

Wyoming Council on Women's Issues

Meeting Minutes

January 4, 2003

Call to Order

Chair Michelle Aldrich called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. on Saturday, January 4, 2003.

Roll Call

Michelle Aldrich, Merna Rierson, Sherrill Heltzer, Diane Moser, Margaret Pilch, Mary England, Marty Coe, Safa Suleiman, and Teresa de Groh.

Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of November 2, 2002, prepared by Sherrill Helzer, Acting Secretary, were discussed.

Margaret noted that she had sent the report for the Legislative Committee by email. Margaret asked the report be included in the minutes. Margaret will send Sherrill a new report to be attached to the minutes. She also said she had some typos to correct.

Mary moved to accept minutes and Safa seconded. Sherrill asked Margaret to send typo corrections. The minutes, with corrections, were approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Michelle mentioned she asked Diane to show percentage expended by categories. Mary asked about the \$81,000 for the Wage Disparity Study and the \$6,000 for travel. Diane explained that the \$6,000 is accounted for in the "Travel in-state" line item; there have not been any charges against this line item because meetings have been by telephone.

Diane summarized the 2003/2004 Biennium Expenditures through 12/31/02 (as produced on 1/2/2003.)

Friend's Account

Marty Coe stated there is \$2,096.14 in the Friend's Account.

Committee Reports

Home & Community

Merna summarized the recent activities of the Home and Community Committee. Merna is actively working with Wyoming Public TV and Radio for Women's History Month. If anyone has ideas for programs and interviews, they are very open to ideas. Please let Merna know.

Mary up-dated the Council on the Woman of Distinction award process. Mary spoke with Girl Scouts and Soroptomists about combining our award with theirs and having the Woman of Distinction during the fall Women's Conference. These groups did not want to change their awards and/or dates.

Diane informed the Council that there will not be any changes in procedure for requesting a Governor's Proclamation regarding Women's History Month. The Council should send a suggested proclamation to the Governor ASAP so that he, and his office, have sufficient time to consider. Merna and Diane will work on a proclamation.

Health

Marty had nothing to report.

Legislative/Education

Safa emailed everyone a list of legislation that WCWI may want to monitor. Regan's safe haven was of interest. There was some discussion of other legislation, but it was agreed that there appeared to be no burning issues with legislation being proposed this session.

Merna up-dated the Council on progress with the Tech Prep Consortium. The recent meeting Merna attended was really good. Although no new high schools have jointed, there are counties, such as Fremont, that have groups of high schools involved. Fremont County is also really encouraging young women into the program. Gillette has a successful program in introducing younger kids to trades. Natrona County's program targets at risk kids and have a waiting list—there is so much demand.

The Consortium has produced videos. Merna has seen a few and they are really good. They are multicultural and show women and men. The Consortium has also received a grant, in part, because of the program WCWI started at the women's prison.

Old Business

1. **T-Shirt & Pins.** Michelle and Diane confirmed that everyone should now have both have a WCWI shirt and name tag/pin.

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2. **501(c)(3) Status.** DaNece was not in attendance to make a report. Michelle postponed this item to the next meeting.
3. **Wage Disparity Study.** Michelle up-dated the Council. There was a meeting yesterday of the Steering Committee. Work is still in progress. There should be a report to the Steering Committee in April. The plan is to give a final report to the legislature by May 1. Michelle reiterated that no information from the study should be used or released until the final report is submitted.

At the recent meeting, the Steering Committee discussed three primary issues. One was wage gap versus wage disparity. There was agreement that the report needs to include definitions so people don't use the terms interchangeably. Mary noted that at the Women's Conference, handouts used by the researchers used gap and disparity interchangeably; Mary expressed a concern that the researchers do not have a clear distinction in their own minds. A second issue discussed was the need to use comparables, i.e., Vermont. The report should look at information/data from states that have similar industries, such as minerals and extraction, and population. The difficulty is that comparable states generally have not done disparity studies; there are states that have done disparity studies, i.e., WI, MN, NY, etc., but they are not closely comparable. Diane noted that John Jackson indicated that looking at these other states could still be instructive and beneficial. Finally, the Steering Committee would like to present a suggested legislation package along with the report that would help address the problem. Whatever came forth from the study could then be acted upon by legislation.

Michelle said one of the suggested outcomes of the study might be establishment of a scholarship program. Mary noted that if they are suggesting scholarships, then they are looking at wage gap and not disparity. The Council discussed the issue and concluded there is a general concern among Council members that the study may address wage gap more than wage disparity. The Council would like to ensure that the study and resulting report addresses wage disparity.

Merna asked if we could get a draft of the study in February? Teresa suggested a letter be sent to the researchers clarifying what WCWI expects: a wage disparity study. The Council discussed its role in the project. Mary suggested a letter be sent to the Steering Committee. Michelle said she would send an email to the Committee expressing the Council's concerns regarding the direction of the study and the necessity of fulfilling the purpose of the legislation. Michelle noted that it is in the interest of the researchers to ensure the final report responds to the legislation.

4. **By-Laws.** Michelle asked if everyone had received her email with the most recent proposed by-laws. The Council then discussed proposed by-law changes by Article, as summarized below. After discussion, Michelle said she would make the agreed upon changes and send out an amended set of by-laws to be acted on next meeting.

Article I: Michelle noted that reference to director is right out of statute. Margaret said the reference to the statute needs to change to WY 9-12-502(b). Discussion ensued

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regarding adding specifics from the statutes regarding members. A decision was made to simply reference the statute.

Article II: Margaret again noted the necessary change in reference to statute WY 9-12-502(b). Margaret withdrew her suggestion for amending this Article.

Article III: Margaret's suggested amendment regarding the filling Council vacancies was discussed. Some council members noted that Robert's Rules of Order addresses this issue. Margaret withdrew her suggestion for amendment.

Article IV: The Council agreed that Section 1 should establish regular meetings six times per year and that Section 3 should establish a quorum as two-thirds of the membership, deleting "or eight members."

Article V: Section 1 was discussed and a consensus was reached that a slate of candidates should be presented 30 days prior to the election meeting (winter) meeting and that this provision should be added to the by-laws. Section 2 was discussed and a consensus was reached that most of the language was redundant or created confusion. All language in Section 2 should be eliminated except the last sentence.

Article VI: The Council discussion of this Article concluded that Section 1 should provide for the by-laws to be amended by a 2/3 vote of the Council membership (not 2/3 of the members present.) Discussion also concluded that Section 2 should provide for impromptu amendments with a unanimous vote of the Council membership present (rather than the entire Council.)

Article VII: no amendments to this Article were proposed or discussed.

Article VIII: no amendments to this Article were proposed or discussed.

Article IX: Mary asked that statute reference be added.

5. **WCWI Brochure.** Diane said Aliza is about to issue another draft incorporating requested information. Diane thanked everyone for their work on it. Members asked if there will be a charge for the WBC's efforts? Diane explained that the WBC will charge for the cost of printing and mailing only. Distribution options for the brochure were discussed. It appeared the brochure will likely be ready by the next face-to-face meeting, at which members could take a share of the printed brochures.
6. **Newsletter.** WBC has been working on putting the newsletter together. Members again asked about charges for WBC's work. Diane said the WBC will charge WCWI for the cost for printing and mailing only. Diane then discussed information needs for the newsletter. Aliza has information from the Legislative Committee and will put in information on Tech Prep Consortium as reported by Merna. Diane said it appears that Nina is out of town; can someone put something together for the newsletter for the Health

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Committee? Marty and Safa said they could put something together regarding the information gathered on services (or lack thereof) for eating disorders and the Women's Treatment Advisory Council. Diane said WBC would try to get the newsletter out next week.

A discussion ensued regarding distributing an information packet for legislators. Safa offered to distribute when legislature begins. Michelle will do a cover letter.

Members asked if WBC planned to hold an open house for legislators. Diane said she was not aware of any plans to hold an open house. Michelle asked that Diane let the Council know if WBC was going to do an open house.

7. **Sexual Harassment Brochure.** Michelle summarized an email from DaNece, who was not in attendance, regarding the up-date to the Sexual Harassment Brochure. DaNece thought the information contained in the brochure still relevant and valid, with minor adjustments.
8. **Election.** Michelle recapped the election of officers: Michelle as Chair, Merna as vice-chair, Marty as treasurer and Teresa as secretary. Michelle appreciated having an actual election and hopes that interest in serving on the executive board continues.
9. **Resource Directory.** Margaret is having trouble getting Human Service Directories from each county. Margaret asked each member to go to their local DFS office to see if they have one. Head Start is supposed to produce and distribute it as a "Community Resource Directory." Margaret said there are foundations that are interested in funding this project.
10. **Legal Handbook.** Council members up-dated each other on how they were distributing handbooks and how distribution in general was going.
11. **Health Directory.** Safa has discussed this project with Margaret and they suggest it should be incorporated into Resource directory.

New Business

1. **2003 Women's Conference, Theme discussion.** Michelle noted that no one from the Women's Conference organizers was able to attend this meeting, but that the person who was the main organizer has applied to be on Council. Michelle suggested this item appear on the agenda for next meeting.
2. **2003 Woman of Distinction.** Michelle informed the Council that invitations for nominations will be going out with newsletter. Invitations will also be sent to Chambers of Commerce, Boards of County Commissioners and Town Councils. Mary asked if we are going to present the award at the next Women's Conference? Discussion resulted in

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the Council being undecided at this point. It seems contingent upon how discussions go with the organizers of the Women's Conference.

3. **Council Openings.** Michelle informed the Council that one at-large position is open (Amy's.) Michelle thought the Council needs more members from the northwest part of the state. All at-large positions are currently in Casper and Cheyenne. Discussion established that the Council has positions available in District 9 and one at-large. Thus, someone from the Lander/Riverton area is needed. Teresa suggested that it is not problematic to have at-large positions concentrated in Casper and Cheyenne: because of the legislature and conference concentrations in the same areas, it makes sense to have a few more hands in those areas.
4. **Set Meetings for Year.** Michelle asked the Council for its thoughts on the date of the next meeting? Discussion concluded that the next face-to-face meeting should be in April. As a result, the Council concluded that the next regular meeting should be Feb 1, as an audio conference, and then a face-to-face meeting April 26, in Casper. Michelle requested Council members to please email her items for the next agenda. Merna reminded everyone to join the Consortium.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.