



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

MINUTES

Iowa Commission on the Status of Women

October 12, 2017, 2-5:00 p.m.

Iowa Secretary of State's office (west conference room)

1st Floor, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa

Commissioners present (in person or by phone)

Phyllis Peters, chair

Sean Bagniewski

Tom Carnahan

David Gudenkauf

Rachelle Hunt Russian

Sherill Whisenand

Commissioners absent

Elizabeth Coonan

DHR/ICSW staff

Kristen Corey, Program Planner, Office on the Status of Women

Monica Stone, Deputy Director, Department of Human Rights

San Wong, Director, Department of Human Rights

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

- Jeanette Thomas, Equity Consultant, Iowa Department of Education
- Linda Bisgaard, Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of the Women
- Amy Getty, Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women
- Emily Williams-Bouska, Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women
- Gail Kotval, Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women
- Karla Fultz McHenry, President, Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women

Call to order

Called to order by Chair Phyllis Peters at 2:02 p.m.

Introduction of guests/public observers

Approval of agenda

Motion to approve October 12th agenda made by Carnahan; seconded by Gudenkauf.



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

Vote:
Aye: all
No: 0
Motion carried.

Approval of previous minutes

Minutes from August 25th, 2017

Motion to approve minutes from August 25th, 2017 made by Gudenkauf; seconded by Carnahan.

Vote:
Aye: all
No: 0
Motion carried.

Public Comment

Jeanette Thomas from the Iowa Department of Education introduced herself to the Commission. She stated that her role as a consultant is to promote non-traditional careers where males and females are underrepresented. She added that she is interested in the Commission's work from an economic standpoint for the population the Commission serves. She added that her goal is to promote how women can benefit from high-paying jobs in STEM fields or non-traditional careers such as in construction and in the trades.

Commissioners spoke with Ms. Thomas about her work. Corey offered to get additional information from Ms. Thomas about her work and distribute it to commissioners.

Iowa Department of Human Rights Update

Monica Stone gave an update for the Iowa Department of Human Rights' Division of Community Advocacy and Services (CAS). She added that the DHR board approved a status quo budget at the last DHR board meeting. She mentioned that there will be more updates about the budget throughout the legislative session. She or Corey will send these updates to commissioners.

Stone added that DHR has been creating a video over the last year that will focus on the legacy and history of human rights in Iowa. She mentioned that DHR aims to release the



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

video in the next month. Stone added that DHR will be making the video available to commissioners and others throughout the state. She mentioned that the Commission for Persons with Disabilities will be putting on a film series by showing a variety of videos throughout the state with each to include a discussion session. She added that this is something other commissions within CAS could consider doing as a way to initiate important discussions on a variety of topics.

Corey offered to send out the DHR annual report that was approved at the last DHR board meeting and will also send the CAS report for the year.

Stone added that DHR is now connected to close to 15,000 people because of the work of the Community Connections team within the CAS division. Over the last year, DHR, as a department, has increased its electronic reach to the public, increasing from approximately 3,500 followers to around 15,000.

Stone mentioned that the requests for help and information from the general public to the CAS division have also increased. She added that a lot of the requests are for programs that no longer exist, which requires CAS staff to connect with local agencies and organizations to help people find assistance. Stone stated that the state relies on the CAS division to be an information clearinghouse for the general public.

Director San Wong gave a short background on the Division of Community Action Agencies and let commissioners know that anytime commissioners would like to connect with local communities, to keep local community action agencies in mind.

Corey outlined a written report on the Office on the Status of Women, including a strategic plan for 2017-2019 that she developed with the help of Monica Stone. Corey will be using this document to guide her work over the next several years and some of the work will include several research projects on women in the workforce.

Iowa Women's Hall of Fame debrief

Peters thanked Whisenand for her leadership as chair of the 2017 Iowa Women's Hall of Fame selection committee. Whisenand stated that the 2017 committee was a great committee and the women on the committee took their roles seriously. She added that the committee ran the selection for 2017 in the same format that was used in previous years. She mentioned that there was some criticism about the selection of the 2017 inductees, but she felt the committee did a conscientious job with the selection and thoroughly reviewed all nominations.



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

Peters asked if commissioners had any feedback on this year's process, selection, or anything else related to the 2017 ceremony.

Carnahan added that he was pleased with the location and received positive comments from members of the public on the location. He mentioned that it was accessible for parking and for persons with disabilities.

Hunt Russian mentioned that she had no comments on the process, but liked the location and accessibility. She added that there was some concern from the public about the lack of diversity in terms of race and ethnicity of the women who were selected. She added that maybe the Commission should consider how the Commission is reaching out to potential nominators so that we can receive more diverse nomination packages.

Several commissioners added that they heard some criticisms on why elected officials received the award.

Peters mentioned that the Commission does not have written guidelines that say anything about not getting the award when the person holds an elected office. She asked if commissioners thought the Commission should have written guidelines about that.

Whisenand mentioned that the Commission has already broken the mold. She added that the Commission and other advocates are trying to get women to run for office and to show their strength as leaders.

Gudenkauf added that he thinks the Commission is over-analyzing itself over what, according to public perception, it might have done wrong. Gudenkauf added that the Commission has selected other elected officials in the past, such as Angela Connolly in the more recent past – but those inductees have not been at the level of Governor or U.S. Senator. He mentioned that these were the highest elected offices that someone can hold. Gudenkauf shared his view that the selection process worked as it should. He added that the Commission did not pick these women based on party affiliation – it was based on what these women have done in their lives.

Peters mentioned that she appreciated Gudenkauf's response. She mentioned that this year it was a realization that we all come to things with different perspectives and added that the hope is to look at the totality of the nominees.



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

Peters asked for suggestions on how the Commission should recruit a more diverse selection pool. She added that the Commission should look at race and ethnicity, while also looking at different professions, geography and women in different corners of the state. She added that to get there, maybe only having two members of the public limits the selection. She mentioned that Iowa Administrative Rules outline the selection committee as having three commissioners and two members of the public, and she posed the idea that the Commission could recommend that the next committee add 1-2 extra people on the committee.

Whisenand stated that she doesn't see anything wrong with the committee the Commission had in 2017. She added that she doesn't understand why adding more people would add a broader view of diversity.

Peters added that if she had to review a lot of nominations at one time, broadening the selection committee might help to bring in different views and might catch something in the nominations that she or someone else had missed. She added that she is not criticizing the process, but would rather look ahead. She mentioned that she spoke with Corey about potentially splitting up the nominations and sending them to selection committee members at different times leading up to the committee's selection session so that they had adequate time to review all of the information. A suggestion was made to send the previous years' nominations (or early nominations) to the committee before the deadline of April 1st and then the rest of them after April 1st instead of sending all of the names and packets to the committee at once. Corey agreed to do that in the future.

Hunt Russian added that as a committee member she looked at all of the nominations in one setting and set aside time to do that. She mentioned that the Commission just has to be okay with people having strong opinions about the selection for 2017.

Wong added that the Commission should remember that in any one year, the Commission is honoring up to five people. She mentioned that it would be worth looking at the group as a class and getting more of a profile of all of the selection candidates.

Corey agreed that moving forward, staff will break down the selection candidates by geographic location, career/impact area and race/ethnicity if that data is available. Stone added that staff will map this out for the next year and can also help with connecting nominators to the process.

Corey agreed that for the 2018 process and in the future, this will be the process. She will also put nominations from the past that are still eligible in a Google Drive folder for



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

committee members so that committee members can review them before the selection committee meets in April or May. She mentioned that she will add the nomination packets to this drive as she gets them.

Carnahan added that it is important to make a concerted effort to nominate people from throughout the state. He mentioned that if a commissioner is on the committee, it should be for a two-year stretch. He added that the second year is easier for commissioners because the commissioner would have already reviewed the nominations once.

Peters asked if commissioners wanted to put their recommendations into the record. She restated the recommendations: the Commission is going to ask that the public members of the committee serve two-year staggered terms, and commissioners also serve two-year staggered terms.

By consensus, the Commission agreed to the following recommendations for the Hall of Fame selection committee:

- Committee members serve two year terms, which are staggered so there is both continuity and turn over
- There is a data component of the nomination selection breakdown (i.e., geographic location, race/ethnicity, career/volunteer area) which staff will provide to the committee before the selection committee meets
- Staff and/or the chair of the Commission will send a message to previously inducted Hall of Fame members to tap into their reservoir of knowledge and connections for nominations – staff will send out this letter: 1) directly after the Hall of Fame, and 2) 6 months before the nomination deadline to provide potential nominators with time (this will be in October/November)

Commissioners and member of the public Jeanette Thomas added it would be helpful if DHR had a Facebook page so this message could be sent out through Facebook. Thomas added this would help the Commission with getting the word out throughout the state.

Peters asked for other final thoughts from commissioners.

Bagniewski stated that because of his current leadership position within the Democratic Party, he would be fine not serving on a nominating committee for the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame. Because of that position, he would have no problem recusing himself from the committee for fear that the position might be seen as influencing who was chosen for the award.



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

Discussion: Commission meeting attendance policies

Corey and Stone briefly reviewed Commission attendance policies for all commissioners. She pointed out that terms for several commissioners will conclude in April of 2018.

Whisenand asked how many of those commissioners would be reapplying. Peters indicated she will not be seeking re-appointment. Whisenand, Hunt Russian and Carnahan all indicated they intend to re-apply for commissioner positions.

Peters added that in terms of attendance, she thinks the Commission performs better when there is full participation, considering there are only seven Commission seats. Whisenand added that if commissioners are on the Commission, it is important that they show up.

Discussion: Commission plan of work for next fiscal year

Hunt Russian moved that the Commission table this agenda item until a later time; Whisenand seconded the motion.

Vote:

Aye: all

No: 0

Motion carried.

Set meeting dates for 2017-2018

Commissioners agreed by consensus to hold the next Commission meeting on Thursday, January 11th at 10 a.m. Corey agreed to look for a site to host the meeting, which will likely be off of the Capitol complex because of a lack of parking at the Lucas State Office Building during the legislative session.

Discussion with the Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women (Friends)

Commissioners and members of the Friends introduced themselves.

Peters went over a list of four things on the agenda for discussion:

- Iowa Women's Hall of Fame costs and location
- The Talent Bank project



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

- Iowa Women of Achievement Bridge
- Setting an annual joint meeting date for the Friends and Commission

Iowa Women's Hall of Fame

Fultz McHenry explained which parts of the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame the Friends pays for, such as the reception after the ceremony, including the food and part of the venue costs, flowers, and so on.

The Commission and Friends discussed the pros and cons of hosting the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame at the Staplin Performing Arts Center (Valley High School) vs. the State Historical building.

Kotval mentioned that it was easier to work with the caterer at the State Historical Building because Baratta's (caterer at the Historical Building) did all of the set up and tear down for the event in previous years.

Fultz McHenry added that she would like to talk through the costs for the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame and how the Friends can help. She added that ultimately it is DHR's and the Commission's decision on where the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame is held. She mentioned that Friends would support whatever location is chosen.

Peters added that if the Office or the Commission would want to do something beyond its modest budget, the Office and/or Commission could potentially make a request to the Friends if it meets the Commission's and/or Office's strategic priorities. Peters asked how commissioners could help with fundraising so it wasn't just the Friends doing fundraising.

Fultz McHenry went over the money raised for the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame. She stated that last year, the Friends raised around \$8,000 for the reception and raised just over \$5,000 this year.

Whisenand asked how commissioners could help with fundraising in the future.

Fultz McHenry explained that the Friends maintains a mailing list that is updated every year to use for mailing fundraising letters. Fultz McHenry added that commissioners could add names to the list and maybe sign fundraising letters to add personalized notes.

Whisenand asked if people give corporate donations to the Friends. Several Friends board members answered yes.



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

Stone brought up the idea of adding a Rising Star Award to the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame and providing a scholarship to a young woman who was nominated. She added that it would be a great way to recognize a young woman and also get to a different demographic.

Several commissioners thought that would be a good idea to think through.

Talent Bank Project

Fultz McHenry mentioned that the Friends made a decision to move the Talent Bank to the Iowa Department of Human Rights. She added that moving forward, DHR and the Friends will be partners on this project. She mentioned that the Friends will still advertise the Talent Bank on the Friends' website, but will redirect to the other host site (which is being developed).

Williams Bouska added that there was a recommendation from the Friends that the Friends formally support the Commission and the work it does or approves from the Office. She requested that the Commission make a formal recommendation that the Talent Bank become a Commission-approved or Commission-driven project.

Director Wong added that nearly half of the people involved with the more recently-created steering committee are associated with different state departments, such as Iowa Workforce Development. She added that the largest collective group consists of DHR staff, Friends and commissioners from the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women. She mentioned that there are others on the group from the private sector, so it is a fairly balanced public-private partnership.

Whisenand added that there are a few subcommittees on the project and mentioned that if any of the commissioners know people who want to help, there may be an opportunity for them to be on one or more of the subcommittees.

Peters asked if DHR is asking for buy-in or help from other commissions outside of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women. She also asked if DHR sees a role in outreach, promotion and/or marketing for the commissioners in this project.

Wong answered that when it's time to populate the Talent Bank, she sees commissioners as taking on some of the responsibility of populating the Talent Bank throughout the state. Stone added that staff have mentioned the Talent Bank at different commission meetings.



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

but added that for right now, the group's goal is to build the Talent Bank for gender equity. She added that this is why the Steering Committee is structured the way it is.

Motion for the Commission to formally support the Talent Bank project:

Whisenand made the motion; Carnahan seconded.

Discussion:

Hunt Russian made a friendly amendment to the original motion. She asked that the Commission put together a formal agreement (like a press release) to say the Commission sees the Talent Bank as a priority. She added that the Commission could bring into that discussion the gender balance goals that were put into law in 2012.

Whisenand added the recommendation that within 30 days, the Commission should have a statement up and going.

Amended Motion: To have the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women state publicly its strong support for the Talent Bank as a tool to reach gender equality on boards and commissions throughout the state.

Vote:

Yes – all

No – 0

Motion passed.

Iowa Women of Achievement Bridge

Karla Fultz McHenry mentioned that the next Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women meeting will take place on November 1st. She added that at that time, the Friends will have a discussion on a number of things, including whether the Friends will act as the fiscal agent should the Commission decide to pursue the Iowa Women of Achievement Bridge project.

Wong gave her opinion on the Iowa Women of Achievement Bridge project from DHR's perspective. She said that everything DHR does could be looked at as an opportunity cost, which means that if DHR staff take on the Iowa Women of Achievement Bridge project, staff would have to give up something else. She mentioned that the Commission and Office are already highly involved with the annual Iowa Women's Hall of Fame. She added that if you look at the priorities of the Commission, Office and DHR, we already



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

have the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame as a formal recognition of women's achievements in the state of Iowa. In other words, there is not a gap in this area.

Wong added that if you look at DHR's mission, the Department's resources need to be directed to those that are the most disenfranchised. The job of DHR is to fill gaps where there are gaps and that where DHR does its work is at the intersection for the greatest need and DHR's ability to have impact.

Wong mentioned that having another entity take on this project is not an issue for her. She added that to her the Commission has not dropped the project, but that the Commission should let someone else take this on. She stated that from the DHR's perspective, she isn't sure she can ask staff to do one more thing.

Wong added that for the Talent Bank project, at the local level, it's much more about what the community needs and DHR's mission. She mentioned that she does not want the Commission and/or DHR to cannibalize one project by taking on another project.

Peters asked what the division of labor looks like between the Commission and the Office.

Wong mentioned that for DHR projects, the Department assesses if staff are working on systems work vs. one-on-one work that may not move the needle. She added that staff from the Community Advocacy and Services (CAS) division aren't just working in one office, but are working across the Division.

Wong added that when she is asked about DHR's work from others, she tells them that the work of DHR isn't like teaching people to fish or where to go to find fish – instead it's like trying to change the whole fishing industry.

Kotval added that the Commission and Friends do not have a gap in recognizing women of achievement, but maybe the groups could fill in some other gaps that exist.

Gudenkauf added that he feels that the Iowa Women of Achievement Bridge could become more of a local government project for the city, or a similar project for some of the other cities throughout Iowa.

Fultz McHenry added that the Principal may want to have a conversation with the Des Moines Parks and Recreation Board because it is a Des Moines' based bridge.



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

Motion: The Commission will contact River Front Development and thank the company for their offer to have the Commission take responsibility for recognition aspects of the Iowa Women of Achievement Bridge, but the Commission respectfully declines the offer.

Carnahan made the motion; Gudenkauf seconded the motion.

Vote:

Aye: all

No – 0

Motion passed.

Discussion: Peters agreed to make these recommendations within a week to River Front Development and the others involved with the project. She added that she will also make recommendations to some other places that may be on board to accept the offer and take this project on.

Fultz McHenry added that once the Friends knows the Commission's plan of work, the Friends can look at other things to be involved with.

The Friends discussed that in the past, the Commission staff prepared a budget outline for initiatives that needed support beyond the office budget. A budget request and a plan of work for the year would be submitted to the Friends as that board planned its work at the start of the year.

Corey asked if the following plan worked for commissioners and Friends: the Office comes up with a list or plan of work and then brings the plan to the Commission to look over and add some things. Staff then takes this plan to the Friends to see what Friends would be willing to financially support. The goal is to make an annual plan, but leave room for responsiveness.

Peters suggested the Commission forms a task group to draft a plan of work. She asked for commissioners who would be willing to sit on that task force. Carnahan and Peters volunteered. Several commissioners volunteered commissioner Coonan.

Peters added that the Commission can then schedule Commission meetings to approve documents.

Corey asked if commissioners and Friends' members would like to have an annual meeting of the Friends and the Commission. Fultz McHenry answered that when the Commission has its plan of work, it would be a good idea to have another collaborative



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

meeting. Fultz McHenry added that the Commission's plan will drive the next things the Friends does.

Adjournment

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

Vote:

Aye: all

No: 0

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 5:22 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Kristen Corey, staff.