

MONROE COUNTY
WOMEN'S COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes



Date: February 8, 2024
Location: Showers Plaza, 106D
Meeting called by: Commission Chair
Type of meeting: Extra Meeting
Facilitator: Susan Hingle

Attending: Juliet Hardesty, Secretary; Molly Otto; Maria Douglas, Vice-Chair; Susan Hingle, Chair; Kathleen Sobiech; Jennifer Belton

Absent: Tiana Iruoje, Jennifer Crossley (Monroe County Council Designee), Monroe County Commissioner Designee (Vacant)

Guest: Daniel Olsson (online), Joshua Huber (online)

Call to Order 5:30 pm

The 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 and marginalized genders in all areas of county life.

- Approval of Agenda
 - Commissioner Douglas motion: add public comment to agenda and add communications to New Business
 - Commissioner Sobiech: second
 - Passes unanimously
- Approval of Minutes
 - Tabling minutes approval of November 16 and December 13 meeting minutes for next week (December 21 meeting cancelled) **(Action Item)**
- Commissioner Updates
 - Commissioner Hingle:
 - Jennifer Belton welcome
 - Public health practice experience; Focus on women and poverty
 - Commissioner Hingle will share orientation info with Commissioner Belton **(Action Item)**
 - 2024 Meeting Dates and time
 - 3rd Thursday of the month at 5:30pm, Nat U Hill in Courthouse
 - Commissioner Sobiech motion: approve meeting dates and time
 - Commissioner Otto: second
 - Passes unanimously
 - Roberts Rules
 - We do not have to follow Robert's Rules but we follow them loosely
 - We need to follow rules enough to have consensus
 - Commissioner Douglas has orientation materials from Commissioner Hingle, might be more detailed than slides, includes Robert's Rules cheat sheet
- Public Comment
 - Daniel Olsson spoke as campaign volunteer with Thomas Horrocks, who is running for Indiana State House District 62 Representative
- Old/On-going business
 - Commission meeting report
 - January 10 – Commissioner Hardesty attended
 - Update from jail - current maintenance issues being fixed, jail population at 250 as of January 9 and that is highest since current jail administration has been in place

- January 17 meeting cancelled
- February 7 – Commissioner Hardesty attended
 - Collective bargaining process happening for jail personnel, not finished yet but seems close, reported that jail is now fully staffed
- Contested races for Monroe County Commissioners likely this year
- County Council meeting report
- Commissioner Douglas attended
 - Councilor Deckard is chair, Councilor Crossley is Monroe County Women’s Commission liaison, Councilor McKim had conflict with our standing meeting time last year, contested races for Monroe County Council likely this year, Sheriff Marté asked for extra \$30,000 in funding and it was approved
- BCSW Meeting report
 - February 1 – Commissioner Hardesty attended
 - Discussion of upcoming All-Options Pregnancy Resource Center talkline advocate training - 2 hours per week, March 4 - April 10, All-Options particularly needs advocates who speak Spanish
 - Women’s History Month Luncheon, March 28 – accepting nominations for 2024 Women’s Achievement Awards; Luncheon tickets are available now
 - Monroe County Women’s Commission might table to recruit new members but maybe not until next year?
- Girls Web Design Camp Subcommittee
 - Commissioner Douglas provides update - Girls Coding Camp has occurred in previous years; Women in STEM areas should be supported and encouraged; Still in phase of MOU approval between County and IU; Commissioner Iruoje works in Luddy School at IU, last time volunteer students taught curriculum and provided venue and computers
 - Disturbing news from IU General Counsel and Molly Turner-King (County legal counsel) - both are concerned about this being offered only to girls, needs to be offered to boys too
 - Commissioner Douglas doesn’t agree, this is giving opportunity to marginalized communities; Being a woman in STEM is to be underrepresented; Not sure of next steps; Commissioner Iruoje is still trying to work that out with Luddy; Line item in county’s budget of \$10,000 that we apply for to sponsor this camp
 - Commissioner Hardesty agrees with Commissioner Douglas about disturbing news – this event is not about equality, it is about equity and supporting women and marginalized genders to participate in STEM
 - Why hasn’t this been an issue in the past? We have already held the camp previously
 - How did this work before? There might not have been an MOU in place and this might have been a problem before but the event still happened
 - Commissioners Douglas and Hardesty are ready to push back on concerns from IU Legal and Molly Turner-King; Commissioner Iruoje is working on this through Luddy; No camp in the spring, probably
 - If MOU isn’t resolved by end of this year - money was budgeted for 3 years so this year might be the last year with that money
 - Commissioner Hingle hasn’t ever felt that it is best use of time and energy but now we might need to push back because the arguments raised conflict with the Monroe County Women’s Commission’s mission
 - How do we support Commissioner Iruoje? We need to hear from her; Maybe we can write a letter to respond; Maybe talk to Molly Turner-King
 - Approach Ivy Tech and move away from partnering with IU? That is a possibility, Commissioner Douglas likes that idea
 - Topic tabled until next meeting when Commissioner Iruoje is present
- Gender Equity and Justice Response Subcommittee
 - CAPS
 - Commissioner Sobiech provides update – CAPS is Council on Alternative Public Safety; Wrote

report based on community interviews and statistics of calls that came through 911 that don't need law enforcement response; Propose a new office of public safety for homelessness issues, proactively address emergency calls that don't need law enforcement response

- Event on February 24 - movie showing of Reimagining Safety with director, Matthew Solomon present; Monroe County Women's Commission sponsoring event
- Event on February 25 - community conversation at IU School of Public Health maybe but might not work out; Room reservation problems coming up; Event is on a Sunday afternoon so hopefully room use is not an issue
- Matthew Solomon (movie director) is well-known in non-violence work area
- From Commissioner Douglas:
 - [Event press release](#)
 - [Tickets for February 25 panel discussion](#)
 - Also shared images to send to Monroe County for social media sharing and sharing across our own personal networks ([Flyer](#), [Social Media Graphic 1](#), [Social Media Graphic 2](#))
- Maybe give public comment at Monroe County Commissioner meeting and Monroe County Council meeting? Talk about in communications agenda item later
- Press release
 - Seem to have conflicting information on whether or not Monroe County Women's Commission can have a press release; Commissioner Douglas asked for clarity and there was no response in regard to what was meant by "this is not how we do business"
 - Can also talk about this in communications agenda item later
- New Business
 - Goals and strategy for 2024
 - Priorities: how do we select our priorities (i.e. importance to community, personal interests, feasibility/opportunity, etc.)? how many priorities should we select?
 - Goals: should we articulate SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound)?
 - Strategies: Can we articulate the speaker series purpose/intended outcomes? Is this a strategy to keep us informed of things going on in the community? Would it be more effective if we did monthly field trips/volunteering instead?
 - Commissioner Douglas notes she does not have capacity for monthly field trips/volunteering right now but maybe starting in May 2024
 - Invite speakers to meetings (10-15 minute presentations) – don't need speakers at every single meeting but maybe quarterly
 - Commissioner Douglas volunteers to get speakers for March meeting to achieve first quarter speaker **(Action Item)**
 - Sub-committee retention or creation
 - Gender Equity and Justice Response Subcommittee – Commissioner Otto thinks this is worth continuing until new jail is built at least; Commissioner Douglas agrees and should continue beyond new facility, pay attention to programming, capacity (how quickly new jail is filled and by whom); Commissioner Sobiech agrees; Commissioner Hardesty agrees
 - Girls Web Design Camp Subcommittee – Commissioner Douglas in favor of continuing; Commissioner Hardesty agrees
 - Creating new subcommittees? Not at this time but Commissioner Hingle has concerns about wage equity in county and wants other members to consider what they are passionate about for possible subcommittees
 - Events we should attend
 - CAPS event on February 24 and 25
 - Women's History Luncheon, March 28
 - all members should attend an event quarterly
 - Hoosier Asian American Power (HAAP) event in January was great!
<https://hoosieraap.org>
 - Sojourn House event (human trafficking) – February 29, tickets purchase by Feb. 14

- My Sisters Closet 25th anniversary – March 1 (\$100)
- Black History Month – February 24 (\$60) – CAPS showing happens before this
- Black History Month events from City of Bloomington – calendar combines IU and City events – <https://sites.google.com/bloomington.in.gov/cobbhm/cal>
- Black Market – February 17
- We have shared Google Calendar we can use to add these events; Commissioner Hardesty will add shell events on these dates and others can fill in details (**Action Item**)
- Organizations to support
- Communications Discussion
 - Internal communication seems to be good but external communication has issues – no social media presence; Commissioner Douglas asked Molly Turner-King about Facebook and Instagram for Monroe County Women’s Commission – Molly T. investigating options
 - Monroe County Women’s Commission has never given public comment at Monroe County Commissioners or Monroe County Council meetings (not as an agenda item or as public comment); Can submit things for Monroe County Facebook page and they might post on our behalf
 - Commissioner Hingle wants written strategy – set a goal or add to calendar (speaking at meetings or send post for social media)
 - Need underlying strategy or focus for speakers or communications; What are we offering to speakers? What are our priorities for this year? Speakers and marketing based on those priorities
 - Priority is to establish our presence; That is why we would do communication, we have voice and we should use it
 - What is our story for this year?
 - Not sure we are ready for lifecycle of woman idea discussed in previous meetings
 - Proposal: We either don’t have speakers or we focus speakers on subcommittee topics
 - We have hot topic projects but not long-term project for advancing our mission; What do women and marginalized genders in this county need us for? How do we work towards gender equity in the county?
 - We should have as a goal to be invited to table when council or commission create something like JFAC; Way we get invited is to make our presence known and share the work we are doing
 - Make our presence known via social media, talk to commissioners/council, things like that; Once we are at the table, we can decide on topics to champion; Start a path now and get our presence out there
 - Don’t want to wait for invitation
 - We need to go to commission/council and talk
 - We made comment at JFAC meetings but we want to be invited to be at table; Serve as advisory to these bodies and they need to recognize and include us
 - Commissioners Sobiech and Hingle will write up draft proposal for strategic plan for this year to present next week (**Action Item**)
 - Reactive was Gender Equity and Justice Response subcommittee, proactive is Girls Web Design Camp
 - Proposal - continue with subcommittee work, go to events, figure out if we can do social media posts; 30 minutes for strategy work at regular meetings
- Meeting adjourned at 7:09pm