

Meeting Minutes
Permanent Commission on the Status of Women
July 13, 2016, 12:00pm–2:00pm
Office of the Secretary of State, Nash School, Augusta

I. Welcome and Introductions

In person: Elizabeth Ward Saxl, Regina Rooney, Amy Gallant, Vera Roberts, Sarah Ruef-Lindquist, Jane Haskell, Samantha Lott Hale, Marjorie Crowley, Kelly Bentley

Attending Remotely: Marianne Moore, Holly Stover

Absent: Rebekah Smith, Fatuma Hussein,

Guests for Policy Meeting 12:00-1:00pm: Ana Hicks from the Speaker's Office, Isobel Golden from the House Democratic Office, Dorothy Havey and Melissa Simones, from the Senate President's Office, Avery Day from the Governor's Office

II. Review and Approve Minutes from April 13, 2016 Meeting

Motion to approve minutes from June 6, 2016 with amendments – Jane, second – Regina, opposed – none, abstentions – Marianne and Holly

III. Policy Meeting – Sarah

A. Review statutory authority – Charged with producing a biennial report to the Governor and legislature. No funding. All volunteers and any charges are done on a volunteer basis. Given our statutory authority and limited capacity as a commission, what recommendations would you make for how we can be most helpful to legislature/policy makers?

B. Identify concerns for women and girls among constituents.

- Domestic Violence (#1 issue for law enforcement in Waldo County).
- Moms concerned about access to drug addiction treatment for their adult children.
- Access to healthcare, usually women in their 20's-30's.
- Senior women whose homes are falling down around them
- More women in state prison than historically typical. Trying to accommodate that and make it work.

C. What information do you receive from other commissions which is useful? What makes it useful and how do you access it?

Reports: AARP Maine, Maine Council on Aging, Kids Count, Maine Development Commission Measures of Growth, Hardy Girls Healthy Women, locally the hospital has a report with a wealth of info related to work in the community. Executive Summary of the reports is the most useful area.

Depending on preference, more information may come from reliable organizations where relationships are already established. Others prefer using well-organized reports prior to calling for information. Executive branch reaches out to agency staff.

Qualities that make data sources useful:

- Divided by sector/area of influence -Legislators are looking at their area of jurisdiction.
- Benchmarks - Extremely helpful for state data and to compare to national statistics. Where do we stand compared to 2 years ago? Are there any gains from the last report? Did something get implemented? Was it helpful? Is it still an issue?
- Geographic area - Helps put data into context, statewide trends in data by area.
- Contextual/local pieces (from survey) - It's helpful for legislators to have a personal story. Like people testifying at a public hearing, it helps them understand what's going on.

PCSW report draws data from a lot of other data sources, but we also have our own survey. How does that set this report apart?

- Significant that the group/audience sees that the commission is made up of people with diverse backgrounds and agrees upon concrete recommendations.
- A one page document by sector (ex: health) with policy recommendations, facts, and high level, survey recommendations would be helpful for legislators.

How do we get the message out?

- Reach out to OPLA analysts and committee chairs. Ask to be on the agenda to provide information to the committee at the start of session.
- Contact your legislator
- Get a date in the Hall of Flags and be present.

D. Who else would you identify as having a significant interest in these issues?

- Department heads- Ask for a 15 minute meeting. Here's this report and here are the 3 things you need to know.
- Ask a couple of legislators to sit down at the same meeting.
- Maine Women's Day at the state house might be an opportunity.

E. Guest questions to the commission:

- Do you lobby the info? No. Individual organizations pull info. We do not lobby as a group.
- Do you share with other organizations? Ex: CAP agencies, hospitals? We did make an effort for outreach this year. All libraries and a few colleges have the report. Also sent out through our own organizations.

Maine's commission was alone in being unfunded among the New England Women's Commissions until Connecticut lost their funding this year. It is a challenge for us to bring Maine to that table with zero funds. Maine has the highest levels of poverty in all areas within the group.

IV. Debrief: – Jane (1:00-1:25pm)

V. Governance: Membership Update – Elizabeth

- Seat 2 – Jessica sent in resignation paperwork.
- Seat 3 - Amy resigned and recommended Clara Whitney. Recommendation sent to the Governor's office on 7/1/16.
- Seat 13 – (Andrea's) at large. Recommend that Amy be placed in the seat.
- Seat 14 – Elizabeth resigned and recommended Cara Courchesne.
Motion that the commission ratifies that move - Elizabeth, second – Regina
- Governor's disability and tribal seats still open. Regina will touch base with someone regarding the tribal seat.
- Seat 17- Holly was just reappointed, but because of the lateness of reappointment, her term expires August 1st. Elizabeth recommends that she continue to serve.
- Figure out who will take over for Elizabeth as Governance Chair.

VI. Next meeting:

August 10, 2016: 12:00 pm–1:00 pm. Sarah will send out a Doodle.

Meeting ended at 1:40.

Motion to close the meeting - Regina, second - Jane

**Debrief of the meeting of the
Permanent Commission on the Status of Women
with legislative and executive policy staff**

July 13, 2016

Attendees:

In person: Elizabeth Ward Saxl, Regina Rooney, Amy Gallant, Vera Roberts, Sarah Ruef-Lindquist, Jane Haskell, Samantha Lott Hale, Marjorie Crowley, Kelly Bentley

Attending Remotely: Marianne Moore, Holly Stover

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Debrief with 4 verbs:

What you learned?

They don't look at commission reports.

Learned about process with the suggestions they made.

Geographic specificity is wanted. Makes perfect sense.

Idea about creating fact sheets.

Succinct update on situation requested

Relationships - this is a first step.

We put together set of simple questions that people did not feel threatened by.

Maybe embrace multi-partisanship of the commission.

What surprised you?

Avery asked about appointments and then was surprised by it.

The degree of interest they had in some part of this.

Where do the policy recommendations go?

What encouraged you?

The helpful recommendations they made.

Having all of us together.

We now have good information to shape report for December.

There now is a higher level of awareness amongst those offices about our commission and purpose. Bodes well for the future, offering ourselves as a resource and the HOF.

What's next?

Use them as a focus group. What do you think about this?

Maybe offer their participation in the report.

Keep an eye on where they all go, in staffing, replacements. - Amy

Letter of thanks to each of those 5. - Sarah and Nikki

Regina- They would like done for December. Will call together a meeting.

Report Committee: Elizabeth, Kelly, Regina, Sarah, Marjorie, Amy, Samantha.

Book HOF on Sept 26. Schedule for after the next report is done. - Amy

Figure out Governance Chair position in Elizabeth's absence.