**Washington State Women’s Commission**

**Summer Plenary - Meeting Minutes**

Virtual Teams Meeting

June 13th, 2025

**Members Present:**

Vicki Lowe

Chris Kobdish

Andrea Carrillo

Quinn Dalan

Riddhi Mukhopadyay

Malia Razzaia

Allison Ford

Senator Wellman

Representative Dye

Grace Huang

Brittany Gregory

Eliza Craig

Samantha Grono

Tanzania Zenzali-Marshall

Tara Osuna

**Members Absent:**

Anna Franklin

Yolanda King-Lowe

Representative Taylor

Senator Torres

**Members of the Public**: none

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| Agenda Topic  Speaker, Time | Discussion: | Action / Follow-up/   * Document Reference |
| Call to Order  Vicki Lowe  *Commission Chair*  09:01am-09:04am | Approval of Minutes and Agenda | *Action:* Motion to approve meeting passed unanimously  *Action:* Motion to approve agenda unanimously |
| Introduction: Brittany Gregory  *Executive Director*  09:04am-09:10am  Introduction: Commissioners  09:10am-09:21am | **Background:** Brittany shared their passion for social justice and reform was deeply influenced by personal and family experiences with the criminal justice system. This personal connection sparked their commitment to engaging in policy work. Professionally, they have led judicial and legislative efforts, strengthened relationships across state government, and advanced impactful policies across a wide range of legislative areas, including civil rights, family law, and more.  **Brittany’s Vison for WSWC:** Emphasizing its role as a central hub for research, policy, and collaboration on issues affecting women and girls in Washington state. They expressed a desire for Commissioners to serve as connectors between government and communities, fostering meaningful engagement. By strengthening partnerships and identifying barriers, they aim to advance equity with integrity and inclusivity. They highlighted upcoming efforts to open committee membership and launch new resources and closed by expressing enthusiasm for continued collaboration.  Commissioners went around and gave some background and where they are in the state. |  |
| Legislative Advisor Update  Senator Lisa Wellman  *District 41*  09:21am-09:36am | **Key Discussion Points:**   * The Commission must define its role and voice more clearly, especially in response to broader national events. * Expressed interest in being a resource and empowering the Commission’s legislative strategy and advocacy. * Highlighted past involvement in a pay equity campaign and noted that disparities in both salary and benefits remain unresolved. * Shared a personal background in education, psychology, and a 40-year tech industry career, including executive roles. * Addressed the importance of recognizing and supporting older women, particularly in areas such as Medicare and Social Security. * Emphasized women's financial independence, including challenges related to credit access and ownership. * Raised concern about public awareness of resources for women, especially new and immigrant mothers. * Called for clearer understanding of the Commission’s relationship with the Governor’s Office, including how independently the Commission can act. * Voiced strong support for economic development, women’s health, reproductive rights, and potential work on women’s voting rights. | *Follow-up:* Clarify the Commission’s public voice authority, particularly in response to external events.  *Follow-up:* Explore renewed legislative and policy focus on women’s financial education, reproductive rights, and early childhood support initiatives.  *Follow-up:* Engage with the Governor’s Office to establish expectations and boundaries for Commission advocacy. |
| Updates from the Governor’s Policy Team  Grace Huang  *Policy Advisor, Civil Rights & Human Services, Office of the Governor*  09:36am-09:59am | **Key Discussion Points:**   * The advisor’s portfolio includes human services (e.g., aging and adult services, developmental disabilities, TANF, homelessness), civil rights, and immigration. * Their agency oversight includes the Women’s Commission, LGBTQ Commission, Human Rights Commission, and others. * The advisor previously served on the Women’s Commission and brings extensive experience in gender-based violence, immigration law, and racial equity, particularly in the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) community. * Upon joining the Governor’s Office early in the session, their team focused on gaining clarity around agency work and legislative priorities. * Shared that there was a temporary pause on agencies taking positions on certain bills as the Governor’s Office worked to refine its policy direction. * Acknowledged that defining the Governor's priorities remains a work in progress, and clear guidance for commissions is still being developed. * Emphasized the value of the Commissioners' volunteerism and expertise, and welcomed advocacy and input from the Commission to help shape future strategy. * Noted past efforts to maintain regular check-ins during session and expressed a desire to strengthen collaboration with Commission leadership going forward. * Encouraged the Commission to participate in interagency forums and ensure their priorities are visible to other state agencies and the Governor’s Office. * Shared that policy planning for the upcoming year will begin once the policy director returns from leave and encouraged Commissioners to uplift key issues during that process.   **Ideas for possible Commission communications initiatives:**   * Implications of Cutting Medicaid - Developmental Disabilities and Elderly Adults will lose more than most. Constituents and community members should understand what these cuts mean in numbers, specifically for vulnerable populations. * Programming Cuts: Legal immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, trafficking Victims   + Encourages commission to assist with education about the real impacts are of the cuts. * Washington Cares Act, – would like to engage with the commission on this topic * Energy Credits and other less visible supports that women need to be aware of, including food assistance, energy assistance, health care | *Action:* Reestablish regular communication between the Commission and the Governor’s policy staff.  *Action:* Begin identifying and submitting Commission priorities for consideration in next year’s policy planning.  *Follow-up:* Participate in cross-agency forums to share Commission positions and increase visibility. |
| Legislative Advisor Update  Representative Mary Dye  *District 9*  09:59am-10:26am | **Key Discussion Points:**   * Described the 2024 session as imbalanced, dominated by one party with minimal bipartisan negotiation, particularly on the budget. * Critiqued the current framing of public education as workforce development, instead advocating for education that prepares engaged, thoughtful citizens. * Spoke to the increasing polarization between regions (east vs. west) and ideologies in the state, with rural voices often feeling dismissed. * Expressed concerns over declining enrollment, academic performance, and family dissatisfaction with current K–12 content and priorities. | *Follow-up****:*** Representative Dye agreed to share documentation and data referenced in remarks. |
| Break  10:26am-10:32am |  |  |
| Commissioner Onboarding, Roles & Responsibilities Overview  Brittany Gregory  *Executive Director*  10:32am-10:41am | **Key Highlights:**   * **Onboarding & Orientation Gap Identified:** There was no formal onboarding or training documentation for commissioners. A new “cheat sheet” has been developed to summarize roles, responsibilities, and expectations in one place. * **Email & Communication Protocols:**   + Commissioners must change passwords every 60 days.   + Avoid “Reply All” in email threads involving five or more commissioners to prevent violations of the Open Public Meetings Act.   + Staff will label time-sensitive emails in the subject line—expect responses within 72 hours; otherwise, respond within five business days.   + Notify the Chair if taking a leave of five or more business days. * **Meeting Expectations:**   + Commissioners are expected to attend plenary and committee meetings, review materials in advance, and respond to calendar invites.   + Commissioners should suggest agenda items and notify the Chair of absences.   + Participation in reviewing and approving meeting minutes is encouraged via email. * **Community Engagement Expectations:**   + Commissioners are now asked to attend at least two community events per year in a representative role.   + A funding request form will be provided for event details and reimbursement (e.g., mileage). * **Committee Participation:**   + Commissioners are expected to actively guide strategic planning and projects within the three standing committees: Health, Safety, and Economic Well-being.   + This includes developing agendas, ensuring progress, and arranging backup facilitation when absent. * **Legislative Engagement & Executive Committee Duties:**   + The cheat sheet outlines protocols for legislative engagement, interaction with the Governor’s Office, and responsibilities of Executive Committee roles (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary).   + It also provides guidance on quorum rules and reappointment or early resignation processes. | *Action:* Send cheat sheet to commissioners or let them know where in the shared folder it is located |
| Committee Priorities  Health Committee   * Reproductive Rights * Menopause   Vicki Lowe  10:41am-10:53am  Safety Committee   * Listening Sessions: Technology, Privacy * Funding   Riddhi Mukhopadyay  *Co-chair for Safety committee*  10:53am-11:09am  Economic Well-Being committee   * Child Care * Education: Financial & Digital Literacy   Malia Razzaia  *Co-chair for Economic Well-Being Committee*  Samantha Grono  *Public Policy & Legislative Affairs Manager*  11:09am-11:28am | **Through the next legislative session, the goal of the health committee is to concentrate efforts on two primary priorities:**   1. **Reproductive Rights:**    * The committee aims to unify advocates across the issue to develop and implement actionable policy strategies.    * Previous delays have resulted from disagreement among supporters; this year’s priority is to align on a shared approach and advance meaningful progress.    * Emphasized the urgency of this work given ongoing threats at the federal level. 2. **Menopause Support and Workplace Equity:**    * The second priority is to increase awareness and support around menopause, a topic often overlooked in public health and workplace discussions.    * The committee seeks to promote broader education about menopause, advocate for proper medical care, and improve workplace accommodations for women experiencing symptoms (e.g., hot flashes, discomfort, disruption to work life).   **Through the next legislative session, the goal of the health committee is to concentrate efforts on two primary priorities:**   1. **Relaunching Listening Sessions (Focus: Technology & Privacy in Gender-Based Violence)**    * The committee plans to revive and adapt prior listening sessions originally conducted under former Commissioner Grace Wong’s leadership, which focused on protection orders and coercive control.    * The new sessions will center on technology-facilitated abuse and privacy threats as emerging aspects of gender-based violence.    * To identify current gaps in safety and legal protections for survivors.    * To reconnect with community partners, rebuild relationships, and raise awareness of the commission’s work.    * Companion community surveys will be distributed to gather broader input from individuals unable to attend in-person or virtual sessions. 2. **Cross-Committee Budget Impact Assessment**  * The committee proposed a **joint initiative across all three committees** (Safety, Health, Economic Well-Being) to assess and document how recent and anticipated **state budget cuts** are affecting services related to women and girls. * The focus includes but is not limited to services for:   + Domestic violence and sexual assault survivors   + Health care and economic support * The findings will be used **to inform and educate legislators**, advocate reinvestment in services, and **highlight gaps** created by funding losses.   **Through the next legislative session, the goal of the Economic Well-Being committee is to concentrate efforts on two primary priorities:**   1. **Childcare Access**    * Identified as a major barrier to women’s economic participation and mobility.    * Noted disproportionate impact on single mothers, working-class families, and BIPOC communities.    * Childcare deserts leading to career delays, stalled wages, and limited negotiation power.    * Committee aims to support policy reform and program development and amplify community voices around this issue. 2. **Education Access Programs (Non-College Pathways)**    * Emphasis on skills development that leads to higher earning potential:      + Digital literacy      + Financial education      + Trades training    * Committee aims to support policy efforts that expand these programs, including proposed high school graduation requirements for financial literacy.    * Acknowledgment of resource clearinghouse development within the commission to connect individuals with economic support organizations.   **Committee Renaming & Repositioning Economic Well-being Committee**   * New committee name better reflects a broad approach to economic freedom and gender equity. * Desire to be more proactive and solution-focused, especially considering persistent pay gaps and structural barriers.   **Activate 3.8 Integration**   * Sam shared the vision to shift Activate 3.8 from an awareness campaign into a long-term strategic initiative. * New directions will address holistic economic barriers, not just workforce access (e.g., caretaking responsibilities, retirement planning, comprehensive resource needs). * Emphasis on intersectional, community-informed solutions rather than solely targeting STEM job pipelines. * Recognition that occupational segregation is a symptom of deeper systemic inequities.   **Committee priorities approved.** | *Follow-up:* Assist in the building of the resource clearinghouse to improve public access to services, by sending resources to staff using the Form in the Shared Folder.  *Follow-up:* Schedule next steps for legislative engagement strategies based on committee priorities.  *VOTE:* Motion to approve committee priorities passed unanimously. |
| Housekeeping   * Increasing communication * Resetting email passwords * Collecting contact information   Samantha Grono  *Public Policy & Legislative Affairs Manager*  Eliza Craig  *Communications & Outreach Manager*  11:28am-11:53am | Commissioners were guided through the process of accessing their official WSWC email accounts and introduced to a new shared SharePoint folder. These tools are designed to improve communication, coordination, and transparency between commissioners and staff. Additional forms and procedures were introduced to streamline commissioner contributions, including event tracking, and policy proposal request form. Discussion on rescheduling October 17 plenary to accommodate absent members. | *Follow-up:* Sam to follow up with IT support for unresolved login issues (e.g., two-factor errors, admin lockout).  *Action:* Commissioners  log in to their WSWC accounts and confirm access to the shared folder &  complete contact update request included in the login email.  *Action:* Reschedule the October plenary and send out calendar Invite |
| Public Comment | None |  |
| Staff Updates   * Website * Resource Center * Commissioner Recruitment * Committee Member Application   Eliza Craig  *Communications & Outreach Coordinator*  Tanzania Zenzali-Marshall  *Interagency Coordination Manager*  11:53am-12:53pm | The Commission provided a detailed update on the long-anticipated Resource Center, which is being developed as part of its statutory mandate. This online hub, designed to serve as a centralized "clearinghouse" of information and services for women across Washington State, is nearing launch. Commissioners were invited to contribute input and collaborate on a statewide community-based rollout. The Commission acknowledged what may be Commissioner Quinn’s final meeting, expressing appreciation for her six years of dedicated service and contributions to the Washington State Women’s Commission.  **Committee Members Application feedback:**   * Members could agree to sign a code of conduct * Blanket language about having some level of expertise * Adding organizations or other connections an applicant is affiliated with   General suggestion to think about a WSWC Youth Council | *Action:* Commissioners share on socials recruitment for WSWC commissioners  *Follow-up*: Launch for committee member application on July 31st  *Follow-up:* Several commissioners volunteered to be contacted by applicants during recruitment. |
| Plenary Meeting Adjourned  Vicki Lowe  *Commission Chair*  12:53pm-12:54pm | Watch email for poll for next plenary date to be finalized. | Action:  Staff send a poll to finalize plenary date. |