

# MONROE COUNTY WOMEN'S COMMISSION

March 21, 2024

Commissioner	Attendance	Appointed by	Term date
Susan Hingle, Chair	Present	MoCo Comm	1/1/26
Maria Douglas, Vice-Chair	Present	MoCo Council	1/1/25
Juliet Hardesty, Secretary	Present	MoCo Council	1/1/26
Tiana Iruoje	Present	MoCo Council	1/1/26
Molly Otto	Present	MoCo Comm	1/1/25
Kathleen Sobiech	Absent	MoCo Comm	1/1/25
Jennifer Belton	Present	MoCo Comm	1/1/26
Jennifer Crossley	Absent	MoCo Council (ex-officio)	
Vacant	Absent	MoCo Comm (ex-officio)	

Voting Members: 7

Quorum Numbers: 4

Meeting Minutes completed by: Juliet Hardesty

Location: Nat U Hill Room, Monroe County Courthouse

## Call to Order 5:30 pm

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 and marginalized genders in all areas of county life.

### I. Approval of Agenda (All approved)

A. Motion and approval

### II. Approval of Minutes

A. 2024-02-15 (All approved)

### III. Commissioner Updates

#### A. Commissioner Hingle

- March is Women's History Month and March 8 is International Women's Day

#### B. Commissioner Douglas

- League of Women Voter's candidate forum on Saturday, March 23 at Monroe County Public Library; 1pm Democratic candidates for County Council-at-Large, moderated by Laura Rusk (American Constitution Society at IU Maurer School of Law)
- 3pm Democratic candidates for County Commissioner, Commissioner Douglas moderating
- Candidate forum co-sponsors are Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce, Monroe County NAACP, Monroe County NOW, IU Political and Civil Engagement (PACE), IU Big Ten Voting Challenge, and Kappa Tau Omega Chapter of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority
- Today is International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination; this date in 1960 was Sharpeville massacre in South Africa when citizens protested apartheid "pass laws"; Black people were supposed to be carrying an internal passport that segregated them,

tracking and controlling their movements; protest against that and police killed more than 80 and injured more than 160

#### IV. Old/Ongoing business

##### A. Profile Subcommittee (Commissioners Douglas, Otto, and Belton)

- Purpose: Elevating profile of Monroe County Women's Commission, who we are, and what we support
- Meets second Thursday of every month at 5:30pm
- No meeting this month due to Spring Break week
- Commissioners Otto and Douglas attended Convening for Inclusive Advantage at Monroe County Convention Center on March 19, sponsored by The Garden, Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce, and Community Foundation
  - a) Information sharing meeting between organizations to prevent duplicating services, meeting quarterly
  - b) Sponsoring organizations are creating Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan for Monroe County
  - c) Inclusive advantage helps to retain and evolve top talent that makes communities the preferred place to rest, work, and play
  - d) Two sessions at this meeting – one session for data collecting on organizations present; another session for visioning, dreaming big for Monroe County and organizations
  - e) Safe space and good conversations; met other organizations and new people
  - f) Commissioner Douglas will share information about next meeting, anyone is welcome to attend
- Women's History Month Luncheon on Thursday, March 28 at Monroe County Convention Center; does not appear to be sold out yet
- [Middle Way House Sexual Assault Awareness Month \(SAAM\) Walk](#) on Friday, April 19
  - a) Need captains and fundraising
  - b) Sign up for a team or create a team; t-shirts are \$25
- Commissioner Hingle question: Can we do something next year for Women's History Month?
  - a) Would need funding, decide what we want to do
  - b) Use County Commissioner's social media, post something every day in March
  - c) Commissioner Douglas will bring to subcommittee
  - d) Could be tied into Outreach Subcommittee too, possibly asking Senator Yoder for help

##### B. Policy Subcommittee (Commissioners Sobiech, Hardesty, and Douglas)

- Purpose: Evaluate county policy using gender equity lens; current focus is jail
- Meets fourth Thursday of month at 5:30pm
- Commissioners Sobiech, Hardesty, and Douglas attended City of Bloomington Community Advisory on Public Safety (CAPS) Commission events, February 24 and 25
  - a) Reimagining Safety documentary screening at IU Cinema, February 24
  - b) Panel discussion at IU School of Public Health, February 25 – City Councilors Isabel Piedmont-Smith and Hopi Stosberg also attended
  - c) CAPS Commission report available since September 2023 – [Alternative Public Safety Report: Safety for All, at the Expense of None](#)
- Commissioners Douglas and Hardesty attended Integrated Reentry and Correctional Support (IRACS) event at Monroe County Courthouse, February 26
  - a) Jayme Whitaker from Mental Health America of Indiana presenting about IRACS
  - b) Program is a management system for managing resources
  - c) Coordinating organizations to support incarcerated people
  - d) Would need to hire 3-4 people that would not already be in any organizations that

exist

- e) Pilot programs in 5 counties in Indiana for about 1 year now (Davies, Dearborn, Scott, Blackford, Delaware)
- f) Could ask these counties about any budget changes
- g) Asked if tracking or seeing any reduction in incarceration budgets or staff needs and that is not being tracked
- h) Public comment expressing strong feelings about who is actually on the ground helping in community now and how they should be supported (possibly as opposed to an internal program like this)
- New jail – third location under review at West State Road 46 and Hunter Valley Road
  - a) Feasibility study happening on that location while feasibility study on current jail does not seem to have actually been completed, assumption seems to be that there is no way it can be used
- Transition team for new jail – team should come from current jail staff and will need to backfill to replace those correctional officers, onboarding takes 8 weeks minimum
- At Convening for Inclusive Advantage meeting, Commissioner Douglas met Tina Reynolds from Women on the Rise Telling HerStory (WoRTH) working with Indiana Recovery Alliance
  - a) She is willing to talk to Monroe County Women’s Commission and/or subcommittee; WoRTH helps incarcerated women
  - b) Ms. Reynolds was arrested multiple times and gave birth while handcuffed in jail, has lived experience with incarceration

**C. Outreach Subcommittee (Commissioners Iruoje, Belton, and Hardesty)**

- Purpose: Create and maintain programs that support our mission; current focus is web design camp
- Meeting on Mondays but do not have next meeting scheduled yet
- Met about Girls Web Design Camp on March 4 to address concerns from IU and Monroe County legal counsel and County Commissioners regarding MOU that camp is only for girls and thus is discriminating against boys
  - a) Sent message to Molly Turner-King (Monroe County legal counsel) that camp can be open to any gender and Molly Turner-King responded that we should also change name to take out “Girls” or it will still be discriminating against boys
  - b) Email response with suggestion to call it Monroe County Women’s Commission Web Design Camp (requires Women’s Commission vote)
    1. This name change is analogous to IU’s basketball camps, which were called boys and girls camps previously and are now named for men’s coach and women’s coach; boys camp website encourages girls to sign up for girls camp
    2. 2011 IU Girls Basketball Camp announced:  
[https://iuhoosiers.com/news/2011/2/4/Join\\_IU\\_Women\\_s\\_Basketball\\_for\\_Summer\\_Basketball\\_Camp\\_in\\_June](https://iuhoosiers.com/news/2011/2/4/Join_IU_Women_s_Basketball_for_Summer_Basketball_Camp_in_June)
    3. 2024 Teri Moren Basketball Camp:  
<http://www.terimorenbasketballcamps.com/About%20Us>
    4. 2024 Boys-only Mike Woodson Basketball Camp where girls are encouraged to sign up for the Teri Moren Basketball Camp:  
<https://www.mikewoodsonbasketballcamps.com/june-day-camp.cfm>
- Commissioner Hardesty moves to change Girls Web Design Camp name to Monroe County Women’s Commission Web Design Camp; Commissioner Iruoje seconds (**All Approve**)
- Girls Coding Camp has occurred in the past at IU so unclear why this is a problem now

and why Monroe County legal counsel and County Commissioners did not have any issue with calling it Girls Web Design Camp until IU raised concern

- This camp is about equity, not equality; Women and girls in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) need to be supported and uplifted, cannot have reverse discrimination against dominant group (boys, in this case)
- Commissioners made a proclamation for International Women’s Day on March 6 <https://catstv.net/m.php?q=13322> (14:45-17:56) that includes quote in direct opposition to position being taken about web design camp: “we recognize and appreciate the potential that local individuals and area groups such as Monroe County Women’s Commission have to affect important change in the ongoing fight for equal rights and representation for women in political, professional, and personal life”; maybe need public comment at County Commissioners meeting or talk with County Commissioners at office hours
- Commissioner Douglas question – Who is our governing body? County Commissioners or County Council or both? Maybe Commissioner Hingle can have this conversation with commissioners and council – Executive Committee (Commissioners Hingle and Douglas) can take this to office hours and ask **(Action Item)**
- Ex-officio members from County Council and County Commissioners are not present this year yet and County Commissioners ex-officio member is vacant so far this year
- [Monroe County Code Chapter 230 Duties](#) – Women’s Commission may undertake specific initiatives assigned to it by the Monroe County Board of Commissioners and/or the Monroe County Council; The Commission may seek approval from the Monroe County Board of Commissioners to undertake other duties and may proceed to perform such duties when specifically directed to do so by the Board of Commissioners
  - a) This needs clarity on whether other duties *require* approval and is that approval only from the County Commissioners?

**D. Data Subcommittee (Commissioners Hingle and Sobiech)**

- Purpose: Become more grounded in who we serve through data; current focus is creating survey
- No updates

**V. New Business**

- A. Commissioner Hardesty as Secretary will update shared Google calendar of meetings and events, especially to remove events that are no longer occurring **(Action Item)**
- B. New Women’s Commission members – Commissioners Otto and Douglas know people who are interested or have applied for commission
  - No vacancies for members at this time
  - Would have to increase size of Commission
  - County Commissioners encouraging people to participate in Women’s Commission even if they are not on the commission
  - Could include this as a topic to discuss with County Commissioners in office hours **(Action Item)**

**V. Public Comment – none**

**Meeting adjourned at 6:30pm**