



STATE OF WISCONSIN

# Wisconsin Women's Council

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**KRISTINE F. MARTINSEK**  
CHAIRPERSON

**CHRISTINE LIDBURY**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Wisconsin Women's Council**  
**Monday, February 7, 2005, 12:00 PM–3:00 PM**  
**UW Milwaukee, School of Continuing Education**  
**161 W. Wisconsin Ave, 7<sup>th</sup> fl., Milwaukee, WI**

## MINUTES

**Members Present:** Kristine Martinsek, Chair; Nicole Bowman; Jane Clark (by telephone); Representative Samantha Kerkman; and Dr. Joan Prince. (Quorum not present)

**Others Present:** Sharon Canter (Milwaukee Women, Inc); Karen Coy-Romano (Wisconsin Women = Prosperity); Christine Lidbury (WWC Executive Director); Elaine Maly (Women's Fund of the Greater Milwaukee Foundation); Sandra Priebe (Wisconsin Women = Prosperity); and Sharon Williams (UW Milwaukee).

1. **Call to Order.** The start of the meeting was delayed pending the arrival of additional members to make a quorum. Without a quorum and with four members present (including one by telephone conference call), Kris Martinsek, Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:15 P.M. Because some members present needed to leave before 3pm, the agenda was amended to switch items 3 (old business) and 5 (new business).

The Chair thanked Dr. Prince and the UW Milwaukee for hosting the Council's meeting and for generously providing the conference room, lunch and parking without cost to the Council.

The Chair asked Council Members and others present to introduce themselves.

The Chair introduced and welcomed Nicole Bowman, who was appointed to the Women's Council by the Governor on February 1, 2005. Ms. Bowman is a member of the Stockbridge-Munsee/Mohican tribe and lives in Shawano, Wisconsin. She is the president of Bowman Performance Consulting, LLC, a certified national research, evaluation, and technical assistance firm specializing in working with Native American populations. Ms. Bowman stated that she is excited to join the Women's Council and eager to participate in the work of the organization. She noted that in addition to her work with her company, she is completing her dissertation at the UW Madison. She also discussed her interest and expertise in the area of diversity and provided further that she has worked much of her life for children of color and particularly Native American children. *A copy of the Council's press release on Ms. Bowman's appointment was provided to Council Members.*

2. **Approval of the Minutes of October 5, 2004** – Action was postponed pending a quorum.

### 3. Old Business

i) Results of expert group meeting on girls programming.

In Fall 2004, a state agency approached the Women's Council with a suggestion that grant money might be available for a project to serve at-risk pre-teen girls on issues of leadership and self-image. After outreach to organizations in Wisconsin that serve girls, the Women's Council hosted an expert group meeting held on January 27, 2005, in Madison. Leaders from organizations including, the YWCA, Girl Scouts, Pearls for Teen Girls, and United Way participated. Most of these organizations also represented larger regional coalitions of girls' leadership programs such as *Girls in Charge* and *Girls, Inc.* Council Member Jane Clark, who chaired the expert meeting, reported that the sessions were productive and inspiring.

The expert identified two program areas that they felt were particular gaps in services for pre-teen girls in Wisconsin, as well as suggested an ambitious data collect project:

1. Status of Girls in Wisconsin Report (a companion to the Status of Women Report)  
Such a report, the expert's felt, would be a great service to policy and advocacy for girls in Wisconsin. In addition to providing a benchmark for the future, it would be an important document to build awareness and give credibility to the issues advocated by girls' leadership organizations. As with the Status of Women Report, gathering comprehensive data and analyzing it in context, tells a powerful story and serves as a platform for policy and program development. It was noted that some other states have status of girls report and Ms. Lidbury reported that she is currently collecting such reports including from Maine, Colorado, Ohio and Illinois.
2. Survival Skills "Curriculum" -- Bringing together program and curriculum elements from different organizations to create an efficient way to teach "survival skills" to at-risk girls. Participants highlighted that girls from W-2 families or other significantly at-risk girls tend to come from homes where they experience a lot of crisis, turmoil and instability in their lives in a high intensity, but not necessarily consistent way. Possibly could be delivered through the kinds of organizations around the table or targeted at girls in families receiving selected public benefits or services.
3. Mentoring for Girls -- Many organizations have tried mentoring with limited success, it is difficult to organize and maintain and hard to sell the benefits to busy individuals. Yet, girls, like adults, survive trauma and crisis by having one or two people who give them a link to the outside world and help pull them through and give them hope and understanding. Mentoring support and acceptance is critical both in delivering mentoring and also in helping girls understand why it is important to accept and seek out mentoring. Women's Council could serve as a clearinghouse on resources for mentoring and mentoring opportunities, while the actual mentoring programs would be set up between organizations and corporations or organizations. This might include, for example, a corporate workbook with a generic framework for mentoring and a continuum of mentoring opportunities from a single site visit with women in a technology company all the way to a longer-term commitment. Perhaps could be linked to a year-long mentoring campaign and/or recognition or awards for companies that participate.

Several Council Members raised concern that these idea built capacity for organizations rather than serving the individuals. There was also concern that staff time and resources were insufficient for projects of this magnitude. There was interest in exploring a Status Report on Girls and looking at examples from other states and what might be involved in producing such a report. Ms. Lidbury advised the Council that she would seek to meet with the state agency that had commissioned the work about the expert group findings and the potential to develop projects in one of these areas. Ms. Lidbury will report back to the Council as more firm project ideas develop.

ii) Public benefit programs and re-entry planning for female offenders.

Ms. Lidbury reported that the Department of Corrections had expressed interested in a partnership to look at public benefit programs in the context of their growing emphasis and pilot projects on re-entry planning for female offenders, particularly women with children. Ms. Lidbury distributed a draft outline of a project which would work with an interagency task force to review and consolidate information / analyses on public benefit programs that may support or create barriers to female offender reintegration into society, with particular emphasis on women with children. This might include areas such as TANF, food stamps, BadgerCare, foster care/child welfare, job training, educational assistance, veterans benefits, SSI/MA, and AODA/recovery support, and possible expand into 'non-traditional' public benefit areas such as access to affordable/subsidized housing and to credit and financial assistance, which are critical to helping women establish productive lives in the community. Ms. Lidbury reported that she is hosting an interagency project planning meeting scheduled for February 23<sup>rd</sup> with confirmed attendance from representatives of DOC, DWD, DHFS and Commerce (public housing).

Ms. Lidbury reported that she had discussed the project with Council Members, Senator Carol Roessler, who has a history of policy work in this area, and who expressed her support and interest in the progress of this project as it develops.

iii) Public Appointments Database and Action Network.

Ms. Lidbury reported that, following a request from the Council at its October meeting, she worked with the Governor's Appointments Office to develop a database of the appointments to boards and commissions made by the Governor. This is now available on the Council's web site and lists all the various board and commission, indicating which have current or upcoming vacancies. A "Frequently Asked Questions" section provides information on how to apply, where to get more information on various boards and commission and what is involved in serving as a board member. She emphasized that the database is available to anyone who accesses the Women's Council website, but outreach is targeted to women's professional, trade and leadership organization.

The Governor provided a letter inviting women to apply for positions on boards and commissions as part of the ongoing effort to increase the pool of women interested in public service appointments. The letter was sent out to about 100 women's organizations along with information about the database and an invitation to be part of the Women's

Council's "Action Network" to receive email updates when new vacancy lists are posted. The Governor's letter is also available on the database web page.

iv). Web site development

Ms. Lidbury reported that she continues to work on adding web site content and plans to issue a press release on the web site in the next few weeks. She reported on a new "Features" section which includes a guest article and information about a specific topic. This was lunched with a guest article by Department of Financial Institution's Secretary Lorrie Keating Heinemann on the Angel Network initiative, which is accompanied by information about the initiative and facts about women's business ownership and access to capital.

In addition, she reported that she had added a section on Women in Government, providing facts and resources on women in elected and appointment office in national government and in state and county government in Wisconsin. This work will form the basis of a partnership we hope to develop with Wisconsin Women = Prosperity to use the Council as a clearinghouse for statistics on women in Wisconsin state and local government, appointment opportunities, and other resources.

It was noted that women in government should include women leaders in tribal government in Wisconsin.

It was suggested that the Women's Council develop bookmarks with information about the database to give out to reference librarians, for example, or in other venues reaching women around the state.

Ms. Lidbury distributed a "Web Trends" usage report for the WWC web site. In the last quarter of 2004, the WWC web site was receiving on average between 2,700 and 3,000 visitors per month, with an average of 85-90 visits per day. A growing number of visitors, about 1/3 of those who accessed the site in December 2004, were "repeat visitors" – that is, people who visit the web site more than one time in a given month.

**4. Testimony on Barriers to Women's Full Participation**

Sharon Canter, Chair, Milwaukee Women Inc.

In 2002, Milwaukee Magazine published an article entitled, "Women in Power," about the place of women in corporate leadership in Wisconsin. Among the 10 powerful women listed, no women of color were represented. It also highlighted a huge gap in information about what companies in Milwaukee were and were not doing to advance women into the leadership ranks.

Milwaukee Women Inc (MWi) was hatched at Kris Martinsek's house when a group of women from Professional Dimensions and Tempo were discussing the article and asking the question, "what is it that we can do" to increase the number of women in leadership positions. MWi's Steering Committee comprises a network of women leaders in Southeast Wisconsin, representing corporate, non-profit and academic organizations.

MWi (the "Inc" stands for "inclusive") decided that what gets measured, gets attention and gets changed. They undertook a survey of women on the Boards and in the executive suites of Wisconsin's 50 largest revenue producing, publicly traded companies. Data was collected using publicly available data in annual reports. They funded the effort with a matching grant from the Brico Fund which offered that if MWi. could find ten companies willing to help fund the study and commit to the project, Brico would pay the remainder.

The Findings:

- 9% of the board seats in the Wisconsin 50 are held by women, compared to 12% of the board seats of Chicago's top 50 companies and 14% of the board seats of the Fortune 500.
- 12% of the corporate officers in the Wisconsin 50 are women, compared to 14% of the officers of Chicago's top 50 and 16% of the officers of Fortune 500 companies.
- In 1992, 5% of corporate directorships were held by women, compared to 10% in these same Wisconsin companies today. A rate of change equal to less than one-half of one percent per year – slow progress.
- In 1992, 5% of corporate officers were women compared to 11% in these same Wisconsin companies today. Again, slow progress.

Among MWi's interesting findings was that the presence of women in corporate leadership often corresponded to better corporate performance. Catalyst also published a study relating the presence of women in corporate leadership with corporate performance and made similar conclusions.

While these studies do not prove causation, it appears that companies with the right "mindset" for diversifying their boards also tend to do better from a corporate performance standpoint. Indeed the rationale for including women in corporate leadership is not simply one of equity, but because it makes sound business sense. For example:

- Wisconsin 50 companies with women directors outperform those without women directors as measured by: return on investment (9.9% compared to 6.6%); earnings per share (\$1.91 compared to \$0.98); and stock price (a \$100 investment in 1992 is now valued at \$431 for companies with women directors, compared to \$314 for companies without women directors).
- Wisconsin 50 companies with women officers outperform those without women officers as measured by: return on investment (9.2% compared to 8.0%); earnings per share (\$1.63 compared to \$1.50); and return on equity (12.5% compared to 10.6%).

Ms. Canter noted that the Conference Board found that "the rule of three" came into play with women on corporate boards. For example, where there are three or more women in corporate leadership the organization is more likely to have conflict of interest practices and codes of conduct in place (94%, compared to 68% for all male boards). Part of making the business case for women on boards is understanding and documenting the advantages to the corporate bottomline and corporate governance.

While progress over the past decade has been slow, there is no question that we are seeing an accelerated advancement of women in key leadership roles. There are three key factors that are working to advance this process:

- a) Change in the government climate. Sarbanes-Oxley requires more independence on boards and the SEC is requiring public companies to report on the process used for selecting board members. Both factors drive companies away from the "old boys network" of closed recommendations for board positions toward a growing use of professional recruiting companies that rely on more objective factors such as experience, skills and a proven business track record.
- b) Expanding clout of women in the economy. Research shows that women are responsible for 83% of all consumer purchases:
  - home furnishings – 94%
  - vacations – 92%
  - home purchases – 91%
  - consumer electronics – 51%
  - cars -- 60% (significantly influence 90%)
  - health care – 80% of decisions & 66% of all health care spending

The net effect of American women's purchasing power is estimated at \$5 trillion, making it the earth's largest economy and accounting for over half of the US GDP!

- c) More women are Board-ready.

As a result of these factors, businesses can not afford to ignore the largely untapped pool of women leaders in seeking the best talent to fill their Board seats.

In October 2003, preliminary results were presented at the Governor's Economic Summit sponsored by the UW System. In May 2004, MWi presented its findings to the Greater Milwaukee Committee, showing the status of women on boards and in executive suites of each of the 50 largest Wisconsin-based public companies.. MWi also sponsored a session on Women on Corporate Boards at the UW's 2004 Director's Summit that was well-attended. In this way, MWi is working to change the mindset in many of these companies. MWi will continue to look for opportunities to get this information out into the business community.

MWi has also joined in partnership with six sister organization around the US, which are doing similar work in other large cities including Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Detroit and Philadelphia, to form "ION", the Interorganizational Network. Organizations in the ION coalition are working to coordinate data collection to use the same format and allow for better comparisons. It allows us to see Wisconsin data side-by-side with other markets.

MWi is developing its next round of research looking at issues of impact and influence.. MWi is now fundraising to carry out this research.

The question was raised of how MWi and the Women's Council might partner in this area. It was suggested, for example, that the Women's Council might host a database of board-ready women in Wisconsin. It was cautioned that in doing so, the Women's Council should first delve into past efforts by the Glass Ceiling Commission to create a database that was ultimately not utilized by corporations. Perhaps if a database is constructed there should be an advisory council from the corporate sector to develop an assessment measure and ensure the database is used and relevant.

*Ms. Canter distributed a copy of the report, "Diversity and Tomorrow's Profits: Women in Corporate Leaders (Executive Summary)" and a brochure for the ION Board of Directors Network. These documents are available online at: [www.milwaukeeewomeninc.org](http://www.milwaukeeewomeninc.org).*

## **5. New Business**

### **a. Administration.**

The Chair noted that while she has the administrative discretion to direct the Executive Director on the matters listed, she prefers such matters be discussed at Council meetings where Members may provide their views and priorities.

#### **(i) Proposal for special strategic planning session with outside facilitator.**

Ms. Lidbury proposed that the Council schedule a special strategic planning session with an outside facilitator. It is envisioned that the planning would occur over a full day or two half days, focusing on a vision for what Council members would see as a success for the organization in a years time, priorities for projects or issues, and the role of the Council members and executive director, all leading to a strategic vision and road map for the organization. Ideally, the planner would contact some or all Council members in advance to do some pre-session work and then follow-up with the Council in several months time to assess progress and pitfalls in implementing the plan.

All members present favored of the proposal. Several recommended a single day session of about 6 hours, and including if possible pre-session work and follow-up by the facilitator. There was concern whether legislators would be able to attend a full day session, but it was thought this might be a concern for other members as well and all members would be encouraged to participate for whatever time they could. Ms. Lidbury was directed to circulate to the Council by email three proposals from outside facilitators at a total cost not to exceed \$5,000, including the process, credentials, and all products and activities (follow-up, etc.) included in the cost, along with prospective dates.

#### **(ii) Proposal to post minutes of Board meetings on the Council's web site in draft form before they have been formally approved.**

Ms. Lidbury asked the Council for permission to post Council minutes in draft form, suggested that they first be routed for review with a specific timeline for comment. If no significant issues arose, the minutes would be posted in draft form noting "not official until approved by the Council." Ms. Lidbury noted that because of the long period of time between meetings, posting minutes in draft form is useful to promote openness and

to allow those not able to attend meeting to be informed about Council activities in a timely way. She provided further that this has been common practice in other governmental organizations where she has worked. Several members this was also true in their organizations.

The question was raised whether the minutes could be circulated and approved by email vote. The Chair provided that this is not possible. They had previously been advised by legal counsel that such action by the Board needs to be agendized and voted on in a meeting. Concern was also raised that publishing minutes that were not approved might create confusion or other problems if changes were later made.

Council members agreed to allow minutes to be posted on the web site in draft form so long as it is clearly indicated that the minutes are not official until approved.

(iii) Select 2005 quarterly meeting dates.

Ms. Lidbury noted that legislative members had expressed a preference for Monday meetings during the legislative session. Generally, floor session are held Tuesday through Thursday and members are often in their home districts on Fridays. It was suggested that a consistent date be set, such as first Monday of each quarter. Ms. Lidbury was directed to circulate a list of potential dates, along with a date for the strategic planning session in order to set a calendar for the rest of 2005.

(iv) Discussion of publishing Council Members' contact information on the web site.

Ms. Lidbury stated that she does not recommend this change, but had received a couple inquiries regarding individuals who had gone to the web site for contact information for specific Council members and were surprised to find that none was provided. Currently, individuals who wish to contact Board members must first contact the Women's Council office. Moreover, state statute provides that government agencies may not disclose certain personal information, including personal address and phone number for people who hold non-elected public office. [See Chapter 19.36(11) Wis. Stats]. Council Members indicated that they wished to maintain the current system, feeling that inquiries should first be directed to the Women's Council office so they can be appropriately addressed and routed.

b. Project, Strategies and Goals

(i) Board discussion of current projects, strategies and goal setting.

*Given concerns over adjourning the meeting on time and low meeting attendance, discussion deferred to future strategic planning session.*

(ii) Request from Lieutenant Governor Lawton to partner with WW=P on tracking women officials in local government.

Request supported unanimously by Council Members present. *A copy of Lt. Governor Lawton's letter to Kris Martinsek was provided to Council Members.*

(iii) Update on minimum wage and the impact on women.

It was noted that the minimum wage issue is an important policy issue for women, both as wage earners and business owners. It was suggested that the Council would be remiss not to acknowledge this issue and provide resources for those interested in following the issue or getting more information. Given the highly partisan nature of the debate and the lack of a quorum present, Council members indicated that they did not wish to seek or promote a Council position on the issue, but instead serve a clearinghouse function providing factual information and resources. Ms. Lidbury was directed to develop an informational web page on minimum wage for the Women's Council web site, including where to find information on the current proposals/debate, resources, data from the Status of Women Report, and who/how to contact elected officials.

**6. Citizen Participation, Communications and Announcements.** -- None

**7. Testimony on Barriers to Women's Full Participation**

Elaine Maly, Director, Women's Fund of the Greater Milwaukee Foundation

Noted for the record that prior to the start of this presentation, Council Members Jane Clark and Representative Kerkman had to leave the meeting.

Ms. Maly thanked the Women's Council for providing funding the 2004 Status of Women report, noting that we can't create change until we create awareness.

The Women's Fund operates largely in the Milwaukee metro area. The 2002 Status of Women in Wisconsin Report was the Women's Funds' first statewide project. It was an important investment for several reasons. Policies that affect the lives of women in Milwaukee and other parts of the state happen on a state level. To change the picture at the local level, we have to look at the policy level. The process of creating the report also offered opportunities bring women's groups together and put them on the same page. In this regard, the report is important for creating greater community awareness of the challenges facing Wisconsin women. Finally, the 2004 update provided the opportunity to review the information in the 2002 report and fill in the gaps on information about women of color.

The Women's Fund is based on the power of cooperative giving. It currently has a \$3.2 million endowment and provides annual grants of \$190,000 for programs and scholarships focusing on women and girls.

**Making the case for women and girls.**

Women and girls are the key to social change. When women do better, entire communities do better because of the vital roles women play. For example:

- American women are the world's largest economy making more than 80% of purchasing decisions.

- U.S. women buy more than 80% of all products and services; 75% of all over the counter medications; 80% of retail purchases, 82% of groceries.
- Women tend to spread positive growth by giving back to the community.
  - Most visible ways include providing for children, caring for the elderly
  - Volunteering and charitable giving. For example, women entrepreneurs give back 5.2% to charity, compared to private industry average of 1.3%.
- World Bank began studying metrics in 92: gross domestic product, fertility rates, and child and mother mortality rates regarding improving standards of living.
  - Investing in girls' education has an enormous impact on the key indicators:
    - Wages increase by more than 10 to 20% for each additional year of schooling and increases gross domestic product.
    - Decreases child mortality.

The Women's Fund was created because few women controlled funding. Only 6% of foundation dollars nationally goes to women's and girls programs.

### **Strategies for selecting grantees.**

1. **Use a gender lens** for grantmaking: Developing and implementing services with an awareness of gender differences and developing mechanisms to equalize the experience. Meta House example. Looked at addiction through a gender lens. Are women and girls more or less affected, affected differently?

2. Move from traditional "women's" interests like DV shelters to **a social change grantmaking model:**

- **Shifting definitions.** Definitions shape the way people think of themselves, their capabilities and their futures. For example, a non-traditional employment training program changes individual women's definitions of their own capacity for employment by introducing them to hard-hatted construction trades. Women who graduate then diversify the construction industry's laborforce in the larger community, redefining the concept of a "construction worker" to include women.
  - Shift away from teen pregnancy to STD prevention
  - Low income women are powerful
- **Shifting behavior.** Behavior is the way individuals or communities act or respond to one another. Changing parenting behavior among low-income mothers, for example, changes their interactions with their children, creating a positive change in their families, schools and communities.
  - Money management programs
- **Shifting power.** Increasing leadership by women and girls within organizations and communities changes the way decisions are made, resources are allocated and problems are solved.
  - Changing from adult-led to youth-led programming is an example of a shift in power.

- More women in office

An example of success in this area is the Girls Scouts which has shifted its policy from an adult leader led organization to a youth-led orientation. This entirely reframes the conversation.

- ***Shifting policy.*** Public policy and institutional policy shape conditions in communities and individual lives. Efforts aimed at overcoming or eliminating institutional barriers to full participation by women and girls contribute to social change. Changing policy to provide improve conditions women and girls makes a ripple effect through the community.
- ***Holding the line on gains made.*** Social change needs to be maintained so that previous conditions do not re-assert themselves. Holding the line on individual changes, institutional and public policy changes is important to sustaining long lasting social change. (Very concerned about JOI, Judicial Oversight Initiative)

### 3. **Prioritizing around areas highlighted in the Status of Women report:**

- Increase quality employment and/or earnings by women and girls
- Increase participation in the political process, public policy and in shaping public systems by women and girls
- Improve health for women and girls, particularly mental health
- Decrease violence in the lives of women and girls
- Improve educational access and educational outcomes for women and girls
- Promote the positive and constructive image of women and girls in the media.

The Women's Fund may increase its focus on economic empowerment. Economic disempowerment results in social and political disempowerment. Health disparity is integrally linked to economic justice which is integrally linked to racism, classism, and other forms of discrimination.

The Fund may also increase its focus on girls because working on girls issues is a strategy for improving the status of women.

The question was raised regarding how many Women's Fund operate in Wisconsin. There are nine Women's Fund's around the state, all attached to Community Foundations. There is a Women's Funding Network, which is an international organization. It was noted that there are links to these Women's Funds in Wisconsin on the Women's Council's web site in the Resource Directory.

Discussion ensued on how the Women's Council could partner or link to the work of Women's Funds in Wisconsin. It was noted that the Funds rarely get together and when they do, it tends to focus on fundraising strategies and administrative issues. May be a role in getting Women's Funds together to talk to each other about how to move the needle in the state. Brainstorm with the Women's Fund to focus externally on how to have the biggest impact. Can also gain their view on specific policies and priorities – for example, what state

laws may be barriers to successful programs, adverse effects of state policies, etc., where the Women's Council may be able to education and advocate on issues or change.

Another issue suggested is to brainstorm on where the various Women's Funds see gaps in resources for women's programming. For example, funding for domestic violence shelters has decreased in favor of programs that are more proactive to reduce the incidence of battering. On a policy level there is also an issue with women being ordered into programs for batterers because of policies about who the police arrest. A woman may be defending herself, yet get arrested and sent to counseling as a batterer, which may create resentment and distrust about a system which should be aiding victims.

*Ms. Maly distributed the 2003 Report of the Women's Fund of the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, "Faces of Social Change." Information about the Women's Fund and its grantees can be found online at: [www.womensfund.com](http://www.womensfund.com).*

2. **Approval of the Minutes of the October 5, 2004 (revisited).** Lacking a quorum for the duration of the meeting, the minutes will be posted on the web site as "unofficial." Approval of the minutes will be added to the agenda for the next Council meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Lidbury

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