



Women's Council  
· Wisconsin ·

WOMENSCOUNCIL.WI.GOV

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Wisconsin Women's Council**  
**March 23, 2023; 2:30 – 4:00 PM**  
**Held In-Person at the Executive Residence in advance of 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

**Council Members Present:**

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

Quorum was not met.

**Staff Present:** Jenifer Cole, WWC Executive Director; Erin Wruk, WWC Intern; Richard Rydecki, DOA-DEO Deputy Administrator

**Public Present:** Yolanda Medina, UW-Milwaukee

**1) Call to Order – Denise Gaumer Hutchison, Chair**

- a. Chair called the meeting of the Wisconsin Women's Council to order at 2:46 PM.

**2) Icebreaker – Women's History Favorites** - Those present shared some of their favorite figures from women's history. Chair made remarks about the importance of remembering women's history beyond Women's History Month.

**3) Approval of Meeting Minutes – February 24, 2023** – Quorum was not met; no action taken.

**4) Vote on Remaining Executive Committee Member** – Quorum was not met; no action taken.

**5) Elect Two Officers: Vice-Chair and Secretary** – Quorum was not met; no action taken.

**6) Executive Director's Report – Jenifer Cole**

- a. Recent Events – J. Cole reported updates on the following recent events related to the Women's Council and Women's History Month:
  - i. La Follette Policy Forum – The event included presentations and discussions related to the opioid and housing crises, public health labor force burnout, and equitable policy implementation.

- ii. Women's Funds Alliance Meetings – Continuing discussions with possible partners on 'Status of Women' research and reporting project. Also, connected with the UW-Green Bay Women's Leadership Institute regarding involvement with 'Status of Women' report.
- iii. Women's Roundtables – J. Cole served on two panels to share about the Council, highlight its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, and discuss work going forward:
  - 1. March 8<sup>th</sup> Roundtable in Milwaukee for International Women's Day with Lt. Governor Sara Rodriguez, DOA Secretary Kathy Blumenfeld, and WWBIC.
  - 2. March 15<sup>th</sup> Roundtable in Green Bay for Equal Pay Day with Secretary Blumenfeld, DFI Deputy Secretary Patti Epstein, Women's Funds of Green Bay and Fox Valley Region, DWD-DET Administrator Michelle Carter, and WWBIC.
- iv. WPHCA Training – J. Cole provided training community healthcare clinic staff on the legislative/budget process. \$250 honoraria earned for the Council.
- v. DOA Lunch & Learn – J. Cole provided a presentation about the Women's Council and its 40+ year history and highlighted some notable Wisconsin women for Women's History Month.
- b. Recent Media coverage:
  - i. WisPolitics spotlighted press releases for the Women's Roundtables.
  - ii. Wisconsin Public Radio used Council reports about women in elected office and interviewed J. Cole about the role of the Council and the reports/data.
  - iii. J. Cole encouraged council members to go to the Women's Council Facebook page to like and share posts to boost site traffic.
- c. Upcoming Events:
  - i. DOA Town Hall March 27 – J.Cole will provide 5 minute highlight of the Women's Council 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.
  - ii. UW-Madison GWS Virtual Conference, April 13-15 – J.Cole will attend.
  - iii. UWGB Women's Leadership Institute Event: Celebrate 2023, April 20<sup>th</sup> 4-8PM – J. Cole and Chair Gaumer Hutchison attending.
- d. Fundraising Clarification – The Women's Council has a "gift & grants" account, so seeking clarification from DOA legal counsel to understand how the Women's Council can fundraise to supplement budget.
- e. Budget Check-in - J. Cole reported currently waiting for invoices to identify any underspending and ideas for allocation of remaining FY funds.
- f. Sponsorships:
  - i. If Council members see additional programs/organizations/events to sponsor, send information to J. Cole.
  - ii. A. Roddy asked about the qualifications for an event for the Council to sponsor it – are there certain qualifications or does the Council simply discuss moving forward with a sponsorship?
  - iii. J. Cole responded with general guidelines, relating to women's leadership, etc; the executive committee can step in to decide, if needed.
  - iv. D. Hutchison noted prioritizing certain events over others – where WWC funds can best be used.

## 7) Project Updates

- a. MMIW Day of Awareness – R. Fernandez reported that planning for the May 5<sup>th</sup> event was going well and hopes to [Agnes Woodward](#) attend and speak.
- b. Hmong Women's Story Cloth Exhibit – J. Cole reported that the exhibit preparations are underway and the story cloth will be exhibited in rotunda of capitol for month of May – Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage month.

## 8) Council Discussion

- a. Status of Women Report Project – J. Cole reported that general interest is high. The main next step is creating a project proposal, which consists of the following elements: creating project budget, identifying potential partners and identify how they can contribute (resources, research, roundtables, surveys), what are the key research questions, and focus of research. J. Cole asked for input and for Council members to send any contacts or ideas to her:
  - i. Chair D. Gaumer Hutchison mentioned possible partnerships with the YWCA (northeast WI) and public school districts doing women's studies work.
  - ii. Rep. J. Emerson asked when last report was, how often these large reports are made, and whether UW extension is involved.
  - iii. J. Cole reported that the last large-scale report was in 2004 and that similar work has been done since with several organizations, including the creation of a dashboard last updated in 2018. There are regional organizations doing research of a regional scope, making clear that now it is time for more statewide, comprehensive data.
  - iv. Sen. D. Hesselbien asked about what is the importance of this report; we know we [women] don't have equal pay, reproductive rights, etc; so, what is the point of this new report specifically?
  - v. J. Cole responded that when we want to point people in the right direction for data on women, it may not be comprehensive or its outdated. Thus, the project will examine issues impacting women across the state and regionally. Report can be used to identify initiatives and make policy recommendations to address issues discovered through the research.
    1. For example: in the Fox Valley status of women report, they identified the biggest issue in their region was supporting single moms will they attained education. Used report findings to target funding and program initiatives.
    2. Furthermore, how do we inform every level of government and state agencies to the status of women and their specific issues, identifying programs that align to address root issues. A main focus remains providing education to any entity that can enact change/inform legislation.
    3. In addition, going back to old reports to look at progress made/not made to ask how we can best address the charge of the Council? Have those problems been solved, or have they gotten worse?
  - vi. Rep. J. Emerson added that this report could help direct attention to agencies/programming that can address these issues, and the report can also be used to see if initiatives and programs are aligned with the Council's mission.

- vii. Chair D. Gaumer Hutchison added that the report can allow organizations to take this data to national scale to acquire grants, how do we get that word out there, etc. The report can bring these issues to the forefront with hard, statistical data that is up-to-date and specific.
- viii. J. Cole emphasized that it is important to be asking these questions while project is currently in its nebulous stage; what kind of data we want, inform timeline, inform cost, qualitative vs. quantitative data, etc.
- ix. Goal: Council members provide information about possible project partners:
  - 1. Organizations/companies & specific contacts
  - 2. Constituent input & their organization contacts
  - 3. Colleges/universities – which departments?
  - 4. Regional/smaller organizations are important to include, too; a variety of ways of collecting information and data strengthens the report.
  - 5. Importance of a broad, diverse lens; inclusion of Native orgs, Hmong orgs, orgs in other regions of state, rural areas, etc.
- b. Expanding Messaging and Outreach
  - i. Again, J. Cole emphasized the need to boost Facebook engagement to reach a wider audience.
  - ii. Other communication objectives include cleaning up the Listserve platform and adding a link to website to let folks sign up for updates from WWC.
  - iii. Communication strategy for the council overall is being developed – J. Cole is asking for input at a future meeting
  - iv. Chair D. Gaumer Hutchison encouraged giving a heads-up up for posts, so everyone can share/boost those posts right away to boost engagement and better our algorithm.

**9) Closing Remarks and Adjournment – Denise Gaumer Hutchison, Chair**

- a. Meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM.