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**Plenary Meeting Minutes | January 10, 2025**

**9:00am-12:30pm | Virtual**

**Attendees:**

* Commission Chair Lowe
* Commission Vice Chair Kobdish
* Commission Secretary Carillo
* Commissioner Dalan
* Commissioner Mukhopadhyay
* Commissioner Razzaia
* Commissioner Ford
* Commissioner King-Lowe
* Maria Siguenza, Acting Executive Director
* Leah White, Deputy Director
* Eliza Craig, WSWC Staff
* Tanzania Zenzali-Marshall, WSWC Staff
* Samantha Grono, WSWC Staff
* Erin Beck, WSWC Staff

External Presenters:

* Representative Jamila Taylor
* Representative Mary Dye
* Senator Lisa Wellman
* Lola Flores, Senior Policy Advisor

Members of the Public:

* Jasmine Alik
* Judith Barba Perez
* Amber Hoefer
* Esmeralda Garibay
* Felicia Mullins
* Kamryn Y.
* Lin Huynh
* Rebecca Chan
* Jenn
* Felicia Hernandez
* Esmeal Xiutecpatl Lopez

**Opening:**

The regular public plenary meeting of the Washington State Women's Commission was called to order at 9:03am on Friday, January 10, 2025, over Zoom by Commissioner Lowe.

**Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was unanimously approved as distributed.

* Commissioner Kobdish moves
* Commissioner Carillo seconds

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously approved as distributed.

* Commissioner M moves
* Commissioner Carillo seconds

**Commission Procedures and Updates – Commission Chair Lowe**

Roles and Responsibilities

* WSWC's role is advisory
* Be aware of what capacity you are working in, WSWC, personal, or work
* Attendance at meetings and active participation
* No unilateral decision making - collaborate with the WSWC ED and staff
* Follow ethical standards

Legislative approach

* WSWC Staff tracks bills and connects with the Governor's Policy team
* Committees have paused during Session to focus on Legislative priorities
* Staff connects with Commissioners during Legislative Committee to align on Strategy

**Public Comment**

**Updates from Legislative Advisors**

Representative Jamila Taylor

* WSWC's Bill will be in Committee soon with co-sponsor Rep Mena - HB 1012
* Top of mind is budget - make sure those who need help will get it
* KOCA - Keep Our Care Act - hospital mergers
* Chair of the Developmental Disability Caucus
* Girl Scout Day at the Capitol - March 13th

**Another Opportunity for Public Comment**

Representative Mary Dye

* How did women fare in the elections?
	+ 25 women in the Senate
	+ 125 women in House
	+ At about 25% in total
	+ Women hold 46% of the seats in the Washington State Legislature
	+ 32.6% is the national average for women in state legislatures
	+ Washington State ranked first for women representation in legislature from 1993-2004
		- One of the first state's in the nation to have suffrage
		- Now ranks 7th, not because WA fell back but because other state have increased their women representation
		- Having open discussions about equity
* Governor's Budget - tightening up and trimming the budget for State Agencies
* Comment: Worried about vulnerable people in our communities - when things get cut sometimes they are most impacted.  Hoping Legislators can help protect our most vulnerable people.

Senator Lisa Wellman

* Resolution in support for women in cloud and women in tech
* Wondering if there is a bill put forward towards women's pay as a result of the Pay Equity Tour
* Seeking updated data for Women on Corporate Boards from the Commission
* Concerned about threatening behavior after the election - "Your body, my choice."
	+ Would like to see position papers from the Women's Commission - especially in terms of AI
	+ Would like to see advice to the Board in terms of pay equity and AI
	+ Was hoping to see something from WSWC about the October 7th attacks in Israel
* Answering her concerns:
	+ Women on Corporate Boards data has been updated as of this summer
		- Found a Positive trend - information will come out in the Biennial Report
		- Women-dominated sectors of the C-suite and men-dominated sectors of the C-suite
		- Will be included in our Biennial Support
		- Question: Has there been a look at Non-profit boards?
			* No, the Women on Corporate Boards Act calls for for-profit corporations
			* Participation on Non-Profit boards is not a paid position
		- Question: Is the C-suite data separate from the Board data
			* Yes, WSWC updated the Board data and then took it a step further to look into the C-suite data for the same companies
	+ Pay Equity Tour: events in Seattle, Spokane, Vancouver, and upcoming in Olympia
		- No policy has come out because there have only been a few events
		- We are conducting surveys at each stop to gather data
			* Will be used as a catalyst for policy
	+ Statement: Commissioners had taken a stance that WSWC will not be speaking out / commenting about international affairs.

*Ahead of Schedule: moved up Committee Updates in the Agenda*

**Committee Updates and Recommendations**

* Health Committee - Commissioners King-Lowe & Lowe
	+ Narrowing of the priorities to focus on protection of reproductive services
	+ Would like to make sure to have a lens for BIPOC women - committee members sharing data
	+ Question: Any crossover from the Health Committee in terms of economic stability?
		- Should be considered especially when speaking of reproductive rights
		- Black maternal health outcomes were definitely discussed
	+ Any conversation about doula work?  A big barrier is that there is not enough diversity in this field.  Needing solutions for this issue.
		- It has been discussed, but not been diving in deep for solutions
		- Surge Reproductive Justice looking to support with the training and certification process
		- SEIU training fund - has discussed adding doulas to the list for reimbursement
* Economic Security and Opportunity - Commissioners Kobdish & Carillo
	+ Identified three priorities
	+ Childcare is very important as women hold that baton
* Safety Committee - Commissioners Mukhopadhyay & Dalan
	+ Committee did not meet yet this year
	+ Past focus has been gender-based violence, firearms, technology
	+ Sentencing Reform - SB 5133 - caregiving as a mitigating factor in sentencing
	+ AI Bill regarding child pornography
	+ Legislation to make Shield Laws stronger which impacts both Safety and Health

**BREAK**

**Updates from the Governor's Policy Team - Lola Flores**

* Transition with Governor Ferguson coming in next week - January 15th at 12:00pm
* Many Policy Advisors changing - restructuring of the Policy Office
* Relationships of Governor's Office with the Commissions changes a bit during Session
* Some examples of how bills are analyzed

**Bylaws Updates Vote**

* Bylaws reflect how operations are managed and do need to be updated occasionally
* These changes are mostly a housekeeping effort - strong foundation for the next ED
	+ Example: Solidifying a process for electing the Executive Committee
* Motion by Commissioner Dalan
* Seconded by Commissioner Carillo
* Motion passes unanimously

**Legislative Updates - Leah White, Deputy Director**

* Weekly schedule: Staff meets with Governor's Staff on Mondays, Staff sends information and Bill Tracker Report on Thursdays, send feedback before Friday afternoon, Committee Chairs align on positions during a Friday meeting
* Committee Chairs should share with their committee members an email regarding an update on operations to be compliant with ethics laws and lobbying laws
	+ Committee members should not reach out to legislators directly as representatives of WSWC
* Be prepared for shifts in process, as changes can be expected with a new administration
* Question: Work sessions during Session?
* Legislative websites have changed
* Maria Siguenza asked to extend the contract to stay with WSWC until an ED is appointed
	+ Commissioners may or may not have visibility into the hiring process, this is still unknown

**Adjournment:**

Motion by Commissioner Dalan

Seconded by Commissioner Ford

Meeting was adjourned at 11:37pm by Commissioner Lowe.

The next general meeting will be at 9:00am on Friday, March 28, 2025, over Zoom.

Minutes submitted by: Erin Beck