



Women's Council
· Wisconsin ·

Minutes of the Meeting of the Wisconsin Women's Council
Friday, June 23, 2023; 1:00-3:00 PM

Held in-person at the UW-Stevens Point Schmeckle Reserve Visitor's Center in Stevens Point, WI

Council Members Present:

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

Staff Present: Jenifer Cole, WWC Executive Director; Marissa Feller, Lt. Gov.'s office.

Guests Present: Jane Graham Jennings and Monica Lo, The Women's Community; Dr. Lyna Matesi, UW-Stevens Point Center for Women's Equity, Development, and Leadership; Sarah Ross, Women's Fund of Portage County; Mayor Katie Rosenberg, City of Wausau; State Representative Katrina Shankland, AD-71 Stevens Point; Jacob Burbach, Rep. Shankland's Office.

Public Present: Nathalee Kristiansen, Dr. Bowman's mother.

A quorum was not present – no Council business was conducted. Instead, the Council listened to the invited panelists and engaged in a roundtable discussion.

- 1) Call to Order** – Chair Gaumer Hutchison called the meeting of the Wisconsin Women's Council to order at 1:06. Provided opening remarks thanking N. Nelson for good work to coordinate the meeting, the location, and invite great guest panelists. Also, thanked panelists for their time and for attending the meeting.

Chair Gaumer Hutchison also provided a brief introduction to the Council, its work, and highlighted some the issues women face/efforts to advance equity.

- 2) Introductions** – Council members, staff, and public introduced themselves to the guest panelists.

- 3) Executive Director's Report**

- a) Hmong Women's Story Cloth Exhibit** – J. Cole reported that the exhibit is in Eau Claire at the Pablo Center until July 21. Shared that the exhibit will be available for next locations beginning in August and working on plans for Green Bay. N. Nelson recommended the Center for the Visual Arts in Wausau.
- b) Status of Women Research and Report** – J. Cole provided background information to the guest panelists about the goals of the 'Status of Women' project and invited them to consider joining or nominating individuals to the steering committee. Dr. Lyna Matesi and Sarah Ross expressed interest; J. Cole will follow-up with them.

4) Panel Introductions & Lightning Round – N. Nelson introduced guest panelists:

- Dr. Lyna Matesi – Director, [Center for Women's Equity, Development, and Leadership at UW-Stevens Point](#)
- Sarah Ross – Center for Women's Equity, Development, and Leadership at UWSP and Director, [Woman's Fund of Portage County](#)
- State Representative Katrina Shankland – [AD 71, Stevens Point](#)
- Mayor Katie Rosenberg - [City of Wausau](#)
- Jane Jennings – Executive Director, [The Women's Community](#) (Wausau)
- Monica Lo – Southeast Asian Advocate for Hmong Program, The Women's Community (Wausau)

All panelists introduced themselves and shared about the backgrounds and current roles. Each panelist then provided an overview about the work they and their organization do in central Wisconsin. N. Nelson then asked them to share about any initiatives, issues, or barriers regarding women and girls in the Central Wisconsin region, related to their work, that the Council and its members should know about. Key topics covered included women's health and safety; access to services like reproductive healthcare, childcare, and culturally specific care/services; training and leadership opportunities for women; lack of resources and limited funding for women's issues and organizations; policy decisions that have had a negative impact on women and their lives; and the amazing and hard work women are doing to lift each other up and support each other's efforts and lives.

5) Q&A/Dialogue – After the panelists each had the opportunity to share, Council members were invited to ask questions and engage in a dialogue with the panelists. Topics discussed included: diversity, equity, and inclusion; connecting personal stories with policy makers; lack of resources and funding constraints; affordable housing concerns; gender-based violence, including violence against trans folk; and how to maintain hopefulness and perseverance.

6) Closing Remarks and Adjournment – Chair Gaumer Hutchison concluded the meeting by, again, thanking the guest panelists and N. Nelson for her work to coordinate such a powerful and important opportunity for the Women's Council and its members. Asked other Council members to consider planning a similar such meeting in their community for future in-person council meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

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