



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

MINUTES

Iowa Commission on the Status of Women
November 9, 2016
Lucas State Office Building, Room 424
321 E. 12th St, Des Moines, IA

Commissioners present (in-person or by phone)

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

Commissioners absent

Sean Bagniewski
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

Erica Johnson, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
Iowa State Representative Marti Anderson
Kimberly Lanegran, PhD, Coe College

Call to order

Called to order by chair, Phyllis Peters at 2:00 p.m.

Motion to approve the November 9, 2016 agenda:

Coonan made motion; Gudenkauf seconded.
Aye: all
Nay: none
Motion carried.

Motion to approve minutes from August 20, 2016 with the following addition on page 2 in the paragraph before "Office on the Status of Women update": "and include the commissioners in the discussion and exchange of information.":

Gudenkauf made motion; Carnahan seconded.
Aye: all
Nay: none

Motion carried.

Public Comment

None.

Presentation: Gender Balance Research

Dr. Kimberly Lanegran, Associate Professor of Political Science at Coe College in Cedar Rapids, presented her research to the Commission related to gender balance on Iowa county and municipal boards and commissions. For her research project, Dr. Lanegran used a mix of interviews with local appointing officials and an analysis of data collected by the Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women and Politics.

Some of the key findings from her research project were as follows:

For counties:

- 1) The higher the percentage of the population with at least a bachelor's degree, the more likely the county's boards and commissions are to be gender balanced.
- 2) Areas with more women elected to the state legislature are more likely to be gender balanced.
- 3) Counties with a larger population size and greater population density are more likely to be gender balanced.

For cities:

- 1) Cities that are more populous and have higher amounts of poverty are more likely to have higher percentages of their boards balanced.
- 2) Cities that have a higher percentage of their population under 18 years of age and have a higher percentage of women residents working are likely to have lower percentages of their boards balanced.

Feedback from interviews with appointing officials:

- 1) Appointing officials usually seek out members; volunteers very rarely come forward without being sought out.
- 2) Several indicated that a decentralized appointment process might lead to less gender balance on boards and commissions.
- 3) Around half of officials interviewed demonstrated a solid understanding of the gender balance legislation, but nearly just as many stated that the gender balance law competes with their desire to have geographic balance on boards and commissions.

Commissioner Gudenkauf asked Dr. Lanegran if while she was interviewing the appointing officials she asked if the well-balanced boards and commissions had shared with her any best practices they used. Dr. Lanegran stated that they had not, but a few

pointed her to their city/county websites and also shared materials the Office on the Status of Women had given to them.

Chair Peters stated that part of the reason the Catt Center was able to collect the data related to local gender balance was due to a grant funded by the Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women, which provided a stipend to a student researcher how gathered data from cities and counties.

Commissioner Carnahan suggested that the Commission ask the legislature to set up a funding stream for the Catt Center to continue to monitor gender balance on local boards and commissions. Several commissioners agreed that this may potentially be a good idea.

Commissioner Gudenkauf stated that part of the reason some communities may have a difficult time recruiting people to serve on local boards and commissions could be due to the number of other opportunities to volunteer that exist. Dr. Lanegran agreed and stated that several interviewees had mentioned that was part of the reason it was difficult to find people to serve.

Presentation: ACLU – Iowa Pregnant Workers Rights Act

Erica Johnson from the Iowa American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and Representative Marti Anderson presented to the Commission on the Iowa Pregnant Workers Rights Act. The bill was proposed to the legislature during the 2016 session.

Representative Anderson explained that she and Senator Chris Brase were approached by firefighters because of the experiences several female firefighters had on the job during their pregnancies. Because of this, Senator Brase introduced the Pregnant Workers Rights Act in the Senate; then the bill moved to the House of Representatives, where it died in committee. Representative Anderson and Erica Johnson stated that they are looking to build a coalition to support re-introduction and passage of the bill during this legislative session.

Commissioner Coonan asked if the point of this legislation is to classify pregnancy as a disability. Representative Anderson stated that it would treat pregnancy differently than as an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and would treat pregnancy as a separate condition.

Commissioner Gudenkauf asked about support of the bill from the business community. Johnson stated that there was some interest from the Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce and other business owners who already accommodate pregnant employees.

Representative Anderson explained that the need for a law comes from a group of attorneys who frequently go to court to support women affected by the lack of accommodation during pregnancy.

Chair Peters asked if the firefighter who came forward to speak to Representative Anderson could have been given light duty. Representative Anderson stated that she spoke with the other firefighters in the Department and they all would have been willing to take over the female firefighters duties so that she could be on light duty. Representative Anderson stated that the Fire Department in question was interpreting the ADA to apply to pregnancy. She further added that the law change would treat pregnancy as a separate condition (not covered under the ADA), which was how the Iowa Civil Rights Commission was interpreting the law until the Iowa Supreme Court ruling in *McQuiston v. City of Clinton* in late 2015 (failure to accommodate a pregnant female firefighter in Clinton, Iowa).

Iowa Department of Human Rights Update

Monica Stone gave an update from the Department. Stone mentioned that the Division of Community Advocacy and Services (CAS), the division which houses the Office on the Status of Women, is continuing to implement the CAS strategic plan. The CAS strategic plan focuses on four specific initiatives: 1) language and communication access, 2) civic engagement, 3) community connection, and 4) youth leadership.

Stone stated that the division has provided education to more than 1,000 people from different populations about serving on boards and commissions and getting people registered to vote.

Stone also mentioned that she would answer any questions related to the work of the Department and cover the budget during the DHR board meeting agenda item.

Office on the Status of Women update

Kristen Corey gave an update from the Office on the Status of Women since the last time the Commission met in person in August. She mentioned the following accomplishments for the Community Advocacy and Services (CAS) division's Communications and Outreach team since August:

- Use of GovDelivery to develop a new Community Advocacy and Services division newsletter that Corey and DHR staff, Sonia Reyes-Snyder, will draft for the division and send out quarterly.
- Work on implementing a Facebook page for the Office on the Status of Women/Community Advocacy and Services division that may go live within the next several months.
- Development of a communications plan for the CAS division for the next several years, which includes setting up measures to track engagement and outreach.

She also covered several other initiatives the Division is working on, such as being in the development phase of several summits which will be held to encourage more of

Iowa's population to serve on local boards and commissions; as well as youth initiatives planned for 2017.

Corey informed the Commission that she has been traveling more than usual throughout the past several months to meet with various women's organizations throughout the state and to attend several statewide conferences as a representative for the Department and the Office. She also is in the planning phase for Capitol Girls and the Write Women Back into History contest.

Corey mentioned that she was able to attend the Way Up Conference in Coralville on November 3rd to accept a certificate from the Way Up Conference on behalf of the Commission, which was one of the original founders of the Way Up Conference (a network of women who work in various positions at Iowa colleges and universities).

DHR Board Report

Elizabeth Coonan, the Commission's representative on the DHR board, gave an update from the October DHR board meeting. Coonan stated she had called in to the meeting and was unable to hear most of the meeting.

Coonan stated that Dr. Mary Chapman came to talk about the work she is doing with Opportunity Nation. She then deferred to Monica Stone for discussion on submission of the Department's annual report and budget.

Stone stated that the Department will be submitting a status quo budget, as requested of the Department. She added that the Department has been operating under a status quo budget since 2010. Over the last two years, the Department has managed the budget cuts with position vacancies. Stone added that a status quo budget again this year will have a staff impact within the Department and the Division of Community and Advocacy Services (CAS). She stated that predicting what that is going to be is difficult because the Department is not entirely sure what will happen with the budget.

Stone added that the Department makes its budget presentation to the Governor on November 29th.

Peters asked if the budget was something the appropriations committee would delve into and possibly amend, and if once the budget is passed, would CAS see a reduction in CAS staff after July 1st.

Stone added that the CAS budget and the budget for the Department's Central Administration go through the legislature's Administration and Regulation committee, which goes through at the end of the legislative session. The Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning is in the Criminal Justice committee and goes through the session at a different time. She added that if there are cuts to staffing, CAS could potentially see those after July 1st.

Stone stated that once the Governor's budget is final, Corey and Stone will share it with commissioners since it is public information.

Peters asked Coonan and Stone if there were any commissioners at the DHR board meeting who raised questions about what the budget the Department is submitting means.

Stone answered that there was one commissioner from Deaf Services who opposed the budget. She added that he didn't talk about it at the meeting, but she thought that his intention was to say he thinks the Department can do better than submitting a status quo budget.

Stone stated that the Department is creating and holding a legislative training session for the Latino Affairs Commission on November 30, and added that there are other seats at the table if commissioners from other commissions want to come.

Representative Anderson stated that our Department may be able to get the Legislative Services Agency to come over and give a presentation on the legislative process.

Stone stated that it is helpful for commissioners to know what the Department is being asked during the budget process. She added that influencing legislative actions is one of the things commissioners can do.

Report and discussion: Legislative Committee proposal

Peters stated that at the August 2016 Commission meeting, two different committees were formed – commissioners Bagniewski, Carnahan and Peters expressed interest in serving on the legislative committee; commissioners Whisenand and Gudenkauf expressed their interest in serving on the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame Solutions Council committee.

Peters added that since August the legislative committee has focused on a few different issues.

Issue focus #1:

The first is related to the cliff effect as it relates to childcare assistance in the state of Iowa. Peters stated that in some cases, if the income of a parent goes up \$.30/hour, that parent can lose thousands of dollars in childcare assistance because of the slight increase in pay.

Iowa's current eligibility for childcare assistance is set at 145% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). Many states set the level at 200% of the FPL or above.

Peters stated that the committee worked with Iowa Policy Project (IPP) to get data related to the cliff effect in Iowa. Commissioners Carnahan and Peters met with the IPP in Iowa City in October.

Peters added that when childcare assistance drops, parents can lose money by moving ahead and advancing. Peters pointed out that a few weeks ago she saw an article on steps that Wal-Mart has taken to make a positive change by offering more pay for their workers. She stated the article reported that Wal-Mart saw amazing changes right away – it made a lot of difference in boosting morale and in customer satisfaction. She added that with the current basis for receiving childcare assistance, if some employees were to get an extra increment in pay, they would lose their childcare assistance in its entirety, not in a graduated way.

Peters added that the committee also met with the Iowa Child and Family Policy Center where the committee learned about OpportUNITY, which is organized by the United Way of Central Iowa. OpportUNITY has a list of organizations all working toward a specific action plan to reduce poverty in central Iowa (including the Iowa Department of Human Rights). One of those action plans includes reducing the cliff effect.

Peters stated that the legislative committee recommends that the Commission put the Cliff Effect issue on its list of legislative priorities for the year. The plan is for the Iowa Policy Project and supporters to ask the legislature and the Governor to increase eligibility levels to 200% of the FPL and include small step decreases in benefits as an individual receives increases in salary or household income.

Coonan asked what the significance is around the 200% of the FPL. Peters stated that she wasn't sure.

Coonan also asked how long the childcare assistance stretches. For example, are parents eligible throughout the child's life (until the child reaches 18)? Peters stated that she wasn't sure and asked commissioners if they would be interested in a presentation from the Iowa Policy Project on the proposed changes to the program. Commissioners indicated they would be interested in receiving more information.

Coonan asked where the funds for the program would have to come from. Stone stated that state dollars would have to make up the cost because the childcare assistance program in the state of Iowa is administered by the Iowa Department of Human Services.

Stone stated that the Division of Community Action Agencies within the Iowa Department of Human Rights does a lot of work in this area as part of its focus to move whole families away from poverty. Stone stated that she would be happy to get staff from the Division of Community Action Agencies to answer the Commission's questions.

Commissioners agreed a presentation from the Division of Community Action Agencies was a good idea, and asked to have a phone presentation scheduled before the next Commission meeting.

Issue focus #2:

After hearing the presentation from Erica Johnson from the ACLU and Representative Marti Anderson on the Iowa Pregnant Workers' Rights Act, Peters asked if the Commission would like to be on record as supporting the Act.

Issue focus #3:

Peters asked if the Commission wants to be work in any advocacy posture for the Community Advocacy and Services division within the Iowa Department of Human Rights after hearing about the state of the CAS budget.

Stone explained that a status quo budget this year will mean we will have staff impacts. Specifically, the Division of Community Advocacy and Services would have to start consolidating how it has staff represent its different populations (i.e., Native Americans, Women, African Americans, Asian and Pacific Islanders, Latinos, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Persons with Disabilities).

Carnahan asked how much more the CAS division needs to be adequately staffed.

Stone stated that to keep current staff and cover basic operating expenses, the CAS division would need a little more than \$94,000. If the CAS division decided to be able to be in different places in the state, the division would need more than that for a travel budget. For the division's current travel budget, 80% of the travel budget goes to paying for commissioner travel. For staff, the division has a very limited travel budget. If the CAS division thinks that investing in programming is good and believes it is valuable to expand youth leadership initiatives, civic engagement initiatives and do more outreach and communication as a division, those costs are additional increases to the budget. Stone added that different people have different definitions of what adequate means.

Stone added that if the Governor recommends a status quo budget, the Department will support the Governor's recommendation. The Revenue Estimating Council has predicted that the budget does not look rosy, so the Department of Management is trying to reign in the entire state's budget. Stone said she would be surprised if the Iowa Department of Human Rights would get a bigger piece of the budget because then the state would have to figure out a way to take the money from somewhere else.

Peters asked if it was better to talk to legislators individually or as a Commission. She added that when costs go up and budgets do not, the Department does not have the resources to do what it needs to do.

Gudenkauf stated that he wanted to note that there would be potential loss of staff, but also that the loss of a travel budget was concerning.

Stone further explained that the budget has remained the same since around 2010, but costs have continued to increase (i.e., staff salaries and benefits, IT time, rent, etc.). Each year since 2010, the Department has had to look through the budget and cut programs and extras that were not 100% necessary. This year, the division has

nowhere left to cut. Stone added that to balance the budget last year, the CAS division held open the vacancy for the previous CAS division administrator. The CAS division also held open the Latino Affairs executive officer position for a little while so the division could balance the budget. In summary, for the past several years, instead of having to look at personnel changes, the CAS division had two people leave.

Stone stated that she is actively looking at Federal agencies and grants to consider grant funding for the CAS division. She added that there are not a lot of agencies in the state that get a formula grant, such as the weatherization program within the Division of Community Action Agencies (in the Iowa Department of Human Rights). She stated that the type of grant funding the CAS division would potentially be eligible to receive would not be in a formula grant situation. She added that it would be difficult to plan for the future with a non-formula grant.

Peters asked if the Commission would want to make it an issue focus for the Commission to work in cooperation with other CAS Commissions to seek an increase in the CAS budget.

Gudenkauf added that he thinks the Commission needs to make note that there has been a seven year status quo budget and the executive body needs to make an adjustment.

Coonan added that budget decision-makers may continue to fund at status quo unless the Commission can show them the detrimental effects of a continued status quo budget.

Peters asked if other agencies have experienced some growth in their budgets.

Stone stated that there have been some increases – for example, the Iowa Department of Human Services asked for an increase due to new Federal mandates. Other agencies have received small increases, such as education funding within the Iowa Department of Education.

Peters added that with Iowa's changing population, service needs and demands are growing because of a more diverse population.

Peters added that if the Commission focused on the first two issues, the Commission could work in conjunction with other partners. If the Commission decided to work on the CAS budget, the Commission could work with other commissioners within the CAS division.

Carnahan added that if the Commission decided to advocate for an increase in CAS budget that Stone could give the Commission the data, but couldn't herself ask for more money. He added that it would be up to commissioners to ask for more money for the CAS division.

Coonan asked if the Commission needed to determine what items it could move the needle on. She added that if the Commission is going to put effort into something, it would be good to ask for something that is doable.

Peters added that commissioner Bagniewski also threw out the idea of working on the issue of untested rape kits and the committee talked to Representative Marti Anderson to see if anything was being done. Peters stated that Representative Anderson indicated something was happening at the Federal level to address this issue. Carnahan added that he talked to legislators in his area about the untested rape kits, and he reported that they also thought there was a fix underway at the Federal level.

Motion to adopt these three areas as the Commission's legislative and policy focus with the understanding that the legislative committee will further discuss how to refine the proposal in an actionable way and decide on who the Commission should present it to.

Whisenand made motion; Carnahan seconded.

Aye: all

Nay: none

Motion carried.

Status update: Hall of Fame Solutions Council task group

Commissioners Whisenand, Gudenkauf, and Peters recently met with Monica Stone to further refine the idea for the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame Solutions Council. Stone explained the idea for the Solutions Council is to bring together members of the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame and DHR commissioners to address various human rights related issues. She added that members and commissioners would be invited to volunteer for the Council and identify what they could do on one agreed-upon issue in one year.

Stone presented a proposal for the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame Solutions Council to the Commission. She explained that members and commissioners can choose the level of their involvement with the Council, and pick whether they would like to be a leader or keep track of what's going on. She added that the Council would be facilitated by the Iowa Department of Human Rights and the Department would be available for expertise as needed.

Commissioner Coonan commented that the proposal makes a lot of sense.

Peters asked if there is any action needed from the Hall of Fame Solutions Council committee before moving forward. Stone answered that if the Commission is in agreement that they would like to move forward, the Department can refine the proposal and set some dates and start reaching out to Iowa Women's Hall of Fame members and commissioners.

Stone added that at the end of the day, the Department will have the expertise available to facilitate the Council even if staff is cut. The Solutions Council is about both creating a solution and also creating a buzz.

Stone added that the Department would like feedback on the design and content for communication pieces to market the Council. Stone further explained that she also needs the Commission's help in getting information out to members of the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame and other commissioners, and would like commissioners to be part of the recruiting process.

Status of Iowa Women of Achievement Bridge (project of The Principal Financial Group and Des Moines Riverwalk)

Peters provided a status update on the Iowa Women of Achievement Bridge. She stated that she is waiting to hear from the groups that make decisions regarding the financing of the Iowa Women of Achievement Bridge. The groups have asked if there is interest from the Commission to put a process in place for the nomination and selection aspects of the recognition, and discussions are underway with entities in Des Moines about who will physically take care of the bridge.

Other updates and/or announcements

Carnahan mentioned that he asked about Catt Center funding earlier in the meeting and asked if the Commission wanted to pursue that as part of the Commission's legislative agenda. Peters mentioned that funding for the Catt Center research was funded through the Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women, and she would ask for the financial total of the grants previously made by the Friends to fund the research.

Carnahan added that the Commission could ask if it is possible to earmark money to dedicate to Catt Center funding for gender balance research/intern. Peters added that the legislative committee will explore this further.

Peters asked the Commission about setting up a future Commission meeting/phone call to discuss/have a presentation about the cliff effect. Gudenkauf suggested it would be helpful to have someone from the state who administers the childcare assistance program present. Peters answered that she will ask Monica to enlist a presenter from state government side (earlier in the meeting Monica had mentioned Community Action office) Peters will set up a 'lunch and learn' for this presentation (over phone/webinar).

The Commission also set the next in-person Commission meeting for Thursday, January 12th from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The location is to be determined – Corey will find a place off the State Capitol complex to meet since the legislature will be in session. The lunch and learn will be scheduled prior to the January 12th Commission meetings.

Adjournment

Carnahan made motion to adjourn. Whisenand seconded the motion.

Aye: all

Nay: none

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.