

WYOMING COUNCIL FOR WOMEN'S ISSUES
Minutes of January 19 and 20, 2007 – Cheyenne, WY

Members Attending:

Michelle Aldrich	Kim Capron	de Groh, Teresa
Suzey Delger	Sherrill Helzer	Maureen Neavill
Scarlet Skorcz	Jan Torres	

Members Absent:

Cynthia Chavez-Kelly	Pamela Downing	Merna Rierson
Jenny Ingram	Julie Simon	

Staff Attending:

Diane Moser, WBC Liaison

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 pm by Teresa de Groh.

A. Executive Committee Election:

Michelle moved the secretary cast a unanimous ballot for the slate of officers as submitted in October. The ballot was: Chair – Teresa de Groh; Vice-Chair – Pamela Downing and Secretary – Jan Torres. Sherrill seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Michelle asked for introductions so Maureen Neavill could put names and faces together. Teresa explained that the Council members who were able to do so visited the Wyoming Business Council offices as well as the state legislature earlier in the day. They also met with Patti Burns and toured the Governor's Office.

B. New Member Orientation Packet

The completed packet was distributed to members with the agenda packet. Since all of our publications are on the WCWI website, members discussed whether or not hard copies should be provided. Teresa felt hard copies were easier to absorb and asked they be included, with a copy of the current year budget. Suzey complimented the simple parliamentary procedure that was provided. Diane was asked to include an explanation of the travel request and reimbursement forms and she explained the reimbursement policy is to include actual expenses. If a receipt for any expense is unavailable, a maximum amount of \$15 is allowed.

C. Media Plan

Diane went over the Communications Plan updated from our last meeting, noting key messages were needed for every committee except the Education committee which is "Learn to earn and live in Wyoming." There was some discussion about the need for a key message as a whole since Kim pointed out

we already have both a mission statement and vision. Teresa pointed out that the key messages provide the foundation for the “elevator” speech. We considered “Women Focus – Wyoming Benefits” and decided to think about it overnight. Michelle moved to adopt the Communication Plan with the understanding that it is a fluid document. The plan has been written through 2008 and will need to be updated. The only piece missing is a crisis communication plan. Kim seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

D. Legal Handbook

Sherrill explained that Michelle had finished her half of the handbook and Diane, Kim, and Teresa reviewed it earlier that day. They thought it more efficient to have the Legal Rights & Responsibilities committee meet with Jan and Michelle to go over the final draft. One of the major issues is whether resources should be included. They are listed at the end of each chapter, which are difficult to keep updated. Since Connect.Wyoming has the most current information, it is probably best to refer to that resource. If we don't get it to the Attorney General's Office soon, new laws from the 2007 legislative session will need to be included and we'll experience even more further delay if we don't get it submitted. Once the subcommittee decides about how to reference resources, it was decided that all members do not need to see the draft.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Conventions Schedule/Organizational Membership

Suzey and Scarlet submitted a list of various conferences we might want to have booths at as well as perhaps organizations that we could join. There was some discussion about NACW and the current president, Bonnie Coffey, revitalizing the group but the consensus was to wait and see whether or not this trend continued before joining.

Suzey mentioned that a group called Expanding your Horizons provides grants for low income girls to explore math and science careers and we could perhaps get some funding for our Job Fair. Michelle pointed out that NAPE is the site she used to find presenters for our event. There was some general discussion about our need to affiliate with other organizations. It is beneficial to attend national conventions but the value of membership is an issue. Attending workshops and conferences may provide ideas and information and that may be the extent of our need. It was decided to table the idea until April. Members were asked to take the information provided, look at the websites and see if there are other organizations we've missed. As members find something new, we should let everybody know. Do they have something we can use to make progress on issues in Wyoming? Do they have helpful methods for getting quality health care to rural women? The Institute for Women's Policy Research is another possibility. Scarlet was assigned to research national partnerships for women and family.

B. White Paper Process

We had previously talked about a white paper on quality childcare. Since the legislature is now deciding the issue, there is no need to produce a white paper. To be effective, we need to gather information in a white paper and do the legwork with groups and legislators before the session. Pamela served on the task force and was actively involved in the proposed legislation.

There was some general discussion about the purpose of white papers and Michelle pointed out that white papers just list facts, without making recommendations. Our purpose was to take the top issues from our survey and try to generate interest and movement. As an example, we can't do much to impact the need for health care ourselves but we can point out that is a top issue on our survey. Many problem areas are being addressed (child immunization, open container laws) and perhaps we can assist in getting momentum toward particular issues. If we only monitor bills, we're doing nothing. It was pointed out we can find good solutions from other sources and suggest them. We can be resources – not experts. Maureen pointed out that every one thinks their issues are the most important. We need constant, consistent messages.

When child care was initially discussed at the last session, the enormity of the opposition from homeschoolers was unanticipated. If there had been a voice to counter, it may have made a difference. Teresa said that each committee needs to take a look at the issues survey and suggest possible remedies. The council members talked about how much time, realistically, each of us has. Monitoring legislation may be the best we can do. Kim suggested we drop the white paper idea and continue to create an annual report that informs the Governor about what we've done. We could point out that WCWI created the Job Fair as a direct result of the gender gap study.

There is a feeling about whether issues are being addressed and perhaps we should be bringing them to attention. Teresa feels we should be monitoring to see if anything was being done. Kim suggested we might want to consider a "State of the State of Wyoming Women", issued by the chair, compiling all those statistics related to women. Diane pointed out the Wyoming Business Council is required by statute to report on certain benchmarks and it annually compiles the information that must be reported. Perhaps we could identify benchmarks on wage disparity, how many women go to college, how many lack insurance, etc and summarize them annually. Currently, we do prepare packets for all the legislators, which are then distributed in person by Diane.

C. Process for Task Determination

Equality Initiatives/On Common Ground. Teresa attended the original meeting and Kim attended the August meeting. Kim said the final decision was that the most effective thing that could be done was to start a very specific and targeted marketing campaign in a very loud way. The campaign will focus knowledge on issues. For example – Wyoming is the Equality state? What's up with women's wages? Once attention is brought to an issue, the group will look at fixing it by generating possible solutions. A budget was completed and the Wyoming Women's Foundation and Equipoise have given staff and money to create a document that can be given to possible funding sources. We discussed

whether we could be an in-kind partner as they gather money, hire a coordinator and implement the publicity plan. We can donate money towards research or appoint a member as the liaison between the 2 groups. That member would then make recommendations to the Council, (i.e., give \$\$). The publicity campaign has a budget of about \$200,000 and has raised \$20,000 so far. They are currently writing a position description for a program director. Kim made a motion to give them \$1,000. After reviewing our budget, Suzey seconded the motion and suggested we pay it out of the \$3,000 in professional fees (since we don't anticipate another strategic planning session this biennium.) Motion passed unanimously.

Governor's Summit on Workforce Solutions

This workshop will be in Jackson May 31 thru June 1. The program will feature both presenters and breakout sessions, focused on proposed solutions. WCWI could have a booth but Pamela pointed out the Dept of Workforce Services has not found that as effective as hoped. It would provide a networking opportunity if WCWI could attend. (Pamela joined the meeting at 8:40 pm)

Equal Pay Day

Members discussed what WCWI could do in conjunction with the event, which is April 24, 2007. We could ask for a Proclamation from the Governor or ask women to wear red. The Employment Practices Committee was charged with coming up with ideas and we added the event to the Communication Plan.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

A. The minutes for October 20 and 21 were pulled as were the Employment Practices and Home and Community reports. The motion to approve the remaining items on the consent agenda was made by Michelle, seconded by Kim, and unanimously passed.

Suzey and Maureen pointed out misspelling of their names. Members discussed the differences between narrative and official minutes and Teresa said the two are very similar. Since Roberts Rules of Orders suggests that the minutes should only track motions, there was no need to duplicate. Jan felt that in-depth minutes aid recall and inform readers. Kim moved to use the current narrative form and the motion was seconded by Pamela and passed unanimously. Kim voted to approve the corrected minutes and the motion was seconded by Michelle and unanimously passed.

Michelle pointed out that Summit Award was to the childcare center in Rawlins as the Employment Practices Committee Report was discussed. Michelle moved to accept the report as corrected, Suzey seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

The Home & Community Report had been sent to Diane who read the information from Jenny Ingram. The Women of Distinction applications and cover letter were being mailed. Plans to add Ann Robinson to the Women of Distinction booklet were being made. Jenny plans to review the scoring rubric.

Pam moved to accept the committee report, Scarlet seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

IV. MATTERS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS AND PUBLIC

Legal Rights & Responsibilities – Kim asked for clarification of the purpose of the report and how to indicate there were items that needed to be discussed when the report is put on the consent agenda. Consent agenda items are informational only, according to Teresa and if the Committee Chair has action items, she should request time on the agenda. She said that meeting times should be not be used for basic information. Kim asked if all four committees should be under new business at all meetings. Teresa explained the written report is to let people know what has been going on in each committee.

The meeting was suspended at 8:58 pm, January 19. The meeting was called back to order at 8:03 am January 20, by Teresa de Groh. Sherrill Helzer was not in attendance.

Kim asked about the process of writing a cover letter for the legislators. She was asked to write a letter, as Chair, but the WCWI Chair actually signs it. Kim wondered if it wouldn't be more efficient for the Chair to write the letter. Teresa said it is helpful to have the committee leader write a draft of the letter because that person knows more detail. The purpose of the letter is to cover a packet of information which summarizes the accomplishments over the past year. Currently, Diane sends a copy of last year's letter to the Committee Chair and to Teresa and Kim believes it would be better for the Committee Chair to summarize the highlights and have the WCWI chair compose her own letter.

Educational Opportunities. Michelle reminded members that there was a great deal of reluctance to host the Job Fair last June and it was approved only if there was no cost to WCWI. It was an unqualified success. Pamela talked to a number of presenters who thought it was great. The issue now is whether to sponsor a Job Fair next Fall. There was some discussion about scheduling our Fall meeting at the same time so WCWI members could attend and assist. The community colleges are very anxious to be hosts and appreciate the value. When scheduling the Fair, it is important to avoid conflicts with WHSAA events and to keep in mind that testing occupies most of the spring months at high schools. The problem is that the event will conflict with the Woman of Distinction Award and we have planned to schedule our meetings in the winner's home location. After discussion, the members agreed that the selection can be made at the April meeting with the award being presented in July. After discussion, Pamela moved to present the award in July and the motion was seconded by Michelle. The motion was passed with one member voting no.

Members talked about coordinating the Job Fair with a WCWI meeting. The meeting calendar will be set in April. Western Wyoming College has offered to host the event next year and proposed several dates. The college would prefer a Friday so that interactive demonstrations can be done in the industrial

technology area. The council suggested two dates: November 2 or October 12th. Several suggestions were made to have exhibits in a common area and to charge exhibitors a \$25 booth fee. Members are asked to send suggestions to Michelle and Jan said an on-campus committee has been formed to help with the college planning. The Educational Opportunities Committee will proceed and finalize details when the date is set. We need to find some way to pay for lunch and to purchase supplies. This year, presenters were asked to bring two door prizes to the event and there was a drawing for the items.

Diane announced that the Governor had issued an executive order concerning travel and reimbursement rates for mileage on personally-owned vehicles. The rate is 48 and half cents for WCWI members. There is also a new reimbursement form which will automatically calculate mileage at the checked rate. A revised travel request form has also been implemented and Diane will send us both of those forms.

Teresa passed around the 2006 Family Photo which can be downloaded from the DFS website. Diane will check to see if it is linked from our website and whether she can get hard copies for members.

Since we have revised our meeting schedule from six meetings to four face-to-face meetings each year, any member who misses 2 meetings in a calendar year may be asked to resign. We may need to amend the By-Laws. The members also discussed the option of declaring a vacancy for purposes of establishing a quorum. When a member isn't attending but has not resigned, the Governor does not re-appoint, which makes the establishment of a quorum confusing. Our by-laws allow proposed amendment changes to be considered 30 days before the next meeting and Jan volunteered to prepare a proposed change to address both issues.

Teresa reminded members that biographies are needed on the WCWI website. Committee chairs need to be sure they are updating the website and all members should visit regularly and check on the content. Kim asked about tracking legislative bills throughout the session and Teresa volunteered to do that on a weekly basis.

Michelle moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 am. Various committees were to work on their projects.

Minutes approved on April 21, 2007

Jan Torres, Secretary

ATTACHMENTS TO MINUTES:

New Member Packet

Communications Plan

Budget Report (12/31/06)

Committee Reports:

Legal Rights & Responsibilities

Educational Opportunities