



Women's Council
· Wisconsin ·

Minutes of the Meeting of the Wisconsin Women's Council
Friday, December 1, 2023; 1:00 – 3:00 PM
In-person at the State Capitol in Madison (Room 300 SE) and Virtually via MS Teams

Council Members Present:

| | | | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------|----|---------------------------------------|----|-------------------------|
| ex. | Gabby Aranda-Pino | | Rachel Fernandez | x* | Carrie Richard |
| | Dr. Jolene Bowman | x | Sen. Dianne Hesselbein | x | Lt. Gov. Sara Rodriguez |
| x* | Sen. Rachael Cabral-Guevara | x | Denise Gaumer-Hutchison, <i>Chair</i> | | <i>Vacant</i> |
| x | Rep. Jodi Emerson | x* | Amanda Medina-Roddy | | <i>Vacant</i> |
| x | Dep. Sec. Patti Epstein | x | Nerissa Nelson | | <i>Vacant</i> |

*Attended virtually for a portion of the meeting.

Staff Present: Jenifer Cole, WWC Executive Director; Chet Agni, Governor's Office, Rachel Roberson, Lt. Gov.'s Office; Margie Berkowitz, Sen. Hesselbein's Office; Lucio De Los Santos, Rep. Emerson's Office; Jana Steinmetz, DOA Division of Enterprise Operations Administrator

Public Present: Steven Walters, press from the Isthmus

- 1) Call to Order & Opening Remarks:** Chair Gaumer Hutchison called the meeting of the Wisconsin Women's Council to order at 1:04 p.m. Chair Gaumer Hutchison welcomed attendees both in the room and virtually and led a round of introductions.
- 2) Approval of Meeting Minutes from August 25, 2023, September 22, 2023, and October 27, 2023:** Sen. Hesselbein moved approval of all three; N. Nelson seconded the motion. Minutes approved unanimously.
- 3) Legislative Update Panel:** *Senator Rachael Cabral-Guevara, Senator Dianne Hesselbein, and Representative Jodi Emerson* - The legislative members of the Council provided a roundtable overview about the following bipartisan bills that had been introduced in the 2023-24 session that have bipartisan and how they would help women in Wisconsin: [AB 36/SB 37](#) - Time limit for processing sexual assault kits; [AB 48/SB 55 – Safe Harbor bill](#); [AB 114/SB 110](#) - Extending MA coverage for postpartum women; [AB 117/SB 121](#) - Coverage of breast cancer/dense tissue screenings by MA and other health insurance policies and plans; [AB 125/SB 127](#) – Informed consent for pelvic exams while under anesthesia; [AB 129/SB 133](#) - Sexual assault by a health care provider and providing a penalty; [AB 134/SB 137](#) - Preferences for woman-owned businesses in state procurement for architectural and engineering services; [SB 166, SB 167, and SB 168](#) – enrolled bills related to addressing issues of sexual harassment and sexual assault in the National Guard; [AB 176/SB 211](#) – Pharmacists prescribing contraceptives; [SB 219](#) – Sales tax exemption for diapers and feminine hygiene products; [AB 249/SB 244](#) – Expanding W-2 for at-risk pregnancy eligibility; [AB 436/SB 430](#) – Break time and accommodations for breastfeeding; [AB 557/SB 520](#) – “Like-kin” kinship care definition and payments; and [AB 615/SB 568](#) - Taskforce on Missing and Murdered African American women and girls.

The legislative members also spoke to the work of the Council over the years related to women in elected office and public service. Particularly, the legislators shared reflections on lagging gender parity in elected office and some of the reasons women may not run for office or run for re-election. The panelists shared some of their personal experiences in office like confronting gender bias, "likeability", balancing family responsibilities, and facing abuse and harassment.

- 4) Review 2024 Meeting Dates & Discuss In-Person Meeting Planning:** The Council reviewed and approved the following meeting dates for 2024:

| Date | Time | Format/Location |
|----------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Friday, February 2, 2024 | 1:00-2:15pm | Virtual via MS Teams |
| Friday, March 1, 2024 | 1:00-2:15pm | Virtual via MS Teams |
| Friday, April 5, 2024 | 1:00-3:00 pm (2hrs) | In-person – <i>Location: Green Bay area</i> |
| Friday May 17, 2024 | 1:00-2:15pm | Virtual via MS Teams |
| Friday, June 28, 2024 | 1:00-3:00 pm (2hrs) | In-person – <i>Location: Eau Claire area</i> |
| Friday, July 26, 2024 | 1:00-2:15pm | Virtual via MS Teams |
| Friday, August 23, 2024 | 1:00-2:15pm | Virtual via MS Teams |
| Friday, September 27, 2024 | 1:00-3:00 pm (2hrs) | In-person – <i>Location: Milwaukee area</i> |
| Friday, October 25, 2024 | 1:00-2:15pm | Virtual via MS Teams |
| Friday, December 6, 2024 | 1:00-3:00 pm (2hrs) | In-person- <i>Location: Madison</i> |

The Council also discussed topics for the four in-person meetings around the state. Suggested topics included: women in the trades, labor, and nontraditional fields, Medicare fraud and other scams targeting seniors, status of child care industry, women in agriculture, and boundaries/civic discourse.

- 5) Director's Report:** J. Cole reported that the Hmong Women's Story Cloth exhibit was still on display at the Neville Public Museum and would be up until January 2024. After January, it will move to its permanent home at The Hmong Institute in Madison; however, it can travel upon request.

J. Cole shared a brief update on the Status of Women Research (IWPR) project. The Steering Committee held a meeting with the Institute for Women's Policy Research to discuss the scope of the project. IWPR is preparing a project proposal, draft timeline, and a budget for the committee to consider by the end of January 2024.

- 6) Updates from Council Members:** N. Nelson shared that she was working to activate people in Stevens Point to find a solution around issues of elderly women's access to a healthcare center. She also noted that a woman-owned print making studio had a fire and Stevens Point locals were stepping up to help them recover.

Lt. Governor Rodriguez shared that the Wisconsin nursing apprenticeship program recently launched, and it's the first of its kind in the nation. She also plugged the Higher Educational Aids Board's nurse educator program and forgivable loan awards.

- 7) Closing Remarks and Adjournment** – Chair Gaumer Hutchison thanked all for attending, both in-person and virtually.

Meeting adjourned at 2:52 p.m.

Minutes were approved at the April 5, 2024 meeting of the Council

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

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