

**Wyoming Council on Women's Issues  
Minutes of 2/11/06 Teleconference Meeting**

**Members Attending:**

Michelle Aldrich	Kim Capron	Cynthia Chavez-Kelly
Teresa deGroh	Pamela Downing	Mary England
Sherill Helzer	Merna Rierson	Julie Simon
Jan Torres		

**Members Absent:**

Jennifer Ingram	Linda Naylor
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**Also Attending:**

Diane Moser, Ex-Officio Staff Member

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 8:02 am by Teresa.

**Roll Call:**

Members responding are shown above. (Mary joined the meeting at 8:41)

**Approval of Minutes:**

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Michelle, seconded by Cynthia and unanimously passed.

**Financial Reports:**

We are unable to encumber \$10,000 for the printing costs of the Legal Handbook as planned. The draft will not be completed until the end of May and the Attorney General's Office will need to review the Handbook before it can be put out to bid. The result is that our planned timeline to encumber the costs of printing is not possible, leaving about \$10,000 in uncommitted monies. Diane also reported that the sexual harassment brochure may not have enough money set aside for printing and distribution if they are to be mailed.

Teresa asked members for ideas on how to spend the money that had been reserved for the handbook. She wondered about using some of the money to help fund the Nellie Tayloe Ross documentary currently planned by public television. There is some money available from the Wyoming Humanities Council for the documentary, but no one knew if it was enough. Merna agreed to check with Ruby Calvert, of Wyoming Public Television, to see if additional money is needed. Cynthia suggested sponsorship for the Shepard Symposium on Social Justice. Diane explained that we could use WCWI money to underwrite specific costs of seminars and conferences. Merna suggested the possibility of more Girl Power workshops in the northern part of the state. Michelle pointed out that Nina Romero-Caron had been trained as a Girl Power presenter and said she

believed that Nina was doing a workshop in Denver. Since this is an election year, Michelle suggested re-printing the bookmark we had created previously, with generic text, to encourage women to vote. Diane said the bookmark cost less than \$200 and unless we upgraded it, would probably not be that expensive. Pamela pointed out that the Women's Health Advisory group was planning on doing workshops in the state. She had attended their recent training and was impressed with their project. Aliza Schultz had contacted her about how to get WCWI support for these workshops. Diane said the National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity was sponsoring a conference in Washington DC about the equity wage gap and perhaps we could send members to the conference. We had reserved money for four members to attend the NACW conference; since we have so many new members, should encourage their attendance. Teresa said that when we dropped our NACW membership, we had talked about investigating other national conferences. She suggested sending two members to NAPE and two to NACW. Diane said the NAPE conference has a tentative agenda that focuses on nontraditional occupations, career and technical information and workforce development. There is also a session on what various states are doing. Merna suggested we consider reprinting the Resource Directory. Michelle didn't feel it could be organized and printed by June. Connect.Wyoming can print out both a summary and specific searches of resources and Michelle believed one search for a specific resource cost about \$20,000.

Teresa said she felt we should focus on our goals and use part of the \$10,000 to better organize and focus on WCWI activities. Michelle pointed out that many groups do strategic planning but unless the results are used, the exercise is pointless. Julie suggested that perhaps we could hire a facilitator and strategically plan realistic goals. As a new member, she's not clear about our current focus. Cynthia said she agreed; she said had already decided to electronically deliver resource information, and printing it is still being brought up as a way to use the \$10,000. Julie said a good strategic plan includes timelines with deadlines projected over a year. Michelle suggested we plan for two years at a time since we work with a biennial budget. Merna said she thought we had already done this kind of work at the October meeting in Lander. Teresa said we generated a framework at that meeting and tried to give each project a time frame in which various component pieces should be taking place. She felt that strategic planning would better solidify our priorities. She wants to make sure we are doing something significant in each of our focus areas. Cynthia suggested we had generated several options and asked that the meeting move to the next item. Our next face-to-face meeting is scheduled for June and Teresa felt postponing a decision on strategic planning was going to make it impossible to schedule a facilitator. Several members offered suggestions on facilitators but in discussion about how to email that information, Teresa pointed out that it isn't working well. She is frustrated when emails to members elicit no or limited response since most members don't respond in a timely manner.

Michelle suggested all emails requiring a decision or opinion should have a deadline and that deadline should be enforced. Teresa isn't sure no response means that a member has no opinion on a decision. Michelle suggested the all responding comments be sent to one central location because she said the number of emails we collectively and individually send is becoming overwhelming. Cynthia pointed out that she really needed to have emails directed to her attention be sent to her "people pc email address."

Since Cynthia needed to exit the meeting by 9:30, the agenda was changed to discuss the Public Relations plan. Cynthia said the plan is ready for review and she will send it to the members for input. She mentioned, that after listening to the comments about biennial planning earlier in the meeting, it might be best to have the PR plan done on a two-year cycle. She will revise the plan before forwarding it to WCWI members and the WBC public relations staff. Cynthia said each member will take responsibility, in the plan, to generate a story emanating from her area, which would then be distributed statewide. All news items planned for state-wide distribution would be funneled through Sanya, the Wyoming Business Council public relations person. Using our June meeting as a reference, Cynthia said we need to summarize our meeting and prepare a press release to make sure our name gets out. If we co-sponsor an event, we need to receive credit. She said none of the Girl Power publicity mentioned WCWI. Teresa asked if Cynthia would send the plan to both Sanya and the members so we could get an idea about what the PR plan. At this point, there was some discussion about members "micromanaging" projects and losing members as a result. Teresa said we all need to comment on the plan and the WBC feedback is more general, and offered in terms of another professional's viewpoint about what these plans typically entail.

### **Committee Reports:**

*Educational Opportunities:* (Pamela Downing, Chair)

Teresa announced that Pamela has agreed to chair this committee. Linda was going to research programs aimed at nontraditional jobs that pay living wages and she had asked the project discussion be postponed. Michelle said she had recently participated in a public radio talk show with Terry Williams, Economic Assistance Supervisor, featuring a call-in format that was very lively.

*Employment Practices:* (Mary England, Chair)

Summit Award: Mary had sent an earlier email regarding her inability to do any more regarding the Summit Award since our January meeting. Teresa said she was concerned about making contact with Nancy Freudenthal to make sure she understands that the WCWI-generated Summit Award has been in place for some time. Pamela said the Department of Workforce Services is moving forward with its own award and their criterion is to focus on self-sufficiency salary. Teresa asked if that affected our Summit Award and Pamela said she

didn't believe it would be problem. Michelle said she didn't think it was an issue because she believes our goal is to identify businesses that are family friendly. Mary said she believes there is some duplication since our criteria is both wage disparity and a family-friendly workplace. Mary will talk to our Summit Award partners and discuss the award being given every year. Since directors of various state agencies serve at will, new directors may have different priorities. Teresa said our plan is to partner with whoever is available and interested; she hesitates to change the plan based on a factor that may or may not continue. In the long term, the Summit Award will be given every year and we will keep as many partners as possible. There was some discussion about attending the Workforce Summit to see how the Summit Award is perceived and to perhaps have a picture and a presence. Michelle suggested we purchase a display board that we could use to highlight WCWI presentations and projects, like the Summit Award, at various conferences.

Wage Disparity: No report was made.

*Legal Rights and Responsibilities:* (Michelle Aldrich)

Legal Handbook: The status of the legal handbook was discussed earlier. Sherill was asked if she had followed up with Dona Playton and she reported watching emails between Diane and Dona regarding the Attorney General's office becoming involved. Teresa asked Sherill to contact Dona to see if she can get at least one chapter to us so that WCWI members can review it by our April meeting. Sherill agreed to get a hold of Dona this week.

Student's Guide to Sexual Harassment: Teresa said the Spanish translation is moving according to the time she established. It is not quite ready but was assured it would be finished by Monday. We are on track towards getting it ready for printing by the end of the biennium. Members will be asked to help distribute the brochure because of a concern about mailing costs and whether or not brochures reach the appropriate person who can disseminate them to students and staff. There are some geographical areas, which do not have a WCWI representative, and getting to all schools within our areas may be a problem. There was also some discussion about whether or not school districts would accept the brochure. Michelle said there is a meeting for consumer science teachers and counselors in June and she thought it would be a good idea to distribute the brochures then, keeping track of which schools receive the brochure. She will also distribute packets about the Summit Award, resource directory bookmarks and other publications at the same meeting

Legislative Session: Michelle reported the repeal of tax on food would probably not get out of the Revenue Committee. The petition to put the issue on the ballot is short 16,000 signatures. Supporters of the measure are now gearing up for 2008 as its goal. The current bill would only repeal the tax for two years, as a "tax holiday". Governor Freudenthal is in not in favor of the proposal and municipalities have not been generally supportive because the food tax is a revenue stream. Even though the bill proposes that \$30 million be set

aside to offset the tax revenue loss to communities, there is concern about whether or not the money would actually be available.

Teresa said there are two house bills aimed at strengthening domestic violence laws and Michelle said she would find and post information about them. Kim agreed to help Michelle monitor upcoming legislation.

*Home and Community:* (Merna Rierson, Chair)

Health & Wellness: Nina's resignation leaves that project without a leader.

Women's History: Merna said that Ruby Calvert has outdone herself with a total of four documentaries airing during March. Ruby has asked that WCWI help promote the programs and Merna will send out information on when the programs will air. Merna suggested that we buy advertising to promote Women's History Month but that she hadn't been successful in finding "canned" ads that we could buy. Michelle said that the television stations would create the ads. Diane said the Wyoming Department of Tourism has purchased 2 x 4 ads on a weekly basis promoting events in Wyoming. Merna is concerned about the lack of focus on women's history in schools, which don't seem to have units on the subject. There was some discussion about the possibility of WCWI locating lesson plans that meet state standards and giving those to school districts. Diane mentioned that National Women's History project has a number of resources and may have a curriculum package. Members agreed to investigate the idea and make sure schools would be receptive before we invest a great deal of money in it.

Michelle and Cynthia both exited the meeting.

Merna was asked if the project to induct Nellie Tayloe Ross into the Hall of Fame has moved forward and Merna said she will check.

### **Old Business:**

*WCWI Vacancies:* Nina has resigned

*Meeting Schedule:* Since our next meeting is scheduled for Easter weekend, Jan had asked Teresa to verify if we would have a quorum attending. Members discussed whether or not it should be moved.

*Meeting Agenda and Workloads:* Teresa said she had hoped committee reports would save time during the meetings and felt it hadn't been working as she had hoped. Would some other approach work? There was general discussion about the four committees and the fact that in many cases, nothing was happening. Teresa said she doesn't know if members are organizing themselves with respect to projects. Teresa had prepared a summary sheet showing the various projects and timelines for components. Merna said that the Woman of Distinction project is not currently doing anything but Teresa suggested that the timeline indicated

that now was the time to invite applications. In her opinion, something is happening all of the time with every project. Kim mentioned that she had received the packets and had been distributing them and if that's what Teresa had in mind in terms of reporting activity? Jan said she is concerned about a proposal that may commit each member's time and energy -- without having any opportunity to hear what the plan is. She used the Public Relations plan as an example and pointed out it was supposed to have been sent with the February agenda. Jan said that we eliminated a face-to-face meeting to save money and now we seem to be floundering and suddenly have \$10,000 to spend on an unplanned project without a clear tie to our four primary objectives. There was general discussion about whether we have too many projects and spend time rehashing items already decided. Teresa said every member should be leading a project. Most agreed that we can't seem to focus and a strategic plan would be very helpful. Jan moved to schedule strategic planning at a face-to-face meeting in April. Kim seconded. There was some discussion about the date. Of the nine members left in the meeting, four would not be available on April 15<sup>th</sup>. Another four were not available at this teleconference meeting so they could not commit. Jan amended her motion to schedule a meeting either April 22 or April 29 and that the site for the meeting be either Casper or Riverton. Motion passed. Teresa agreed to locate a facilitator and that she would spend some time clarifying the desired outcome with that person. Members who have suggestions on facilitators should email Teresa with names as soon as possible. Teresa will email members about the change to have a face-to-face meeting, with a facilitator to do a strategic plan.

Julie volunteered to be the project leader for Health and Wellness and Kim and Pamela volunteered to lead the wage disparity project.

**Adjournment:**

Jan moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:58 a.m. The date, time and location of our next meeting will be announced.

Approved: April 23, 2006