



Women's Council
· Wisconsin ·

WOMENSCOUNCIL.WI.GOV

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Wisconsin Women's Council – September 4, 2019**

**Wisconsin State Capitol, Room 328 NW
Madison, Wisconsin**

Patty Cadorin, Chair

Board Members Present: Patty Cadorin, Chair; Dr. Lisa Armaganian; Denise Gaumer Hutchison; Alderwoman Chantia Lewis (by phone); Dr. Rosalyn McFarland; Nerissa Nelson; Carrie Richard (by phone); Senator Janis Ringhand; Shelby Schmuldach; and Ze Yang. A quorum was present.

Also present: Christine Lidbury, Executive Director.

1. **Welcome and Introductions.** The meeting was called to order at 11:35 am.
2. Patty Cadorin welcomed the newly Governor appointed members of the Women's Council. She invited board members to introduce themselves and highlight the issues they are most passionate about. Topics highlighted included encouraging and empowering women, public education, racial and ethnic health disparities, pay equity, financial education, domestic violence, arts, trauma informed care and educational opportunities for youth aging out of foster care.
3. **Approval of the Minutes of June 5, 2019.** The Chair noted that the board had undergone and transition and many of them members present were not at the June meeting. She reported that Christine had reviewed and got sign-off on these draft minutes with past members who did attend the June meeting. With that in mind, only those board members present who had attended the meeting should comment and vote. Moved to approve by Carrie Richard; second by Lisa Armaganian. Approved unanimously.
4. **Strategic Overview.** See PowerPoint attached to these minutes.

History. See PowerPoint

Mission & Vision. In sharing the agency's mission and vision statements, she highlighted expectation for discourse that are inclusive and respectful, and while disagreement and differing opinions are expected, members should keep in mind several core values, including:

- Respect the potential and dignity of all individuals by recognizing the wide spectrum of values, experiences, concerns and priorities represented across Wisconsin women.
- Members and staff must work towards a common goal for the success of the organization in achieving its mission and vision.
- Set a positive tone at the top by maintaining respect among Board members, staff, and others who participate in the Council's work, for the diversity of values, perspectives, priorities and expertise each individual brings to the table.

Agency Resources. Christine provided an overview of the Council's program budget. In the State Budget, the Council received \$27K in program funds, however, more than 50 percent of these funds go to agency administration through a series of non-discretionary assessments and other mandatory expenses such as board travel reimbursements. In total, the agency has about \$14K in program funds for a given fiscal year. Christine reviewed the preliminary program budget and program expenditures to-date. By January, with current obligations, the remaining budget will be under \$10K. Christine highlighted that this is an important consideration in program planning. She was asked whether the Council could raise money. It was noted that the Council can accept outside fund, with the expense of those funds subject to state procurement rules. The Council is not a 501(c)(3) organization and as a state government agency is often not eligible for grants through philanthropic organization unless partnered with a non-profit or for philanthropic or Federal grants targeted for government organizations. Use of such grants should be considered carefully in the context of staffing, reporting requirement and organizational capacity.

Board Engagement & Advisory vs. Working Board. Christine provided that during her tenure, the Council primarily been advisory, meeting quarterly to decide on programs and issues and maintain accountability through receiving status and final reports. In this capacity, the Council also serves as a resource, provided expertise as needed, as a source for outreach such as identifying and connecting to experts, organizations and resources in their communities, their own organizations and across their networks.

Christine provided that the only expectation for Board members is to attend and participate in regular Board meetings. The extent to which Board members have time, interest and availability to participate in committee work, Council program and attend Council events (or attend events on behalf of the Council), is up to Board members themselves. The Council has not maintained many committees often due to lack of availability by Council members and differences in policy by different Chairs over whether individuals from outside the Council should participate on Council committees. Currently, the Council's only active and going committee is the Governor's Trailblazer Awards Planning Committee, which has been in place since 2007. Christine has convened expert groups for specialized topics such as financial literacy, and conference and event planning.

Role of Legislative Board Members. Senator Ringhand spoke of her years on the Council Board and her experience in bringing issues to the table, engaging in dialogue and helping to connect the Council as a board and as an agency to the legislative process and, as appropriate, to legislation. Senator Ringhand highlighted the respectful and inclusive environment, that allows for dissent and substantive discussion, fostered by the Council despite often significant differences, such as working across the political aisle and from different communities and backgrounds.

Executive Director's Report

The Council helped host the 2019 Family Caregiver Summit, with the Dept. of Health Services and the Wisconsin Family and Caregiver Support Alliance, held Sept 5, 2019 in the Dept. of Health Services building. About 80 persons attended the event, mainly from state and local government agencies and non-profit organizations that work with family caregivers. The program included an employer panel featuring local employers that offer caregiver support programs.

The Women's Council is a member of the Governor's 19th Amendment Centennial Planning Committee. Denise Gaumer Hutchison and Christine attended the August executive committee meeting. Christine continues to manage the state's Centennial website. Wisconsin Historical Society has upcoming program releases in early Fall including a teacher toolkit and a Centennial traveling exhibit.

Patty and Christine attended in the National Association of Commissions for Women 2019 annual meeting in Chicago. The 2-day conference was an opportunity to network with other state women's commissions board and staff members from around the county and share information about programs, issues and priorities. Speakers included the Deputy Director of the US Department of Labor Women's Bureau.

Voices for Women National Survey Project. The National Association of Commissions for Women and the Maryland Women's Commission are rolling out a national survey on women's issues and priorities. State commissions were asked to take the lead on rolling out the survey in their state. State commissions that participate will be able to receive a copy of the survey data from their state. Christine provided that this was an opportunity to be part of a national survey and gain both state and national data. We will revisit the topic in work planning and creating working groups later in the agenda.

5. Issue Discussion

Health Disparities

Discussion ensued about health disparities around infant mortality. Possible projects could include using the Council's website to provide information about reducing infant mortality.

Suggested included talking with Meta House about programs and needs; providing tips on the website; setting outreach goals for each month.

The Milwaukee-area zip code 53233 was highlighted as having especially high infant mortality. Target programs and outreach by zip code areas with worst outcome statistics.

It was suggested the Council could seek funding from insurance companies and access to health care programs.

Regarding chronic conditions, diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease were all raised as issues around prevention and access to health care and disparities in lower-income communities.

Homelessness

Christine reported on the current work being done through the Interagency Homeless Committee, chaired by Governor Evers. Homelessness, in general, is an active topic that has bipartisan support.

Eve Galanter spoke on an initiative of the Wisconsin Newspaper Association Foundation, to change the conversation around homelessness in Wisconsin. The Association held a symposium during the summer, with another scheduled for October 22nd. She invited the Women's Council to attend. The organization has committed to a statewide media campaign, with a coordinated release of stories with unified content – statistics, stories, photos - provided by the Wisconsin State Journal, and coming out in newspapers across the state on Sunday October 13th, followed by editorials the following week.

There is an active consortium of legislators, business, state government and media focused on the issues of ending homelessness, and an opportunity for the Women's Council to bring to the table a focus on women with data and outreach.

Other Issues to Consider:

Council members were invited to raise additional issues for consideration in creating a program of work for 2020, explain the interest in the issue. Discussion ensued. Suggested were:

- Childcare quality and affordability
- Family and Medical Leave Insurance to provide paid leave
- Pay Equity / Wage Gap
- Family Caregiving (current program of work)

6. Issues were posted on flip chart paper and members were asked to identify, in priority order, the issue they would like to investigate further to develop a program plan for the December Board meeting. Members not present at the meeting were consulted afterwards and their preferences added to the total.

	Women & Homelessness	Health Disparities (Infant Mortality & Access to Health Care)	Family Caregiving (Current)	Childcare (access/affordability)	FMLA Insurance (legislative proposal)	Pay Equity/Wage Gap
Interested in pursuing issue	8	7	5	4	4	3
Would chair / actively work on assessing project feasibility	Armaganian McFarland	Armaganian Hutchison McFarland Yang	Yang	Hutchison Lewis Schmudlach Yang	Armaganian Nelson Yang	Hutchison Lewis

7. Next Steps

Christine would formalize board work groups to further research each topic and create a proposed work plan for the two issues with most interest: Women & Homelessness and Health Disparities. Christine would schedule conference calls with each group to get started.

The Council was also interested in pursuing the Voices of Women Survey and Denise and Lisa agreed to assist.

8. **Other Board Business. None.**

9. **Public Comments. None.**

10. **Adjourn.** Motion to adjourn by Senator Ringhand; second by Denise Gaumer Hutchison. Approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Lidbury