

MONROE COUNTY WOMEN'S COMMISSION

June 15, 2023

Commissioner	Attendance	Appointed by	Term date
Susan Hingle, Chair	Present	MoCo Comm	1/1/24
Maria Douglas, Vice-President	Present	MoCo Comm	1/1/25
Nicki Williamson, Secretary	Present	MoCo Comm	1/1/24
Molly Otto	Present via Zoom	MoCo Comm	1/1/25
Tiana Iruoje	Absent	MoCo Council	1/1/24
Juliet Hardesty	Present	MoCo Council	1/1/24
Kathleen Sobiech	Present	MoCo Comm	1/1/25
Jennifer Crossley	Present	MoCo Council (ex-officio)	

Voting Members: 6

Quorum Numbers: 4

Meeting Minutes completed by: MCWC Secretary

Location: Nat U Hill Room, Monroe County Courthouse

- I. Call to Order:** 5:30pm by Commissioner Hingle
This Commission shall serve in an advisory role to assist residents, businesses, and the government of Monroe County in addressing issues of gender equity in all aspects of society.

The mission is to advance the status of women in all areas of county life and to champion women's contributions to local culture and society.

II. Introductions

Welcome of new commissioner, Kathleen Sobiech

III. Agenda approval (all voting members approved)

IV. Minutes approval (all voting members approved with link being fixed by Comm. Douglas)

V. Commissioner Updates

A. Commissioner Hingle

- Monroe County Council Jennifer Crossley present with updates about Criminal Justice Response Committee (CJRC) which was suspended early spring
 - FYI, County Council is the pocketbook for Monroe County
 - County Council received lots of community input through the CJRC meetings
 - CJRC was supposed to be in response to earlier discussions about need to build a new jail because current building was failing and needed too many updates
 - A new committee, Justice Financial Advisory Committee (JFAC) has been established with membership including:
 - Ex-officios from the County Council (Crossley, Kate Wiltz, Peter Iversen)
 - representatives from Prosecutor's Office and Public Defender's Office
 - City Council representative
 - Department Head from the City of Bloomington
 - Rotating member on JFAC who has had direct lived experience having

been incarcerated in Monroe County

- JFAC established during org meeting on June 5, 2023
 - Goal is to ensure transparency as the new jail site and needs are being figured out
 - JFAC will provide budgetary considerations into budget decision meetings of the Council
 - Will have a rotating Chair on this committee
 - Relevant topics of discussion. For example, “diversion”. Topics will rotate.
 - **Action item:** Crossley to provide email address of JFAC to MCWC
 - Commissioner Douglas provided information to Councilperson Crossley that we have a subcommittee about Gender Equality and Justice Response. MCWC involvement is advocate to ensure persons with female needs are taken care of appropriately and with dignity while incarcerated (i.e. healthcare, pregnancy, menstruation, access to hygiene products, undergarments, programming, etc.)
 - Crossley notes they are mindful of asking questions about these very issues as well as how trans inmates are cared for
 - Crossley encourages us to go on our own tour of facility
 - They were able to go on a “deeper” tour where they talked with female inmates who reported many needs including: mental health and substance use treatment as well as basic clothing items, hygiene products, etc.
 - **Action Item:** MCWC subcommittee arrange a tour to see jail possibly talk with inmates
 - **Action Item:** Gender Equity and Justice subcommittee to put together a report of summation to provide to County Council and JFAC (Commissioner Hardesty)
 - **Action Item:** Attend JFAC meetings to stay up to date on progress. Next meeting: June 29th at 4:30pm at Nat U Hill
2. Monroe County NOW meeting
 - MCPL June 22nd at 730pm
 3. Monroe County Commissioners Office Hours
 - Clarified whether or not they want us to have input and how
 - Commissioner Penny Githens had ideas for us to consider including: childcare desert, intersection of women and healthcare and veterans
 - Social media: MCWC can use Monroe County social media account. Write up what info to send out and send to Angie for posting.
Action Item: Commissioner Hingle to ask Angie if we can have a FB page

B. Commissioner Douglas

1. Juneteenth Celebration

- Switchyard Park Saturday June 17th 2pm-7pm.
- Pride Month

VI. Ongoing business

A. Monroe County Council summary

1. Establishment of JFAC

2. Approval of money for car updates
 3. Capital Improvement Board (CIB) is reconvening to address convention center Expansion
- B. County Commissioner meetings sign up.** Reminder that we want to have someone present at those meetings regularly
- C. County Council meetings sign up.** Reminder that we want to have someone present at those meetings regularly
- D. Bloomington City Status of Women sign up**
- **Action Item:** Commissioner Williamson to send out sign up
 - They have been invited to attend our meetings
 - Marisa Carr Scott may attend or they may rotate
 - Monroe County Domestic Violence
 - Other things they are doing:
 - August: Women’s Market at City Hall
 - August 26th. Women’s Equality Day and Pridefest
 - Their budget comes from fundraising from annual luncheon
 - They have student youth involvement from local high school
 - **Action Item:** Consider high school student involvement at later meetings
- E. Girls Coding Camp Subcommittee**
- County Commissioners are creating an account for us with approved funds
 - Commissioner Hardesty put info into Dropbox about what other local coding camps are doing, whom they target
 - What makes our Coding Camp unique?
 - middle school ages, free to students, involvement of Luddy School at IU
 - Girls and STEM important issue, is this still something we want to continue
 - Are we still meeting a need in the community now that other coding camps have been established?
 - **Action Item:** Add debrief of Girls Coding Camp to fall agenda and assess relevance
- F. Gender Equity and Justice Response subcommittee**
- Want to do an analysis of current jail issues
 - 2020 report based on 2003-2018 data set
 - **Action Item:** Contact sheriff’s office to ask if there is more recent data. How much time women are spending in jail and details surrounding
 - Share our analysis and recommendations with JFAC
 - Commissioner Hardesty is doing so much good work on this issue. THANK YOU!

VII. New Business

1. JFAC (see above)
2. Mission
 - Opportunity to rewrite our mission if we choose
 - Present to County Commissioners for approval
 - **Action Item:** Revisit later.

VIII. Guest Speaker: Beth Clawson, trans youth advocate

1. Mother of three including 10-year-old transgender daughter, Kirin
 - Kirin has been living as herself for seven years
 - Ensuring every situation Kirin is involved in is a safe space (school, sports, other activities, community)
 - Clawson family became more involved in public advocacy when trans girls sports ban came into play
 - They speak out as long as Kirin wants them, too
 - Trans rights are not a one-size-fits-all issue or approach to advocacy
 - Clawsons are not speaking for all trans people or families. They represent themselves
2. Indiana SB 480 Gender Affirming Care Ban
 - Set to go into effect July 1st
 - Supercedes parents' rights to obtain healthcare for their child
 - Trauma of puberty for the trans kid population
 - This is about women's rights and body autonomy
 - Rights of grandparents to have grandchildren is behind legislation
 - Concerns about procreation and the impact of trans community
 - People being accused of lying about their gender identity
 - Not about providing safety for children. It is about controlling bodies.
3. Indiana HB 1608 LGBTQ youth and families
 - "Don't say gay" bill
 - Don't speak about human sexuality unless cisgender and heterosexual
 - ALL children need to see themselves, be themselves and read about themselves
 - Schools must inform parents if a child asks to change pronouns at school
 - This has all kinds of safety ramifications as many do not live in affirming homes
4. Relevant information
 - 32% trans youth have affirming homes
 - 51% of trans community have affirming schools
 - Without affirming spaces, LGBTQ youth and trans youth suicide rates climb.
 - Very large homeless rate for trans community, especially young people
 - 93% of trans and non-binary youth worry about not getting gender affirming care
 - Some insurance companies pay for gender affirming care. Many do not.
5. Protect our People
 - Helping secure pathways and warehouse information for trans youth to gain information about gender affirming care if HB 1608 goes into effect
 - Working with Riley Gender Clinic (which will have to close if bills pass)
 - Eskanazi Gender Health Clinic will remain open (for adults). They are offering mental health care to this community
 - Currently Illinois, Michigan, and Minnesota are safe states providing gender affirming care
 - Wanting to secure funding and rides for people to safely get to those states and

receive healthcare

- Those states are quickly becoming saturated with out of state people seeking care

6. How can MCWC be helpful to this community?

- Be aware that MCCSC does not have a corporation wide policy to support trans kids and teachers
- Remember that transwomen are women. And transmen have many overlooked issues as well. They also need reproductive health care similar to cisgender population.
- Consider adding trans woman to this commission
- **Action Item:** Beth to send Commissioner Williamson contact names
- Help educate that gender is a spectrum that is so much more than binary
- Get and stay involved in trans and LGBTQ rights issues

7. Resources

See Clawson handouts in MCWC Dropbox

VIII. Public Comment

Meeting Adjourned at 7:00pm