



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

MINUTES

**Iowa Commission on the Status of Women
October 6, 2015
Room 319, Lucas State Office Building,
321 E. 12th St, Des Moines, IA**

Commissioners present (in-person or by phone)

Phyllis Peters, chair
Tom Carnahan
David Gudenkauf
Beth Coonan
Sherill Whisenand
Rachelle Hunt Russian

Commissioner absent

Aaron Sewell

DHR/ICSW staff

Kristen Corey, Program Planner, Office on the Status of Women
San Wong, Director, Iowa Department of Human Rights

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

Karl Schilling, President, Iowa Organization for Victim Assistance

Call to order

Called to order by chair, Phyllis Peters at 9:31 a.m.

Motion to approve Oct. 6, 2015 agenda with an update from commissioner Gudenkauf on the Iowa Criminal Justice Summit held on October 1, 2015 added to agenda:

Gudenkauf made motion; Carnahan seconded.

Discussion: Director Wong suggested adding a commissioner update section to future ICSW agendas.

Aye: all

Nay: none

Motion carried.

Motion to approve minutes from August 22, 2015:

Carnahan made motion; Gudenkauf seconded.

Discussion: none.

Aye: all

Nay: none

Motion carried.

Public comment

Karl Schilling attended the meeting on behalf of the Iowa Organization for Victim Assistance. Mr. Schilling stated that he wanted to voice his organization's support for the ICSW and that is why he came.

Mr. Schilling stated that he advocates on behalf of victim issues, such as supporting the dating violence bill and a bill during the last legislative session to require those who have been habitually violent to serve 85% of their sentence instead of 1/3 of the sentence. He also stated that the organization is victim-centered and that there is an overlap between his organization and the ICSW when it comes to violence against women.

Commissioner Carnahan asked Mr. Schilling to explain the position of the Iowa Organization for Victim Assistance with respect to the growing amount of prisons and the effect this has on reform. Mr. Schilling stated that the organization is concerned with the financial incentive of keeping people in prison. Mr. Schilling added that if offenders are not rehabilitated they will likely reoffend and create more victims.

Iowa Department of Human Rights update

Director Wong gave an update for the Iowa Department of Human Rights. Director Wong stated that since the former DHR Deputy Director left in December 2015, this is the first time the DHR executive team has been fully-staffed. She added that the Department recently hired Monica Stone as the Deputy Director and also hired Sonya Streit as the Director's Assistant, DHR Public Information Officer and Policy Coordinator. Director Wong added that Ms. Streit has a JD from Drake University and has experience with the legislative system and state government. She was most recently the Product Compliance Analyst with CoOpportunity Health and served as the Associate General Counsel in the Governor's Office during the Vilsack administration.

Director Wong added that there is an opening within the Community Advocacy & Services (CAS) Division for the executive officer position over the Office of Latino Affairs and the Office on the Status of African Americans. Corey added that she would send the position announcement to the commissioners electronically.

Director Wong added that DHR recently finished strategic planning at the department level and that DHR is close to getting performance level measures approved with the Department of Management.

Office on the Status of Women update

Corey gave an update on the activities within the Office on the Status of Women since the commission last met in August. Corey stated that the CAS division is also going

through a strategic planning process and has decided to focus on four specific initiatives in the coming years:

- Increased language access
- Increased civic engagement and participation
- Enhanced engagement with the Department of Human Rights in our communities
- Improved educational and leadership connections with youth

Corey stated that CAS is currently deciding how the offices will measure progress. She added that she will have an update on the CAS strategic planning process at the next commission meeting, including which of the four initiatives she will be coordinating with other CAS staff.

Corey added that she sent a letter, the Friends' Talent Bank brochure, and the ICSW's guide "*Recruiting Gender Balanced Boards and Commissions: A Guide for Cities and Counties*" to officials in more than 200 cities and all 99 counties in Iowa to let them know that the Office on the Status of Women, the ICSW and the Friends of the ICSW are resources for recruiting more women to boards and commissions. She sent the first batch of these letters in late September and will send the last batch during the next several weeks.

Corey stated that she will be presenting to the American Association of University Women (AAUW) – Waverly and Cedar Falls chapters on October 15th. The title of that presentation is "Pay Inequity – It's a Fact: The Realities behind Unequal Pay & Strategies for Achieving Equality."

Peters disseminated information to the group about a speaker who may be of interest to the commission, Heidi Shierholz, PhD. Dr. Shierholz presented on the Iowa State University campus on October 5 about "Wage Inequality: Why It Matters and What to Do About It."

Carnahan added that we always hear the statistics regarding pay inequity, but we never hear what to do about it.

Iowa Criminal Justice Summit update

Commissioner Gudenkauf gave an update on the Iowa Criminal Justice Summit he attended on October 1st as a representative from the commission.

Gudenkauf stated that it was wonderful to hear from both those that were in the criminal justice system and the safety officers from the other side of the system. Gudenkauf added that several presenters talked about the disparities that exist and how going to prison can affect a former inmate for the rest of his or her life, such as not being able to vote or get a job.

DHR Board member (ex-officio) Representative Phyllis Thede also stated that she attended the summit.

Discussion with DHR Board ex-officio member Representative Phyllis Thede

Representative Phyllis Thede from Bettendorf attended the meeting on behalf of the DHR board ex-officio members. She currently serves with Senator Rita Hart as a legislative liaison to the DHR board.

Chair Peters went over the duties of the ICSW commissioners in the Iowa Code for Representative Thede. She asked how commissioners can best be effective within these specific duties.

Representative Thede stated that the Iowa legislature uses the 2010 census as a blueprint for Iowa in that more people of color and other groups have graced Iowa over the last several decades. She added that we need to have that awareness clearly in mind as we think about change. Representative Thede stated that legislators need to do an impact statement on every piece of legislation that they put forth and that the ICSW could be helpful in providing the data and reports for those statements. Representative Thede added that legislators need to know what is needed in communities throughout the state, such as business needs and the needs of new populations or communities in Iowa.

Carnahan added that one of the problems the commission has had is a matter of timing and stated that we seem to be a “half hour late” in terms of involvement in the legislative process, such as waiting until January or February to advocate for things going on in the legislature.

Representative Thede stated that August, September or October are the best times to have a conversation with legislators and to get people involved in the legislative process. She added that often by January legislation is already drafted in the form of a shell bill, with the possibility of adding to that bill during the legislative process. She added that commissioners can also begin the conversation with others about why specific issues, such as mental health, are important. Representative Thede stated that if the commission was interested in putting together a shell bill, she would work with them to put a bill together before the upcoming legislative session.

Representative Thede added that during a forum she recently attended, a person in the audience stated that we are now in the third generation of kids who are having kids at a young age (some as young as 13). Representative Thede stressed the importance of working together with other groups to offer parenting classes or to give them the resources they need to be successful parents. Thede added that to be effective the commission needs to connect with other community organizations throughout Iowa to reach the statewide population of women and girls.

Gudenkauf added there are many Human Rights commissions in different communities throughout the state and that we need to reach out to those commissions.

Representative Thede also stated that she is a member of the AAUW chapter in the Bettendorf area and we could talk about some of our concerns with them.

Peters added that a few years ago Iowa Caregivers and other groups asked the commission to sign on to their legislation, but suggested the Commission form a policy agenda that is concise.

Representative Thede stated that in the legislature she has noticed it is difficult to make things better for the average worker, such as increasing wages for those workers.

Peters asked how the commission can best have a dialogue with legislators.

Thede stated that it would be more effective to start with legislators first before putting together a policy agenda. The legislators can put something together and come back and ask the commission for its support. She added that as DHR ex-officio board member, she could continue to have the conversation about what specifically ICSW would like to focus on during the next session.

Peters added that DHR, CAS and the ICSW are all are taking a systems approach and a bipartisan approach in their strategic plans. Peters asked if there is the possibility of working with both parties on issues the ICSW would like to work on.

Representative Thede added that there are quite a few partners on both sides of the aisle and she needs to have a conversation about how we can work together to make things happen.

Commissioners thanked Representative Thede for being at the meeting and for her work on behalf of Iowans.

Discussion and vote on proposed 2015-2018 ICSW strategic plan

Commissioners discussed the draft 2015-2018 strategic plan as amended since the August 22nd commission meeting. Commissioners decided to make the following changes to the strategic plan:

- Change the date of the strategic plan from 2015-2018 to 2016-2019 to reflect the work that we will begin in 2016. The “due by” dates will all be moved back by one year because of this change.
- Removed “flexible workplace” and “increase in the minimum wage” from the actions under the goal: “Systems are in place to support and challenge women to reach their full potential and enhance Iowa’s future.”
- Added the words “at home and in the workplace” to “childcare and family supports” under the goal: “Systems are in place to support and challenge women to reach their full potential and enhance Iowa’s future.”

The final strategic plan can be summarized by the following:

- Mission: The ICSW advocates for and leads collaborative efforts that champion the success and well-being of women and girls.
- Motto: "Iowa's commitment to women."
- Vision: Empower Iowa women and girls to achieve their full potential.

Goal #1: Iowa has a statewide coordinated effort to advocate for the needs of women and girls throughout the state.

Strategies and actions:

1. Coalitions are established to identify and address areas of need and opportunities that support the ICSW vision.
 - a. Internal collaborations (other commissions within DHR)
 - b. External collaborations (non-profits, businesses, other state agencies)
2. A communications plan is established that supports coordinated efforts.
 - a. Increase digital media presence
 - b. Communication process and data system
 - c. Efforts need to address negative impressions of women

Goal #2: Systems are in place to support and challenge women to reach their full potential and enhance Iowa's future.

Strategies and actions:

1. Women have greater opportunity for economic stability and career growth.
 - a. Develop initiatives to increase public awareness and gain public support for the following:
 - i. Childcare and family supports at home and in the workplace
 - ii. Increased STEM opportunities for women
 - iii. Pay equity/comparable worth
 - iv. Women-owned businesses
2. Women experience increased safety and well-being.
 - a. Raise awareness about access or lack of access to the following services for women:
 - i. Protective services for victims of assault and abuse
 - ii. Mental health care
 - iii. Health care

Goal #3: The Office on the Status of Women and the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women are structured to enhance and support the commission and the Iowa Department of Human Rights' goals and priorities.

Strategies and actions:

1. Staff and Commissioners have access to resources and have clearly defined responsibilities that support the goals.
 - a. Monthly e-mails from staff regarding requests for help from commissioners, news, etc.
 - b. Feedback and content from commissioners on website, listserv messages, social media and communications from staff
2. Suggestions are provided and processes are in place to address resource gaps.
 - a. Identify resource gaps
 - b. Send suggestions to staff regarding how to address resource gaps
3. Commission members are valued and valuable in achieving the goals.
 - a. Identify areas in which commissioners could get involved
 - b. Form committees to address the areas of action in goal #2a and #2b

Corey went over a work plan she developed to track goals, specific actions related to the strategic plan, the person(s) responsible for each action and the due date. Corey stated that she will use this plan to track progress on the strategic plan.

Corey asked that each commissioner volunteer and be responsible for an issue listed in goal #2. Several commissioners volunteered for areas they were interested in and others told Corey they would think about it and let her know by November 1, 2015.

These issues and their assigned commissioners are the following:

- Childcare and family supports at home and in the workplace
- Increased STEM opportunities for women – commissioner Whisenand
- Pay equity/comparable worth – commissioner Carnahan (Corey will take a lead role)
- Women-owned businesses – commissioner Coonan
- Protective services for victims of assault and abuse
- Mental health care – commissioner Hunt Russian
- Health care

Corey also asked commissioners to e-mail her suggestions of groups the commission could collaborate with by November 1, 2015.

Motion to adopt the strategic plan with the incorporated changes as summarized above and by chair Peters:

Whisenand made motion; Gudenkauf seconded.

Discussion: Carnahan stated he was not in favor of removing minimum wage from goal #2, but other than that he stated approved the rest of the strategic plan.

Aye: 4 (Peters, Gudenkauf, Coonan, Whisenand)

No: 1 (Carnahan)

Feedback from the Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women and the Friends' request

Peters gave an update from the last Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women meeting. Peters stated the Friends group exists to be the support for the commission and its work and is currently going through strategic planning as well. Peters added that the Friends would like a copy of the ICSW final strategic plan and would also like to have a joint meeting with the commission to talk about joint efforts moving forward.

Commissioners agreed to have a joint meeting with the Friends of the ICSW during the Tuesday, January 26th ICSW meeting. Commissioners discussed the following schedule for the January 26th ICSW meeting:

- 8:30 to 10:00 a.m.: commissioners meet with legislators on their own (optional)
- 10 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.: commission meeting (concluding with brown bag lunch with the Friends of the ICSW from noon to 1:00 p.m.)

Corey will draft some needs from the commission for the Friends of the ICSW for the January 26th meeting.

2016 Cristine Wilson protocol

Corey and Whisenand presented the 2016 Cristine Wilson nomination protocol they developed for the 2016 Iowa Women's Hall of Fame.

Coonan suggested that the commission open up the nomination for the Cristine Wilson award to the public. Gudenkauf suggested that this pool of nominations for the Cristine Wilson award should be opened up and refreshed every year, instead of every three years (as the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame nominations are refreshed).

Corey will make changes to the protocol to open up the nomination for the public and will have the nomination form drafted and to the commission for review at the next ICSW meeting.

Discussion of the Women of Achievement Bridge at the Principal Riverwalk in Des Moines

Peters stated that the Principal Foundation, which founded the Women of Achievement Bridge on the Principal Riverwalk in Des Moines, would like to offload the planning and nomination process to the ICSW because of the bipartisan and statewide nature of the commission.

Peters added that the women chosen for this recognition are historical (deceased) and have advanced opportunities in the state and the world. Peters stated that the bridge serves as a prominent way to display their names for the public to see. Peters asked if the commission would be willing to oversee and be the coordinator for the process of selection.

Commissioners Gudenkauf and Coonan suggested this supplements the ICSW's efforts for the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame and having this with the commission would take the politics out of the nomination process.

Peters asked if other commissioners would be willing to form an exploratory committee to have a meeting with the Downtown Community Alliance, who is currently overseeing this process. Several commissioners offered to serve on this committee.

Coonan stated that this would be another way to honor people from outside of the Des Moines area since the commission is statewide.

Adjournment

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

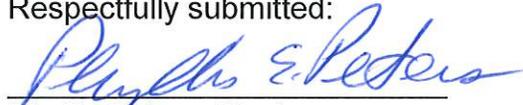
Ayes: all

Nay: none

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 12:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Phyllis Peters, Chair



Kristen Corey, Program Planner

