



Governor Terry E. Branstad
Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds
San Wong, Director

MINUTES
Iowa Commission on the Status of Women
May 13, 2015
Room 418, Lucas State Office Building,
321 E. 12th St, Des Moines, IA

Commissioners present

Phyllis Peters, chair
Tom Carnahan
David Gudenkauf
Beth Coonan
Aaron Sewell
Sherill Whisenand

DHR/ICSW staff

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

Members of the public - present for all or part of the meeting

Dawn Oliver Wiand, Executive Director, Iowa Women's Foundation
Jessica Love, Cedar Falls resident (by phone)

Call to order

Called to order by chair, Phyllis Peters at 9:36 a.m.

Motion to approve minutes from Feb. 26, 2015:

Gudenkauf made motion; Coonan seconded.

Aye: all

Nay: none

Motion carried.

Motion to approve minutes from March 19, 2015:

Gudenkauf made motion; Carnahan seconded.

Aye: all

Nay: none

Motion carried.

Motion to approve agenda for May 13, 2015:

Carnahan made motion; Coonan seconded.

Aye: all

Nay: none

Motion carried.

Commission on the Status of Women

Public comment

None.

Presentation: Improving the lives of Iowa women and girls through economic self-sufficiency

Executive Director of the Iowa Women's Foundation (IWF), Dawn Oliver Wiand, presented to the commission about the Foundation's planned initiative to improve the lives of women and girls in the state of Iowa through economic self-sufficiency.

Oliver Wiand laid out the five key strategies IWF is using to guide its work for this initiative:

- 1) Research – use research to guide the work; IWF funds gender-specific research
- 2) Grant-making – IWF awards grants to organizations that work with women and girls directly; the IWF tries hard to be demographically and geographically diverse throughout the state
- 3) Advocacy
- 4) Education – the IWF tries to lead change through educating the public – focusing on what is happening with women and girls in our communities and how to make things better
- 5) Collaboration – with other organizations that serve women and girls in the state

Oliver Wiand added that starting on May 22, 2015, IWF will convene 16 community meetings to collect qualitative (focus groups) and quantitative data (surveys) and then will compile a report to begin targeting their work. The IWF will then go back out to the 16 communities to share results and ask for help on strategies that can improve economic self-sufficiency for Iowa women. She mentioned that the final report is due to be out by January 2016.

Oliver Wiand also mentioned that she will reach out to commissioners of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women since her organization will be visiting cities and towns throughout the state.

Chair Peters mentioned that the commission has a listserv that reaches people statewide that office staff could use to send information; and that within the Iowa Department of Human Rights' Community Advocacy & Services division, there are groups that work with various populations that could maybe be useful. Peters added that the commission could help to be involved with the solution and it could be a starting place for future ICSW projects.

Much discussion followed. Oliver Wiand ended by thanking commissioners for their time and help and let the commission know she would contact the program planner for the Office on the Status of Women, Kristen Corey, with additional city tour information to

pass to the commission. Corey agreed to send Oliver Wiand's information to the commissioners so they could contact her if interested in helping.

DHR board report

Commissioner Coonan gave the report for the February 26th, 2015 and May 1st, 2015 DHR board meetings.

For the February 26th DHR board meeting, Coonan mentioned that the biggest issues discussed were board priorities and implementation of CAS recommendations. She added that being new to the board she is still trying to understand how everything fits together. Coonan added that she needs to talk to the DHR board about how the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women fits in and what we should be doing as a commission.

During the May 1st meeting, Coonan mentioned that the bulk of meeting was dedicated to showing the DHR board what the new DHR website will look like.

Assistant to the Director Stone gave a short report of changes within DHR and mentioned that there has been a lot of turnover lately and there is a new leadership team. She added that this is the year of reforming how things will look in the future and that the commission will be involved with the discussion and future plan about how we can meet the goals of the Department.

Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women report

Peters gave a report for the Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women. Peters mentioned that the Friends of the ICSW have been trying to "strengthen its bench" and recruit volunteers to help with the gender balance project. The Friends of the ICSW held a networking event in April for women interested in volunteering for the gender balance project. She added that many women came to the networking event and wanted to be given a task, so the Friends of the ICSW will be looking for ways to engage these volunteers in the project.

Peters added that the Friends of the ICSW is involved with planning the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame reception and luncheon following the ceremony.

Iowa Department of Human Rights report

Stone gave an update for the Iowa Department of Human Rights. Stone mentioned that in the short amount of time she has worked for the Department, she has had the opportunity to work with the whole Department and sees where the CAS division fits within the Department.

She added that the new DHR website will be live by the end of June. Stone mentioned that the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) is in the process of finishing up

security testing and once it is complete, Monica will be sending links to the test website out to everyone for thoughts and input. Stone added that the website will be a continuous work in progress; it provides a new framework with an application that is more user-friendly. The goal is to showcase the work of the Department. The front page will be dedicated to the work the Department is doing and helping to connect with the public.

Stone added that the legislature is still in session. As of the May 13th meeting, the Department does not know what the budget will be. Stone added that there will not be a windfall of new resources for the Department and that the management team is hoping to protect the resources available today.

Stone also added that there is strategic planning going on within a few different offices and within the CAS division. There are a number of issues that cross all the different commissions, such as education, economic success, language access, and healthcare. One of the things the Department is looking at is how can to do a better job at addressing each issue with different populations. What does the data tell us about Iowa? What is happening to the underrepresented communities CAS offices serve? What are the strategies that are going to move the needle forward? Stone added that commissioners should expect this to be a six-month plus process and the Department will be working with the commissioners to get feedback and support. This also will change some of the conversations the Department has had with legislators related to financial support and funding.

Commissioner Gudenkauf asked if the commission could get more information on the juvenile justice process as it relates to women and girls in Iowa. Stone answered that office staff could provide the commission with several reports the CJJP division has done over the past several years. She also outlined some of the work the Iowa Task Force for Young Women is taking on with the Girls Justice Initiative.

Stone added that the division administrator position for the Community Advocacy & Services division was posted and the last day for applications was May 8th. Director Wong has assembled a selection team to interview and choose a new administrator. The selection team will do initial interviews. Once they have narrowed down candidates, there will be a public presentation followed by final selection. Stone mentioned that her best guess is that it will be late June by the time someone is selected for that position.

Iowa Department of Human Rights, Office on the Status of Women report

Corey mentioned that Stone covered a lot of the information for the Iowa Department of Human Rights, but wanted to add a few things. She publicly thanked Stone for the work she has done to get the DHR website up and running.

Corey gave the commission updates on the Girls Justice Initiative and some of the other projects the office has been involved with since the last commission meeting.

Corey added that over the next several months, the office will be doing some of its own strategic planning for initiatives that are important to the office and to the Department. She also mentioned that the office has started work on the gender balance project, beginning with drafting a letter to all 99 counties and over 200 cities throughout Iowa to let them know about the Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women's Talent Bank database, and also to inform them that the office, commission and Friends of the ICSW are available to help if those entities are looking for more women to serve. Corey mentioned that another idea the office has had is to contact the people in the Talent Bank to ask them if they need help applying for a county/city board or commission.

Peters added that this is going to be an ongoing process of working with decision-makers in counties and cities on how to make information about how to apply for a board or commission more readily available.

Old business: Update on the status of legislative policy items

Peters publicly thanked commissioner Whisenand for serving as the MC for the Write Women Back into History essay contest ceremony in March. Commissioner Whisenand shared her thoughts on serving as the MC for the ceremony and added that she is glad the commission sponsors it.

Peters also added that she recently attended the Latina Leadership Initiative (LLI) community service presentation and would like the commission to stay connected to this leadership initiative.

Peters also gave an update on the legislative policy items that were discussed during the February 26th commission meeting. She mentioned that during that meeting there was good discussion on what the commission wanted to support, but the list was lengthy so the commission met over conference call on March 19th with a shortened list to focus on which legislative items the commission wanted to support. She added that the process moved quickly and she ended up dropping it. Peters stated that her personal view was that commission's discussion on legislative issues in late February and mid-March was too late in the process to be effective.

Peters added that regardless of budget constraints, can we find solutions that help the women and girls we advocate for? She stated that there are many avenues to address issues and propose solutions and she doesn't think they all need legislative action.

Iowa Women's Hall of Fame, 2015

In the absence of Hall of Fame selection committee chair Hunt Russian, Corey gave an update on the 2015 selection committee. The selection committee is set to meet to select the 2015 honorees on Tuesday, June 2nd from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Corey is developing a timeline of events that will happen after selection for chair Peters, Hunt Russian and office staff to follow. Corey asked commissioners to prepare to free some

time on Thursday, June 4th for a phone call to vote on 2015 selected Hall of Fame inductees.

ICSW planning for 2015-2016

Corey led the discussion for ICSW planning in 2015-2016. She asked the commission for feedback on what has worked and what has not worked since she started in late 2013.

Several commissioners commented:

- Whisenand likes getting too much information rather than not enough
- Peters added that Corey came back from the NACW conference last year with ideas; we can't add more hours to the week, but we could do different things

Stone commented that committees meet during the session, but they also have interim meetings when the legislature is not in session. She made the point that if advocacy groups try to influence legislators during the committee meetings, the groups are already behind. Some legislation takes years. If there is a legislative agenda that a group is really passionate about, it could take years and planning. Based on experiences she has seen in state government, she pointed out that getting legislation passed is a lot of strategy and a little bit of conversation. Stone suggested starting the process of legislative agenda planning the day after the legislators go home.

Commissioner Sewell added that the coalition approach could work very well. If it aligns with our similar goals, we could connect that with other women's organization to get behind new projects or legislation. Chair Peters suggested the possibility of reconvening a planning subcommittee.

Commissioners discussed whether it would be beneficial to have a strategic planning session that encompasses the next 3-4 years. Much discussion followed with commissioners agreeing that having a planning session would be beneficial. Corey will schedule the session for late June or July 2015 and will find a place and a facilitator.

Stone added that something to think about is to anchor the initiatives to maintaining the organization's mission – what does the organization need to do more of and what does it need to change to maintain the mission? The commission needs to develop key initiatives anchored to its mission.

Adjournment

Whisenand made a motion to adjourn. Gudenkauf seconded the motion.

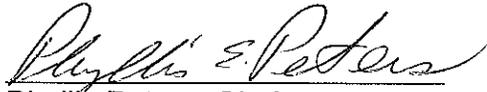
Ayes: all

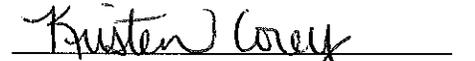
Nay: none

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 12:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:


Phyllis Peters, Chair


Kristen Corey, Program Planner

