



Women's Council
· Wisconsin ·

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**Minutes of the Meeting of the Wisconsin Women's Council
Friday, February 24, 2023; 1:00 – 2:15 PM (CST)
Held virtually via MS Teams**

Council Members Present:

x	Gabby Aranda-Pino	x	Sen. Dianne Hesselbein	x	Carrie Richard
x	Dr. Jolene Bowman	x	Denise Gaumer Hutchison, <i>Chair</i>		<i>Vacant</i>
	Sen. Rachael Cabral-Guevara		Rosalyn McFarland		<i>Vacant</i>
x	Rep. Jodi Emerson	x	Amanda Medina-Roddy		<i>Vacant</i>
x	Rachel Fernandez	x	Nerissa Nelson		<i>Vacant</i>

Quorum was met for start of meeting. Rep. Emerson had to leave early; however, Carrie Richard joined shortly thereafter, maintaining quorum for the duration of the meeting.

Staff Present: Jenifer Cole, WWC Executive Director; Erin Wruk, WWC Intern; Jana Steinmetz, DOA Administrator Division of Enterprise Operations (DEO); Richard Rydecki, DOA-DEO Deputy Administrator; Margie Berkowitz, Office of Sen. Hesselbein

Public Present: None

1) Call to Order - Denise Gaumer Hutchison, Chair

Chair called the meeting of the Wisconsin Women's Council (WWC) to order at 1:04 p.m.

2) Approval of Meeting Minutes January 27, 2023 – Motion to approve: J. Emerson. Second: N. Nelson. Approved.

3) Establish Executive Committee and Elect Two Officers: Vice Chair and Secretary – Denise Gaumer Hutchison, Chair

- a) J. Cole reported that the Women's Council statutes only establish a Chair, but general state statutes regarding councils require the Council to elect a Vice Chair and Secretary. Council policies requires the establishment of an Executive Committee, which consists of Chair, Vice Chair, three other Council members, and Executive Director to serve as ex-officio, non-voting member. Executive Committee must be approved by a majority of the Council. Committee members will attend committee meetings, establish agendas, approve spending, sponsorships, etc.
- b) D. Hutchison stated these positions would be helpful, a valuable committee, especially for work in between council meetings, and presents an opportunity to get six people connected to help move Council initiatives forward.
- c) The following individuals self-nominated: G. Aranda-Pino, N. Nelson, J. Emerson, and A. Medina-Roddy.
 - i) Motion to approve slate of candidates for the Executive Committee: D. Hutchison. Second: D. Hesselbien. Approved.

- d) J. Cole will circulate current Council policies regarding officer roles. Council will determine Vice Chair and Secretary at next meeting. Any additional members interested in serving on the Executive Committee may self-nominate in advance of the next meeting.

4) Executive Director's Report – Jenifer Cole

- a) **Introduce New Intern: Erin Wruk** – E. Wruk is serving as the Council intern for spring semester 2023. She is participating in the UW-Madison Gender and Women's Studies Internship program and has been hired as a state LTE for the duration of the semester. Welcome, Erin.
- b) **40th Anniversary Celebration Update** - J. Cole reported on the status of the event planning.
 - i) Invitations will be sent by March 1 and asked Council members to review guest list. Email addresses are still needed for past Council members. Council will also send names and addresses of other guests and partner organizations to include.
 - ii) With Governor Tony Earl's recent passing, considerations about how to honor his legacy were discussed.
 - iii) Work on graphic designs for invitations and posters, etc. are underway.
 - iv) Developing short speaking program, which will include First Lady Kathy Evers and Chair Gaumer Hutchison.
- c) **Women's Council Listserve (GovDelivery)** – J. Cole reported that she worked with the DOA Secretary's Office and communications staff to complete the development of WWC listserve in GovDelivery, a mass communications platform for government. Platform includes access to up-to-date press lists and email list subscribers. It features plug and play templates for press releases and analytical reporting on engagement with messaging.
- d) **Biennial Budget and Legislative Updates** – J. Cole provided a high-level overview of items included in the Executive Budget proposal that she is tracking because of their impact on women in Wisconsin, such as additional funding for the LIFE (Living Independently through Financial Empowerment) Program, sexual assault prosecutor training, crime victims services, anti-human trafficking and runaway, homeless youth programs, the creation of an office to tackle MMIW initiatives, and exempting sales tax from diapers and menstrual products.
 - i) Council discussed how to receive updates on budget and other legislation tracking – bulleted lists via email once or twice a month. Will look for ways for Council to take official positions on bipartisan bills and provide advocacy in support of initiatives that improve status of women and girls.

5) Discuss and Confirm Priority Topics Project Idea: Status of Women Report and Project Partners – Jenifer Cole

- a) J. Cole provided overview of Council's recent work to identify overarching topics areas and possible initiatives to focus on going forward. Through these discussion over the past three months, and meetings with past partners and stakeholders, several concrete project ideas emerged:
 - i) Taking a deeper dive on work uncovered in Alverno College's Women in Public Life report and partnering on a white paper to address the issue of harassment, bullying, and threats experienced by women elected to office. N. Nelson and C. Richard shared support of this work.
 - ii) Working with Women's Funds to develop regional reports on status of women so that they can better target their funding to support evidence-based initiatives.
- b) J. Cole reported that there is great interest in moving beyond just regional reporting and developing a large-scale, statewide 'Status of Women' research and report project. Possible project partners include Women's Funds from around the state, UW-Green Bay Women's Leadership Institute, Alverno College Research Center for Women and Girls, state agencies and other UW academic and research departments. The project would resurrect statewide 'Status of Women' reports Council developed with numerous partners approximately 20 years ago.

- i) Executive Budget proposal would provide \$100,000 over the biennium for the Council to advance such a research project by providing funds for LTE research analysts. Council discussed how to support and advocate for these funds to remain in the final budget.
- ii) Motion to approve going forward with 'Status of Women' research and report and moving forward with actions to implement: C. Richard. Second: R. Fernandez. Approved.
- iii) Next Steps: circle back with current project partners (Women's Funds, UWGB, Alverno), continue scan of organizations whose work intersects with charge of the Council and keep women's issues front and center, engage Tribal communities and organizations serving communities of color to ensure project includes a comprehensive and equitable lens of all women's identities, and develop project proposal and budget to begin outreach work to develop a large coalition of project partners and sponsors. Work will begin after 40th Anniversary celebration.

6) Closing Remarks and Adjournment - Denise Gaumer Hutchison, Chair

Chair Gaumer Hutchison provided closing remarks reminding Council members of the importance reaching out in own communities and bringing those connections to Council.

Meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jenifer Cole
Executive Director, Wisconsin Women's Council