



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

MINUTES
Iowa Commission on the Status of Women
August 25, 2017, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
Iowa Association of Community College Trustees Building
855 E Court Ave, Des Moines

Commissioners present by phone or in-person

Phyllis Peters, chair
Tom Carnahan
Sherill Whisenand
David Gudenkauf
Sean Bagniewski
Elizabeth Coonan

Commissioners absent

Rachelle Hunt Russian

DHR/ICSW staff

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

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

None.

Call to order

Called to order by Chair Phyllis Peters at 1:04 p.m.

Approval of agenda

Whisenand moved for approval of the August 25th agenda; Gudenkauf seconded.

Vote:

Aye: all

No: 0

Motion carried.

Approval of previous minutes

Minutes from May 24, 2017

Whisenand moved to accept the minutes as presented. Carnahan seconded.

Vote:

Aye: all

No: 0

Motion carried.

Public Comment



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

None.

Iowa Department of Human Rights Update

Corey gave an update for the Office on the Status of Women. Since the Commission last met in person in February, she highlighted some key things that have happened in the Office such as Capitol Girls, the Women's History Month Video contest, planning for the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame, and several presentations and task force meetings the Office has participated in. Corey also mentioned some of the highlights from the Community Advocacy and Services (CAS) division.

Monica Stone gave an update from the Department perspective. Stone outlined the changes that have taken place over the last fiscal year within the CAS Division. She added that the CAS division laid off 1.5 FTEs (2 people total) and the Division has also seen an increase in inquiries of around 30 percent. Stone mentioned that the cuts primarily impacted youth programming for students with disabilities and also for the deaf and hard-of-hearing community. Staff within the CAS division have absorbed the work of these two areas.

Stone added that the Division has been working on four Division-wide topic areas:

- Communications and outreach
- Civic engagement
- Youth engagement
- Government access

Stone mentioned that from an overall budget perspective, no one knows at this point whether there will be a special session and added that the Revenue Estimating Committee meets in October. The Department had a lower budget appropriation last year, and then a mid-year budget reduction so the Division made a reduction in staff. This year, if there is another budget reduction, the Division may have to take similar measures. Stone added that the upside of the Division's budget is that the Division now has a small budget the Division can dedicate to programming. Stone mentioned that this budget for programming is the first thing that would go away if the Department faces a further budget cut.

Commissioner Whisenand asked what the Commission could do to help alleviate some of the problem.

Stone answered that one of the ways that commissioners can help is to connect with legislators and the media. Stone also explained that the legislature funds the CAS division as an entirety, and not as different offices. Stone added that one of the challenges the Division faces is branding. Legislators who vote on the Department's budget might understand the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women and what it does, but may not know that the Commission falls under the CAS division.

Peters asked if the Department has suggestions or best practices from other commissions.

Stone mentioned the idea of collecting and using qualitative and quantitative information. She added that if we are able to supply legislators with information about what is happening with women in Iowa, that would be helpful.

Stone added that the conversation in and of itself isn't the end state, and that commissioners should consider making specific recommendations on what should happen.



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

Coonan asked if anyone has devoted any time to putting together a communications plan that has been rolled out. She asked if there was specific information the Commission/Department could roll out over social media. Corey answered that the Department does not have a Department-wide Facebook page, other than the ones supporting our Department's youth programs and a pilot Facebook page for the Office of Latino Affairs.

Stone answered that the Division is hiring a new person to fill the Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs position – Tina Shaw. Shaw has a background in public relations and communications. Stone also added that the clusters in the Division are being dissolved and Shaw will be focusing her time specifically on work dedicated to the Office of Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs, while Corey will be dedicating her time to the Office on the Status of Women. She added that additionally, Division staff will have Division-wide duties.

Stone added that the Division has a total 56 commissioners. The Department, in total, has 106 members of different commissions.

Whisenand added that commissioners are waiting and are willing to help when needed.

Peters added that commissioners can brainstorm ideas. She mentioned the women's studies programs throughout the state of Iowa and offered that reaching out to them may be a way to get communications out about women in Iowa and about the Office/Commission. She added that public libraries may also be able to do something for Women's History Month. She added that if public libraries had some guidance, they could push out the communication message.

Peters also added that at one point in time, commissioner Gudenkauf had brought up the idea of talking to the different civil rights agencies in Iowa. Stone answered that many of the local civil rights agencies are more about enforcement; but some also focus on advocacy.

Discussion of Commission's Role and Plan of Work for FY 2018

Peters started the conversation about the Commission's plan of work for fiscal year 2018 and beyond.

Peters gave the background on the Talent Bank database that the Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women started. The goal of the Talent Bank database is to connect women with appointed positions on city and county boards and commissions.

Stone explained that the Department has taken on the project of updating the Talent Bank database and is reaching out to various partners outside of the Friends, including the Governor's office, Iowa Workforce Development, the Association of Business and Industry and others. She added that a steering committee has been formed and it is establishing subcommittees.

Whisenand asked if the Department would have the money to move forward with the project.

Stone answered that the Department will be applying for an Iowa Access grant, which is due in December 2017. She added that the steering committee has formed a funding subcommittee to look at long-term sustainability.



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

Gudenkauf mentioned that he thinks there will be a bigger push in rural counties and rural communities to get technology into residents' hands. He added that creating the message around this project will be fun.

Stone added that we will be able to have this Talent Bank as an app on a phone since the database will have mobile capabilities.

Carnahan asked if anyone had talked to counties and cities about best practices and what they have done that has worked.

Commissioners talked about Professor Kim Lanegran's research related to gender balance (from Coe College). Dr. Kim Lanegran presented at the Commission's Nov. 9th meeting.

Peters asked what the role of commissioners will be in the project. She added that the Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women is excited about the project, but has some trepidation about losing some of the original goal and focus on local communities in Iowa.

Peters asked how the Commission can be the backbone that allows more women to have a seat at the table and bring to light issues such as economic disparities. Peters asked how the Commission could divide and execute and have something that moves down the track toward a win.

Peters added that the Commission formed task groups in August of 2016. The prior year, in 2015, the Commission had a strategic planning session, but added that the Commission hasn't used it as a road map.

Carnahan added that one of the problems is that things are very fluid in terms of funding and mentioned that the Commission did some advocacy with the legislature last year.

Whisenand mentioned that as a commissioner, she sat down and talked to legislators about the Commission's legislative agenda.

Whisenand and Peters both added that the Talent Bank gives commissioners a project to work with.

Gudenkauf added that the Commission's job is advocacy and we have to adjust to what comes to the Commission. He added that when something is presented to the Commission, it is the Commission's role to be nimble.

Peters added that the Friends group wants to form its plan of work based on the Commission's projects and priorities. She added that there is frustration from the Friends Board because its members are looking to support the work of the Commission, but aren't always sure what projects to support.

Whisenand mentioned that she sees two roles for the Commission:

- 1) Advocacy
- 2) Communication

Coonan mentioned that she has always seen the Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women as the fundraising arm of the Commission.



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

Peters added that the Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women might be a good group for former commissioners. Whisenand added that she sees the Friends Board as a natural fit for former commissioners and Hall of Fame members.

Stone read the Commission's powers and duties vs. the Office on the Status of Women's duties as outlined in Iowa Code. Peters added that when commissioners are asked to do something, they want specifics.

Commissioners discussed the fact that the Commission is a statewide group, and that many of the past Hall of Fame honorees/commissioners are scattered throughout the state and may be willing to help.

Whisenand added that it would be good to communicate with past commissioners and honorees to ask them for help. She stressed the importance of writing letters to them and using direct contact.

Whisenand asked if the Commission has a pamphlet that could send out. Corey answered that there is an older version of a Commission pamphlet that could be updated, and that the Office on the Status of Women has a pamphlet that could also be sent out.

Peters added that it is important to explain the relationship of the Office vs. Commission vs. Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women.

Discussion: Iowa Women on Achievement Bridge

Peters gave an update on the Iowa Women of Achievement Bridge. She mentioned that Peters and commissioner Hunt Russian met with the Principal to talk through what the Commission taking over the process would entail. Peters added that the Commission needs to make a decision on what they would like to do moving forward, otherwise the Principal is going to look elsewhere.

Peters explained the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that was approved by the Attorney General's office.

Whisenand mentioned that the Department does not have the funds to pay for the work on the bridge. Peters answered that the city of Des Moines will maintain the plaques.

Gudenkauf stated that he has a problem with the MOU as written. He added that the Commission is not a fund-site. Coonan added that the Commission cannot take the funding piece on as a state commission.

Peters added that she brought up the funding piece to the Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women the prior week.

Gudenkauf brought up some of his additional concerns, such as the work the Commission would be required to do and what the Department would be responsible for.

Peters added that the cost estimate is from the company that made the first signs.

Gudenkauf mentioned that if the Commission puts up four plaques every year that is around \$3600 for four plaques. He added that on the MOU, it says the Commission would procure and pay for the production of



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

the recognition ceremony. He asked if that meant that the mayor of the city and elected officials would be invited to the ceremony every year.

Peters answered that the Principal started the Women of Achievement Bridge and kicked it off, but that it would now be the Commission's responsibility for doing the ceremony and work. She added that the Commission could potentially get the Hall of Fame Solutions Council or another body to work with the Commission on the ceremony every year.

Whisenand asked if we could enlist the Friends' help to work on the Women of Achievement Bridge.

Whisenand also asked what the Commission's financial commitment would be. Carnahan added that if the Department of Human Rights gets a bill, the Department wouldn't be able to pay it.

Peters mentioned that the goal of the Riverfront Development Authority (RDA) is to hand control of selection over to a respected, non-political entity to make a selection. She added that RDA came to the Commission because the RDA sees the Commission as the place to go for women and girls in the state.

Coonan added that she sees RDA coming to the Commission with this project as a gift. She suggested that maybe it's a subcommittee of the Commission that involves Hall of Fame members that selects the honorees for the Women of Achievement Bridge. She added that the Commission has a process in place to select Hall of Fame members – the Commission should be able to replicate it for the Women of Achievement Bridge. Coonan added that she thinks it would be a mistake to turn the project down.

Peters added that if the costs were \$10,000 per year, fundraising for the Women of Achievement Bridge would not be a heavy lift.

Whisenand added that as long as we're not committing the Commission to a heavy lift, she would be okay with moving forward.

Coonan added that taking on the Women of Achievement Bridge project would be an opportunity to do something that the Commission cannot do with the Hall of Fame. She suggested that the Commission could make it a requirement that women from different geographic regions are identified. She added that it would be a great way to have a large, long-lasting impact.

Gudenkauf mentioned that the MOU has to read that the Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women agrees to undertake the obligation to pay for plaques and recognition aspects of the Women of Achievement Bridge.

Stone added that the Director of the Iowa Department of Human Rights is the only person who can financially obligate the CAS commissions to do this kind of work.

Peters asked commissioners if the consensus was that the Commission move forward with this project.

Carnahan added that he thinks the Commission should move forward, but there are things that the Commission, Department and Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women need to work through.



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

Motion:

Proceed with the Women of Achievement Bridge project with the understanding an ad hoc group of the Commission will: 1) revise the language on the MOU, 2) obtain the signature of the Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women as the fiduciary agent, 3) obtain the signature of the Director of the Department of Human Rights on the agreement, 4) bring an action plan to the Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women for review, and 5) take on any other issues that come up related to the Women of Achievement Bridge.

Whisenand made motion; Bagniewski seconded motion.

Vote:

Aye - all

No - 0

Motion carried.

Discussion of the motion:

Commissioners discussed who would work to clean up the language on the MOU. Stone offered to help Peters with cleaning up the language on the Women of Achievement Bridge MOU.

Peters asked for volunteers for the Women of Achievement Bridge task group.

Task group:

- Phyllis Peters
- Beth Coonan
- Rachelle Hunt Russian (Peters will speak to commissioner Hunt Russian and ask her if she is still interested in serving on the task force)

Coonan added that the Commission needs an action plan and to know what the Commission is committing to. Peters added that part of the steps include tapping into people to get things going.

Discussion of 2017 Iowa Women's Hall of Fame ceremony

Corey and commissioners went over the logistics and the task list for the ceremony scheduled for August 26th.

Commissioners and staff discussed a planned protest for the ceremony on the 26th and outlined steps to take should there be protests inside during the ceremony. Commissioners asked staff if there was a contingency plan, should safety issues arise. Corey mentioned that the school administration had been contacted since the ceremony will take place at Valley High School. She added that Valley High School will proceed with security measures to protect their property should anything occur.

Stone added that additional Department staff will be on hand to help throughout the ceremony with logistics and staffing.

Corey added that at the request of one of the honorees, we will have a room set aside for press in case press would like to ask questions.



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

Peters added that the Commission needs to have a discussion about including different viewpoints on the Hall of Fame selection committee and the process.

Whisenand added that she thinks it would be a good idea to have a frank discussion about what the criteria are for next time around. She added that the Commission is already receiving nominations for next year. Corey concurred and added that she has received several e-mails and calls from nominators who are planning to nominate someone in 2018.

Peters added that just because there is something written in administrative rules about the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame selection process, it does not prohibit the Commission from having other members than those listed. She added that maybe the commissioners can suggest a way to tweak things so they become working guidelines.

Set meeting dates for 2017-2018

The Commission agreed by consensus to a date of Thursday, October 12th for the next Commission meeting. Commissioners agreed by consensus to have a Commission meeting from 2 to 3 p.m. and then to have a dual meeting with the Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women from 3 to 5 p.m. Corey agreed to look for a room for the meeting.

Corey and Stone also agreed to circulate the Commission's attendance policy before the next meeting. Corey agreed to put Commission attendance on the agenda for the next meeting and also let commissioners know their renewal dates for Commission terms.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Whisenand, seconded by Carnahan.

Vote:

Aye: all

No: 0

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m. Minutes prepared by Kristen Corey, staff.