



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

MINUTES
Iowa Commission on the Status of Women
February 1, 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.
Conference call

Commissioners present (in person or by phone)

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

Commissioners absent

None

DHR/ICSW staff

Kristen Corey, Program Planner, Office on the Status of Women
Monica Stone, Deputy Director, Department of Human Rights

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

None

Call to order

Called to order by Chair Beth Coonan at 12:04 p.m.

Approval of agenda

Motion to approve February 1st agenda made by Gudenkauf; seconded by Carnahan.

Vote:

Aye: all

No: 0

Motion carried.

Approval of previous minutes

Minutes from October 25th, 2018

Motion to approve minutes from October 25th (as presented) made by Carnahan; seconded by Gudenkauf.

Vote:

Aye: all

No: 0

Motion Carried.

Public Comment

None.

2019 ICSW Legislative Priorities

Corey circulated a draft legislative priority document that was created in response to reviewing the poll taken by commissioners. Coonan and Corey went over the legislative document with commissioners.

Commissioners agreed by consensus to discuss the priorities individually instead of discussing the document as a whole.

Carnahan mentioned that he thinks the cornerstone of the document should be advocating for a minimum wage increase. He added that if we look at the states surrounding Iowa, all have a higher minimum wage than Iowa. He added that he is not sure how we can achieve pay equity if we don't increase the minimum wage.

Commissioners discussed their thoughts on the minimum wage and Coonan suggested that the commission needed to see the data. Corey will send data on the minimum wage to commissioners to review.

2019 Policy Recommendation discussion:

Policy #1: "The Iowa Commission on the Status of Women supports legislation and changes to state policies and practices that ensure that women and girls have greater opportunity for economic stability and career growth by: ensuring pay equity, increasing access to childcare and family support, increasing access to paid family leave."

Discussion on policy #1:

Carnahan's suggestion is to keep #1 as worded and then leave it up to each Commissioner to broaden the conversation. Whisenand also agreed with the wording on policy #1.

Motion to approve policy #1 in the 2019 policy recommendation document as written.

Motion by Carnahan; Second by Gudenkauf.

Vote:

Aye: all

Nay: 0

Motion carried.

Policy #2: “The Iowa Commission on the Status of Women supports legislation and changes to state policies and practices that ensure that women and girls are free from gender-based workplace discrimination.”

Discussion:

Several commissioners discussed removing the word “workplace” from the sentence to make this statement apply to a broader setting.

Whisenand suggested removing “workplace” from the phrase “Are free from gender-based workplace discrimination.” The statement would be reworded to the following: “Are free from gender-based discrimination.”

Motion to revise #2 in the policy document to: “The Iowa Commission on the Status of Women supports legislation and changes to state policies and practices that ensure that women and girls: are free from gender-based discrimination.”

Motion by Whisenand; Second by Gudenkauf.

Vote:

Aye: all

Nay: 0

Motion carried.

Policy #3: “The Iowa Commission on the Status of Women supports legislation and changes to state policies and practices that ensure that women and girls: are free from sexual harassment and violence in the workplace.”

Discussion:

Musgrave suggested removing the clause “in the workplace” from the end of the phrase to make this a broader statement.

Motion to revise #3 in the policy document to: “The Iowa Commission on the Status of Women supports legislation and changes to state policies and practices that ensure that women and girls: are free from sexual harassment and violence.”

Motion by Gudenkauf; Second by Whisenand.

Vote:
Aye: all
Nay: 0
Motion carried.

Policy #4: "The Iowa Commission on the Status of Women supports legislation and changes to state policies and practices that ensure that women and girls: are supported in leadership positions and have access to training opportunities they need to succeed."

Discussion:

There was some discussion from commissioners on this goal as a long-term goal.

Motion to approve policy #4 in the 2019 policy recommendation document as is written.

Motion by Whisenand; Second by Carnahan.

Vote:
Aye: all
Nay: 0
Motion carried.

Corey added that she will clean up the document and convert it to PDF. She stated that she will send out to all commissioners. She will also print copies for the DHR Day on the Hill on February 28, 2019.

Iowa's Constitution and gender-neutral language

Coonan explained that Iowa's Constitution specifically references the word "he" when referring to Governor, Lt. Governor, etc. She asked if the commission would be supportive of a move to revise the Iowa Constitution to be gender neutral.

Carnahan and Whisenand both mentioned that they would be for the change. Whisenand asked if there is any obligation the commission has to move this forward.

Coonan stated that at this point, the commission has not been approached to support the change. The change would include a Constitutional Amendment that would take some time. She added that in terms of the level of support that the commission provides, it would be up to commission.

The commission discussed several ideas such as helping to building bipartisan support and writing/placing letters to the editor in support of the move to change the language in the Constitution to be gender neutral.

Coonan asked if any commissioners had strong feelings against this move, or feel like the commission should not be looking at or taking this on.

Carnahan stated that the only misgiving he has is that he would like to keep the wording change as very narrow in scope. He would like to make sure this language change would not be used as a means to throw other issues into the change to the Constitution.

Whisenand added that she would like to see the commission sign onto this, although it has a long way to go and could take a lot of years to get it through.

Carnahan added that as the Commission on the Status of Women, this is something the commission should be behind.

Gudenkauf added that as a minimum, the commission should write a letter to say that this is something the commission supports.

Coonan added that Corey and Coonan would draft a plan of action with action items for commissioners that will be available for discussion at the commission meeting on February 28th.

DHR Day on the Hill: review of schedule

Corey went over the tentative schedule for the DHR Day on the Hill. The day starts at 7:30 on the Capitol rotunda, following by several commission meetings starting at 10 a.m. Lunch will follow and be available for all commissioners who would like to attend. The day will end with the DHR Board meeting.

Old/New Business

None.

Adjournment

Whisenand made the motion to adjourn. Carnahan seconded motion.

Vote:

Aye: all

No: 0

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Kristen Corey, staff.