



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

**MINUTES**  
**Iowa Commission on the Status of Women**  
**November 12, 2014**  
**Lucas State Office Building**  
**321 E. 12<sup>th</sup> St., Des Moines, IA 50309**

**Commissioners present**

Phyllis Peters, chair  
Tom Carnahan  
David Gudenkauf  
Sherill Whisenand

**DHR/ICSW staff**

Heidi Smith, Deputy Director, Iowa Department of Human Rights  
Sanjita Pradhan, Executive Officer, Office on the Status of Women  
Kristen Corey, Program Planner, Office on the Status of Women

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

Anna Clymer  
Florine Swanson

**Call to order**

Call to order by chair Phyllis Peters at 9:35 a.m.

**Introductions of commissioners, staff and guests**

Two guests announced their presence on the phone:

- Florine Swanson from Wright County, who is working on the gender balance project and with Vision 2020 (thru Drexel University, a national initiative)
- Ana Clymer, from United Way of East Central Iowa in Linn County

Chair Peters asked both guests if they wanted any time on the agenda. Clymer mentioned she just wanted to listen in. Swanson said she would like to talk during gender balance project portion of the agenda.

**Approval of minutes from August 23rd meeting**

Peters asked the commission if there were any revisions to the agenda from the August 23rd, 2014 meeting.

Whisenand observed one minor typo error on the second to the last page – she suggested correcting commissioner Hunt Russian’s last name where a typo appeared. Corey agreed to make this correction.

**Motion to approve the minutes with the typographical revisions:**

Chair Peters requested a motion to approve the minutes from August 23. Commissioner Whisenand made the motion to approve the minutes. Gudenkauf seconded the motion.

Aye: all

Nay: none

Motion carried.

**Department of Human Rights (DHR) update/DHR Board update**

Chair Peters introduced DHR Deputy Director, Heidi Smith. Smith stated it has been quiet in DHR due to legislators not being in session. Smith added that she is the process of hiring for the open Deaf Services position, and has hired two part-time AmeriCorps staff, who will primarily help with youth events including Capitol Girls and Write Women Back into History.

Since commissioner Coonan, DHR board representative from the ICSW was absent, Smith gave an update for the DHR board. Smith informed the commission that the board has discussed having a whole day event on Feb 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The schedule for Feb. 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015 will be the following:

- 7-9 a.m.: all divisions of the Department of Human Rights (and commissions) have tables at the rotunda to present jointly to legislators
- 9 a.m.-noon: if each commission chooses to have a commission meeting on this date, they can vote to hold a commission meeting during this time period
- noon – 1: lunch
- 1-3 p.m.: DHR board meeting
- 3-5 p.m.: DHR open house (in the Lucas Bldg., Dept area)

Commissioner Gudenkauf asked if we did something like this last year. Smith informed the commission that we hosted a DHR-wide legislative social on the rotunda and also had an open house, but on separate dates.

Gudenkauf mentioned it was a good experience, and that commissioners were able to meet with many legislators and the Lt. Governor.

Smith stated that for commissioners who are travelling from outside of the Des Moines area, it is a long day.

Whisenand asked what would be a good sense of time commitment for the commissioners and that going forward in the future we could consider if this needs to be an all-day event. She asked what would be the greatest value that would come from that event - for office staff, commissioners and legislators.

Smith informed that this is the first time we are doing it this way and would like to receive as much feedback as possible from all participants. Smith gave an example of how the vice president of Casey's attended our open house one year and as a result of that Casey's ended up making a donation to some of the youth programs.

Corey stated that the commission had previously voted to have a commission meeting on Feb 11<sup>th</sup> – this would involve the commission voting to move its February meeting date to Feb. 26<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioners Whisenand and Gudenkauf stated that they like the idea of moving the meeting in February to Feb. 26<sup>th</sup>.

Peters clarified that these events have been happening independently in the past, but this is just bringing everything together on the same day. Peters also asked about parking. Smith informed the commission that parking is one of the biggest concerns so far.

Corey informed the commission that she has reserved the Community College Board of Trustees building on Court Ave. in Des Moines in case we need that meeting room for our commission meeting on Feb. 26<sup>th</sup>. Whisenand informed the commission that there is a good room at the Secretary of State's office which she could help the commission reserve.

Peters asked who the audiences are that we are trying to target for the open house and if this will create more problems for parking.

Carnahan added that with this kind of event we get a lot of one-on-one time with legislators which is a good thing - it is not always clear or easy to judge the value that comes from this. Whisenand asked what the commissioners' responsibilities will be.

Peters mentioned we can take action to agree to adjust the date for our next commission meeting. Gudenkauf suggested that we add some logistics information to the discussion such as parking.

**Motion to move the commission meeting to Feb. 26th**

Gudenkauf made a motion to move the commission's scheduled meeting date from Feb. 11<sup>th</sup> to Feb 26<sup>th</sup>. Carnahan seconded the motion.

Aye: all

Nay: none

Motion carried.

Smith informed the commission that the DHR board has chosen to focus its legislative agenda on one priority item, which is disproportionate minority incarceration.

Peters asked if Smith could send some information to the commissioners on the issue. Corey will send some background information on this.

### **Office on the Status of Women report**

Corey placed a written report in all commissioners' packets. Peters asked if any commissioners had comments and/or questions related to the office report.

Gudenkauf commended the website updates. He also mentioned that he has been monitoring the website on a regular basis and he is very happy that the website is maintained and updated.

Gudenkauf also asked about the RaySociety class that Pradhan and Corey have been involved with. Corey explained that the RaySociety was founded by Governor Robert D. Ray and the main audience of the RaySociety is retired men and women in the Des Moines area. She added that the RaySociety approached office staff for support to create a new class on 'Women in Leadership Roles'. Office staff met with the RaySociety to discuss options and came up with the four topics for a four-part series class:

- 1) Women in education
- 2) Women in politics
- 3) Women in business
- 4) Women in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM)

Gudenkauf asked if this program has any intention of expanding to other areas of the state. Gudenkauf suggested that if it is a good program, we should expand the program beyond the Des Moines area.

Corey informed the commission that at this time, this class will be in the Des Moines area because the RaySociety approached the commission and caters to people in the Des Moines area. Corey suggested we talk further about this in the agenda item, "Partnership opportunities."

### **Friends of ICSW report**

Peters informed the commission that Linda Bisgaard who was on the agenda to give the update for the Friends of ICSW was ill. Peters gave the update for the Friends of ICSW.

Peters stated that Bisgaard asked that she cover three items:

- 1) **Women You Know, Women You Want to Meet:** the Friends of ICSW hosted a "Women You Know, Women You Want to Meet" networking/fundraising event on Oct 20<sup>th</sup>, at the home of Susan Judkins Josten. Peters stated the event was well attended. She added that Susan hosted the event with her daughter Whitney, who brought in a younger demographic. Peters added that fundraising during this event is important because the Friends of ICSW continues to financially support some of the work the office staff do.
- 2) **Iowa Women's Leadership Project (IWLP):** Peters stated that the Friends Board has always participated in the IWLP and is considered one of the core groups involved with the IWLP.

- 3) **Gender Balance Project:** Peters stated that the gender balance project is a key priority for the Friends of ICSW. Peters added that the Friends formed a marketing taskforce and a new branding and outreach plan is underway.

### **ICSW Planning Subcommittee Proposal and Discussion: Summary of Sept. 27<sup>th</sup> and Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> task group sessions**

Peters gave the commission some background on the She Matters report (which came out of the Iowa Women's Leadership Project). Peters stated that a larger report was published first, and it was condensed. She added that the IWLP is currently updating the report, narrowing the focus to six issue areas, and assigning various partners from around the state to work on each issue. The six key issues are:

- 1) Economic self-sufficiency/security
- 2) Pay equity
- 3) Leadership
- 4) STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)
- 5) Violence/safety
- 6) Women-owned businesses

Each organization involved in IWLP agreed to work on one of the six issues. Peters added that a report is being compiled with a summary of each issue, updated data and it will also list action steps for: 1) businesses, 2) individuals, 3) nonprofit organizations, 4) educational institutions, and 5) elected officials.

Peters added that each organization is working on a topic and is responsible for developing a strategy to address each of the topics. She added that the report will be finalized and presented to legislators in February. However, the report also needs to be shared out in communities. We need to identify contacts, and partners in our work to promote gender balance on local boards and commissions.

Peters stated that Hunt Russian had given the commission planning subcommittee a blueprint outreach proposal for commissioners which was in draft form and was not discussed during the last planning subcommittee meeting due to time constraints.

Carnahan asked if there was a law that was passed that was to take effect in various stages (Iowa Code 69/gender balance law). Peters stated that the law took effect on January 1, 2012.

Carnahan informed the commission that he reviewed the numbers from the Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women and Politics data that Peters provided to the commission at the last meeting and it struck him that there were some very low numbers in his area of the state (such as 5% in Eldridge). Carnahan suggested that commissioners meet with the mayor of each of these communities and maybe take a threshold (such as 30%) and ask each mayor/city/county representative what their plan is to increase gender balance and how the commission can help as a resource.

Peters and Whisenand stated that this was one of the strategies discussed in the outreach plan Hunt Russian drafted. Peters asked if the discussion could be held for inclusion in the “gender balance project” agenda item.

Peters informed the group that after the first planning subcommittee meeting, Corey provided the subcommittee with a draft of ICSW 2015 issues and public policy priorities that the subcommittee had discussed at the first meeting. Corey stated the planning subcommittee decided to try to align the priorities with the issues laid out in the latest draft of the She Matters report and asked if the commission had any comments or anything else added or changed.

Peters stated that each department within state government has a policy advisor; therefore it may be a good idea to develop a list of priorities that office staff can monitor.

Gudenkauf complimented the priority document stating that it was very organized and well presented. Gudenkauf also mentioned that he didn't see anything in the priority document mentioning the protection of elderly women. Gudenkauf also stated that the Iowa CareGivers came to speak to the commission at prior meetings but he hasn't seen the commission do much in this area. Gudenkauf also made the point that the commission has to find solutions to work with young women. Gudenkauf brought up the equity issue with closing the Toledo facility for young women, while leaving the young men's facility open in Eldora. He stated that we as a commission need to provide oversight for these issues. He added that he knows there are other departments who work closely on these issues, but sees it as our job as commissioners to provide oversight to these issues and suggest remedies. Gudenkauf added that some Iowa nursing homes are in trouble - we need to have a focus on the elderly, as well as young women who are at high risk.

Corey mentioned that as she developed the policy planning document, she struggled with finding how and where to fit in all of the issues, and when it was compiled, she, too, noticed that young women were not specifically mentioned. As office staff, Corey mentioned that she and Pradhan sit on the Iowa Task Force for Young Women and young women/girls are a part of our work.

Corey asked Gudenkauf and the commissioners for a suggestion on wording to specifically mention young women and elderly in our 2015 issues and policy priorities document.

Peters mentioned that this was a critical issue and thanked commissioner Gudenkauf for bringing it up. Peters also mentioned that during the last legislative social legislators asked, “What are your priorities?” and the commission didn't have anything to give to them, so our goal is to have talking points to focus on priority issues ICSW supports.

The commission and staff suggested that priority #4 in the draft document (Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) could be reworded to = “Proactive protection and

oversight for Iowa women and girls” and have young women and elderly women as sub-headings.

Peters mentioned that the 2015 issues and policy priorities document is not only for legislators - it could also be used to bring issues to the attention of news groups; it could be used to write white papers; etc. Peters asked if it would be more manageable to take off one of the topics which is already being taken care of by other organizations/groups, such as women in business.

Whisenand added that she didn't think that we need to take anything off, women in business is important. Whisenand asked if there is any way we can add one more point and not take anything off of the list.

Gudenkauf agreed with Whisenand and stated that he reads a lot about how women-owned businesses rank lowest in Iowa and believes it is a key issue for women in Iowa.

Whisenand stated that the commission is a catalyst and connector, so if we are going to communities to talk about the importance of gender balance and having women in leadership positions, then it is important to be involved in this issue.

Carnahan agreed with Whisenand and Gudenkauf on women in business; he also talked about challenges for women in business and how it is a cycle. He added that everything on our draft priorities document is interconnected in some way.

Peters suggested going back to the Iowa Caregivers Association and ask them how the commission can support their work, what they need from us, and what partnership they are looking for.

Corey informed the commission that office staff participates in the Young Women's Task Force and the task force's biggest issue with closing of the Iowa Juvenile Home is the fact that there are no places for these girls in Iowa, but there are places that exist for young men.

Gudenkauf added that we need to work on advocacy for young girls to help them get the help they need.

Corey asked if the commission could complete and approve this policy summary before the next formal commission meeting on Feb. 26, which is a time when we will be meeting with legislators,.

Gudenkauf suggested that since the commissioners discussed revisions in the policy document, the changes could be referred to staff to re-draft and send to the commission by email for review.

Corey agreed to rework the document to add the new points about young and elderly women.

Carnahan suggested re-ordering the four priorities and prioritizing as a hierarchy.

Peters summarized the discussion:

- Corey will review and add the new items discussed in the meeting
- She will reorder the hierarchy (#1: Proactive protection and oversight for Iowa women and girls, #2: Pay equity and women in poverty; #3: Women in leadership; #4: Women in business)
- Corey will send out the draft document to the commission and the commission will have a conference call to approve the document by phone
- The point of this will be to map our policy agenda and define what we support and what we are going to advocate for

Whisenand suggested that the commission finalize this document before the holidays.

Carnahan suggested this policy document should be ongoing and at least a two-year priority.

Whisenand mentioned we should add 2015 instead of 2015-2016 just to add some urgency and not make it look like it is ongoing and that these issues are not urgent.

Peters recapped that at this time we need to finalize this policy agenda, approve it as a commission, and share it with partners.

### **Iowa Women's Leadership Project action plan to address top issues; status of reports and 2015 proposed activities**

Peters asked the commission if the name of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women should be on the list of organizations on the back of the new She Matters report. She added that at this time, the Iowa Department of Human Rights is listed, but not specifically ICSW.

Gudenkauf mentioned that he is very uncomfortable with that because we are a government agency and not a nonprofit.

Carnahan asked if this means that we are in agreement on all the issues within the She Matters report.

Whisenand mentioned that she is in agreement with Gudenkauf about the legality of putting our name on the She Matters report.

Pradhan explained that the commission has been involved in this coalition (Iowa Women's Leadership Project) from its beginning, including active involvement by DHR Director San Wong.

Peters explained how community members tend to ask what the commission is doing on the issues presented in the She Matters report and if they support it. Peters asked if maybe it is better to put the Office on the Status of Women/IDHR to explain our setting.

Gudenkauf asked what the IWLP is.

Peters explained that the Iowa Women's Leadership Project (IWLP) consists of different women's organizations throughout the state that have formed a coalition to support each other and work on the specific issues mentioned in the She Matters report.

Corey explained that office staff participates on different task forces or coalitions because we are the state-funded women's advocacy organization for the state. She added that IWLP participation is like the staff being on different task force entities.

### **Motion to include the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women name on the She Matters report**

Carnahan motioned to include the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women's name on the She Matters report and as a participant in the coalition. Gudenkauf seconded the motion.

Peters restated the motion to approve the use of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women as a name and participant in the coalition.

Aye: all

Nay: none

Motion carried.

Peters informed the commission that on Feb 17th all of the coalition members from the IWLP will be on the Iowa State Capitol rotunda endorsing/sharing the updated She Matters report with legislators. This gives the commission some visibility on the 17th.

Gudenkauf asked if this coalition has members across the state. Peters explained that there are members who call in from various parts of the state. Maxine Lampe calls in from Storm Lake, Doreen Hayek calls from Cedar Falls, etc.

Peters added that the next IWLP meeting's agenda will include a roll out plan for February 17th. Commissioners will be very helpful in bringing this report to their own communities.

Corey reminded the commission that our proposed priorities are similar to the priorities in the top issues in the She Matters report.

### **Gender Balance Project – update**

Peters informed the commission that the data Carnahan was referring to earlier in the meeting (page 5-6 of the minutes) was the data from the Carrie Chapmen Catt Center for Women and Politics. She referred to the column where it says when the data was received - most of data was collected in 2013 and 2014.

Peters also talked about the Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women's talent bank database and passed out a printed handout for reference. Peters informed the commission that one of the uses of this database is to use this as a tool when meeting with mayors or city/county officials to point them to a resource where they can find a database of women who are interested in serving on a local board or commission.

Peters added that the Friends of ICSW has a marketing proposal out to develop a marketing kit. Peters suggested that office staff could be a hub of information for cities/counties looking for candidates and also for women who are looking to serve on boards and commissions. Peters asked what commissioners could do to make sure more women serve on local boards and/or commissions.

Peters presented some research she has done on her own by looking at some city/county websites. Peters pointed out that some cities and counties have listed on their website the need for their boards and commissions to be gender balanced. She gave the example that on the city of Des Moines' website this information is easily accessible; however on Polk County's website, the information is not currently accessible. Peters suggested that doing outreach to cities and counties could be something the commission wants to 'divide and conquer.'

Gudenkauf suggested the possibility that some smaller counties may operate in ways to stay not up-to-date with website processes for online application processes related to local board and commissions. Gudenkauf stated doing this is a good idea, but in rural communities we may need to use other strategies to reach out to those communities. Gudenkauf suggested maybe working with community colleges and other groups on the ground that can encourage women to be on local boards and commissions.

Carnahan suggested each commissioner look at their city/county and give examples of city/county neighbors who are doing well with gender balance.

Peters suggested that the commission give time to Florine Swanson to share her experience. Swanson, a citizen guest on this call and at prior Commission meetings, lives in Wright county, a rural area, and she operates a farming business.

Swanson explained that there are only four counties in Iowa that are gender balanced – with two being rural and two urban. Swanson explained that she has visited 17 communities that are gender balanced and has attended all of their meetings to talk about the importance of gender balance. After she finishes her outreach, Swanson stated that she will submit a written report to the commission to provide an update.

Swanson added that most of the city meetings have public comments at the beginning and she always uses a press release ahead of time and distributes that information to members.

Gudenkauf asked Swanson what she thought of his notion of rural counties not being on the Internet as much as in urban areas. Swanson disagreed with Gudenkauf and mentioned that she thinks in today's world most people are on the Internet. She relayed her own example and one of an elderly women in a retirement home who uses the Internet on a regular basis.

Peters asked if commissioners are willing to visit neighboring counties to talk to the leadership in those cities/counties about gender balance. Peters suggested that the planning task force and office staff can put a packet and talking points together and point to resources as needed.

Corey mentioned that this effort could actually be tied into the "Women in leadership" priority in the draft 2015 issues and policy priorities document presented earlier in the meeting.

Peters brought up the fact that in small communities, libraries can be a very important point of contact where marketing information and resource materials can be shared with the public.

Peters asked if the office staff is ok with being the hub/connector of information between candidates who are interested in serving in boards and commissions and being a resource to boards and commissions who are looking for support.

Corey said she is happy to do this and is already doing this for various other types of calls that come into the office.

Carnahan pointed out the boards and commissions database from the Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women and Politics has information on which boards are doing well – and pointed out that women have a good representation on library boards, but are less represented on the planning & zoning boards, utilities boards, etc. which tend to lead to leadership positions later on.

Carnahan agreed to visit a few communities if needed. Gudenkauf asked what the latest database update of the Catt Center data is. Peters said she will follow up and let the commission know.

Smith mentioned that it is an important piece to develop a toolkit for working with women who are interested in running for office to educate and equip them with the information they need, groom them, educate them to get them ready to walk into a planning and zoning commission and be confident.

Peters summarized: Carnahan will visit few counties in his area to visit with key individuals to talk to them about the gender balance project. Corey and the office team will be involved as informational resources (the hub reference earlier). Peters will provide tools as needed.

## **Partnership Opportunities**

Corey explained she gets a lot of calls/inquiries/emails from organizations or individuals asking the commission/office to support them, work with them, and/or partner with them. She presented a few examples and wants to consult with commissioners to get their take on a few of the requests she has received in the last couple of months. Corey referred to the print out she put in the packet for commissioners.

The first example Corey presented was an e-mail from Jean Sinzdak, Director of the Program for Women Public Officials at Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers asking the commission to be listed as an ally of their "Teach a Girl to Lead" program.

Whisenand asked how we would decide something like this. Both Peters and Whisenand asked how it would benefit the commission to be an ally for their program.

Corey explained that they had linked to the ICSW Capitol Girls program on their website and stated that the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers is a well-known, well-respected organization; being listed as an ally on their page would show that the commission supports their work. Corey also pointed out that some of the other state commissions on the status of women (Hawaii, for example) are listed as allies on their website.

Peters mentioned that she doesn't like the word "partnership" in this instance because it implies that we help shape the agenda and are taking an active role. Pradhan seconded the concept.

Whisenand asked if it fits in our mission. Whisenand also mentioned she thinks it is similar to the question to what Gudenkauf brought up related to the Iowa Women's Leadership Project.

Smith mentioned that she can help Corey come up with some criteria to screen requests based on Iowa code, etc. and then share the outcome with the commission.

Corey discussed a second email from Sonya Ashe from the Young Women's Resource Center asking if the commission or the Friends of ICSW will speak at an upcoming leadership conference on gender balance.

Commissioners suggested that when Corey receives questions like this (i.e. an opportunity to speak), that it's good to send it out to the whole commission so that all commissioners have an opportunity to speak/participate.

Corey also shared a third e-mail from Jolene Pfaff, who is interested in collaborating with the commission/office to create short biographies of women in Iowa who have diverse careers/job and use those bios for curriculum for school children.

Peters suggested that Corey put all opportunities together and send as one e-mail instead of different e-mails; should have a speaker's bureau (pair things with people's availability and expertise); also gives permission to Corey to volunteer to speak at different engagements on the commission's/office's behalf.

Peters suggested that it is nice to continue to keep a running list of requests that come in to the office and keep a tally of topics about which we get a lot of calls/requests.

**Public Comments**

Peters asked if any public members were on the call. Both public members had already left the meeting. Swanson shared her comments during gender balance project discussion.

**Adjournment**

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

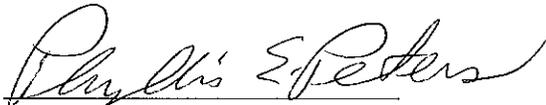
Ayes: all

Nay: none

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Phyllis Peters, Chair



Kristen Corey, Program Planner