these changes during the 2019 session.

The commissioners asked Corey to take the wording from the letters and articles and condense into one-pager. Commissioners agreed to then get the information into lawmakers' and the public's hands.

Commissioners especially agreed on using the last phrase from the article Corey drafted, *"And it's time we change the language we are using to talk about our state's highest leaders so that one day our children and their children's children will see the words governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, legislator; and instead of visualizing a "he," they will visualize a "me."*

A suggestion was made to post this through the ICSW newsletter and also link to who people's legislators are.

Iowa Women's Hall of Fame outreach and committee assignments

Commissioners discussed committee assignments for the 2019 Iowa Women's Hall of Fame committee.

Commissioner Wendy Musgrave agreed to be the chair. Commissioner Sherill Whisenand also agreed to serve. Corey mentioned that Sean Bagniewski agreed to

serve another year in a previous discussion. The Chair for the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame will select two private citizens to serve as public members on the committee.

Hunt Russian asked if Corey could send a postcard to all commissioners about the upcoming Iowa Women's Hall of Fame nominations. Corey agreed to send this to commissioners.

Old/New Business

Carnahan mentioned that in a discussion with a member of the public at the DHR legislative day on the hill, he spoke with the man at length about the fact that military veterans are having a hard time finding employment in the state of Iowa. Gudenkauf added that Iowa does not have a lot of military employment or contractors in the state, so there is often not much understanding of military communities from employers as a whole.

Whisenand mentioned that she will pull the number of women veterans in the state of Iowa and get that data out to commissioners.

Coonan mentioned that the next Commission meeting will be by phone in May to vote on the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame nominees and to go over some additional items. She added that the Commission may possibly choose to have another call before that meeting.

Coonan asked commissioners to:

- Write a quote about why the change to gender neutral language in the Iowa Constitution is important and get it to her or Corey
- Recruit people to nominate Iowans for the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame and the Cristine Wilson Medal for Equality and Justice
- Pass materials about the Iowa Constitution out to their legislators.

Adjournment

Whisenand made the motion to adjourn. Hunt Russian seconded motion.

Vote:

Aye: all

No: 0

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 11:57 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Kristen Corey, staff.