

Wyoming Council on Women's Issues

Meeting Minutes

June 5, 2004

Call to Order

Michelle called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Roll Call

Teresa called the roll. Michelle Aldrich, Jan Torres, Margaret Pilch, Marty Coe, Merna Rierson, Sherrill Heltzer, Cleo Medina, Cynthia Chavez Kelly, Teresa de Groh, Nina Romero-Caron, Mary England, and Diane Moser were present. DaNece Day was absent and Safa Suleiman has resigned.

Minutes of Last Meeting

Teresa noted that she had received two suggested changes from Margaret, which were read and noted that there were a few typographical errors that needed to be corrected in the minutes for the April 3, 2004. Michelle asked if there were any other changes to the minutes.

Jan moved to approve the April 3, 2004 minutes with the suggested corrections and Mary seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Diane explained the financial information provided in the meeting notebook. After updating the projections for the budget to the end of the year, Diane estimates WCWI will have about \$9,000 that is unexpended or otherwise uncommitted. Diane suggested these funds could be used toward development of the website or printing more documents.

Friend's Account

Marty reported there is \$2,064.52 in the Friend's Account. She noted that the amount has not changed significantly in a long time. Other members pointed out that when individuals or groups approach Council members regarding contributing money, they should be directed to the Friend's Account. Other members pointed out that until the Friends obtains tax-exempt status, it may be difficult to obtain contributions to the Friends.

Committee Reports

Health

Marty reported on the Girl Power workshop she attended in Montana. She said it was great. She has a three ring binder that contains the suggested curriculum for teaching young girls...

There was some discussion regarding how to use this opportunity in Wyoming. An Ad Hoc Committee was formed with Nina, Michelle, Marty and Sherrill serving to pursue bringing the workshop to Wyoming.

Sherrill said she would coordinate the Race for the Cure for WCWI. There was discussion among the Council regarding who could actually be in Cheyenne to participate. Race date is August 28. Sherrill will get the necessary information for participation and email everyone.

Nina informed the Council that Food Bank of the Rockies will be expanding their food distribution to include Wyoming. They are establishing a warehouse in Casper. Michelle noted that Feed the Children has been coming to Wyoming once a year, which provides another opportunity for folks to obtain food.

Nina brought a videotape of the Larry Kirkwood exhibit and it was agreed to watch it during lunch. Nina informed the Council that Love Your Body Day will be October 20th this year.

Legislative

Michelle noted that Safa had been the committee chair and a new chair was needed. Margaret volunteered to be the committee chair. Michelle noted that the legislature passed some extensive changes to Title 14. Michelle also noted the legislature will be holding a special session this year to deal specifically with judicial reform.

Home & Community

Merna repeated her request for suggested programs for public radio and public TV—it would be good to start the process now for airing next year. She is still having difficulty making progress on the Road Map and has put it on a back burner until Rick Ewing can get back to her. Merna asked if anyone knew of someone who is an expert on Esther Hobart Morris. Merna indicated she feels getting Ms. Morris into the Women's Hall of Fame is a high priority effort at this time.

The Council briefly reviewed the nominations for Wyoming Woman of Distinction. Michelle asked Council members to review the nominations and email her by August 1 with their first, second and third choices. There was some discussion regarding how the award should be made and Cynthia offered to develop a score sheet for members to use (some members had already been using score sheets, but they were developed individually). Cynthia will email her work to members by July 1.

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Margaret moved to develop a score sheet for rating the nominations for Wyoming Woman of Distinction. Merna seconded the motion. Mary suggested a score sheet be developed for all awards. Discussion lead to the conclusion that since the Council currently has only the Woman of Distinction award, i.e., another award is in the works, but not yet adopted by the Council, it is appropriate to address only the Woman of Distinction award at this time. The motion passed unanimously.

Development of a publication that described all recipients of the Woman of Distinction award was discussed; Merna had been working on this project. Merna asked if someone else could take over the project—she needs some help from her committee. Mary volunteered to take it over and Jan suggested photos of each recipient be obtained.

Marty suggested continuing publication of a First Ladies booklet. WCWI had developed one in the past, but the author of that publication has not given permission to reprint it. The Council would need to rewrite text for First Ladies covered in the original booklet and then bring it up to date. Michelle suggested approaching the Governor’s Mansion Historical Society as a group that may be willing to collaborate on such a project (both Michelle and Diane said they would talk to folks involved with the Historical Society).

Merna informed the Council that she has continued to attend Wyoming Tech Prep Consortium meetings. The Consortium has started buying tools for member schools—she really encouraged Council members to pass the word on to school districts that are not yet involved. There was some discussion regarding what is involved in joining the consortium and members asked for an “information sheet” that would enable them to approach schools in their districts about joining the Consortium.

Michelle mentioned another program, CLIMB, which has been initiated and may bear watching. Nina reminded the Council about the Shaping Healthy Futures II conference in Jackson, April 27 through 29, 2005.

During the Committee Reports, there was some discussion regarding committee assignments. There has been enough turnover in members the last few years, that committee assignments need to be updated. Committee assignments were:

Health: Nina (Chair), Marty, Sherrill and Jan
Legislative: Margaret (Chair), Teresa, Cynthia, DaNece, and Marty
Home & Community: Merna (Chair), Mary, Michelle, and Cleo

Council members with expiring terms indicated whether or not they were requesting reappointment. Teresa had already sent her request to the Governor; DaNece in a previous email had indicated her intention to request reappointment. Cynthia will be requesting reappointment and Cleo is resigning. Michelle asked Cynthia to request a change to Judicial District 2 from her current at-large appointment so that there will be greater flexibility in filling open appointments.

Old Business

1. **Pinnacle Award.** Mary distributed an update of her draft criteria for the award. She wants it to be a business award that strives toward helping families. The Council discussed the name of the award—some members would like the name to have more connection to Wyoming. The Council consensus was to call the award the “WCWI Summit Award”. Then the Council discussed the draft description of the award and the criteria for it. Mary will redraft.
2. **State Survey.** Michelle distributed the raw data received from the survey. She stressed to all members that the data was not to be disseminated in any way outside the Council at this time. The data was for the Council’s information only. Next, the Council will be getting a draft report and a discussion will be scheduled with the UW staff. The Council discussed the process by which the report, once finalized, should be released and distributed. Diane will talk to the PR people in the Business Council about the release process. The WCWI Council would like the release to be coordinated and joined with the Governor’s Office. The release will likely be sometime in August.
3. **Resource Booklet.** Margaret asked if anyone had any changes that needed to be made in the directory. Many members indicated the directory has been in great demand and a few members indicated they had already distributed all the prints they had been given and more were needed. Marty moved to order more Resource Directories—5,000 if WCWI gets a break on the price. Merna seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Council members were instructed to email Diane with how many boxes they had of the directory and Michelle encouraged members to email Margaret with any changes so that the Directory can be as up to date as possible.
4. **Legal Handbook.** The Council discussed the need to reprint the Legal Handbook; an assessment was taken of how many handbooks are left and how long they might last. The Council discussed possible updates to the handbook. Margaret indicated she has been keeping abreast of the changes in State Statute and she does not believe there have been any changes that affect the information in the handbook. The Council agreed to send letters to each State department responsible for issues covered in the handbook and the Attorney General’s office. The letter should indicate that WCWI is getting ready to reprint the Legal Handbook, that the WCWI has reviewed the recent changes to the Statutes and does not believe any updates are necessary in the handbook, and that WCWI is requesting a review and confirmation that no changes are necessary to the information in the handbook.
5. **Women’s Conversation.** Merna indicated there will be another meeting in the future, but currently there is no activity.
6. **Wage Disparity Ad Hoc.** Jan indicated she had sent out an email with her ideas regarding pursuing suggestions in the Wage Disparity Study, but had received no response from other members. Teresa said what Jan had sent around was a good starting

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point and she was prepared to discuss Jan's ideas. Other members asked that Jan's email be sent around again and the discussion take place when the Council meets to discuss priorities for future projects. The Council discussed the importance of actively using the information in the Wage Disparity Study and not let it simply get pushed aside. Cynthia suggested that this information, as well as other information about WCWI, be sent to all the people running for the legislature. Mary brought up the issue of "living wage" and said she hopes that this issue can be pursued as well.

7. **Website.** Diane informed the Council that five (5) proposals had been received in response to the RFP for website development. Merna removed herself from the room due to a conflict of interest. Diane and another staff member, Rachel, had reviewed and scored each proposal; their recommendation was to accept the proposal from Limelight Technologies. Jan moved to accept the proposal from Limelight Technologies as vendor for the WCWI website. Nina seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, with Merna abstaining.

8. **NACW Conference in Pasadena, CA, July 14-17.** Michelle summarized what has been happening with the NACW Conference. Michelle, Jan, and Cynthia are on track to go; Teresa had been selected to attend also, but had declined. The next alternate was DaNece and Michelle indicated DaNece could not attend. The next alternate was Nina, who will check her calendar. Jan offered not to go to the conference due to the dissention among members regarding how many people should attend the conference. This launched a discussion covering a variety of issues and concerns with conference attendance and member conduct. A majority of the Council, as before, concluded that participation in the NACW conference is very educational to Council members and that sending four members per year until all members have had an opportunity to attend at least once is an important member building endeavor. Additionally, the Council resolved to be intolerant of actions or discussions that appeared to be grounded in ethnic prejudice.

9. **Any Other Old Business.** Michelle asked if members had any other old business to discuss. There was none.

New Business

1. **Proposed By-Laws Change.** Michelle indicated that due to the attendance issues the Council has been experiencing, a change to the by-laws has been suggested. First, Michelle asked Teresa to provide the Council with the attendance record of each member. Teresa had compiled an attendance record going back to January 2003. Most members had a 75 percent or better attendance rate, with only two members' attendance below 75 percent. Michelle informed Council members she had requested the Governor's Office speak to the issue of whether or not the Council can have an attendance policy. The Governor's Office indicated the Council can and Michelle asked Council members to think about what WCWI's attendance policy should be. Discussion of the issue covered

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topics including excused absences, productivity of members, and adequate representation of members' districts.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.