

City of Bloomington, IN

October 2017 CSW Minutes

THE COMMISSION OF THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Thursday, October 5, 2017 5:30pm

McCloskey Room, Suite 135

City Hall

401 N. Morton Street Bloomington, IN

Commissioners Present: Debby Herbenick, Jacqueline Fernette, Beth Friedman Kirk, Sylvia Martinez, Regina Moore, Ashley Hazelrig

Commissioners Absent:

County Commissioner Present:

Staff Liaison Present: Sue Owens

High School Representative: Lisi Skiba

Community Guests Present: Sharlene Newman, Maresa Murry

Call to order: The meeting was called to order by Debbie at 5:37 pm.

Additions to Agenda:

- Jacqueline requested a reminder on sub-committee sign up (so that we are clear)
- Bicentennial invitation – Sue
- Time for guests, Sharlene and Maresa to speak

Approval of Minutes: The minutes for September were reviewed and two corrections were requested: correction of Lisi and Nicole Bolden's names. Minutes approved with corrections.

Old Business – WHM Lunch – March 21, 2018

Jacqueline Fernette gave update. In the past, in-kind sponsors were given comp tickets at the same level as cash sponsors and she noted that the event ended up in the red. The planning committee considered recognizing in-kind sponsors with a thank you at the event but no tickets. Some were upset by this proposal. As a result, in-kind sponsors will be listed as sponsors on event materials but will not be given tickets.

Jacqueline also presented proposal to increase lunch tickets from \$22.50 to \$25. Increase necessary because costs associated with running the event have also increased (food, credit card fees, and such).

Sue Owens noted that the fees for the BCT contract are also increasing and that the City recommends increasing the lunch price to \$25. After deliberation, the commission agreed that ticket price should increase to \$25. Motion moved to increase price to \$25. Second motion by Regina and motion approved by commission.

Sue then asked whether price for reserved tables should also increase. Commission discussed increasing table prices to \$275. Jacqueline moved to increase table price to \$275. Second motion by Regina. Motion approved by commission.

Jacqueline requested that we table discussion about co-sponsors for lunch event until next month. She handed out a list of potential co-sponsors. We are to review for next month's meeting.

New Business – Guests, Sharlene and Maresa speak about Indy Star article – black girls in Bloomington

Sharlene's daughter attended BHS North (lead author on piece). The piece summarizes results of a study on the experiences of black girls attending BHS North and South. Girls interviewed for the study. Girls reported being treated differently than black boys suggesting that boys were treated better. Generally, the girls in the study felt (and feel) invisible in Bloomington. But they also reported overt racism in their classrooms, perpetrated by peers, teachers, and administrators. The girls leading the study and respondents just want a safe space in schools, not a special club.

Sharlene's recommendation is that teachers and administrators need training on how to create safe spaces. Maresa mentioned how teachers need training to tackle difficult conversations about race (e.g., the N word).

Long discussion followed about the ways in which we can get MCCSC and appropriate school administrators to address this issue. Thus far there has been silence.

Debby contacted Sue Wanzer and Dr. DeMuth and Ashley has tried contacting MCCSC but to no avail.

Commission agreed that it will continue to put pressure on MCCSC and Herald Times to address the findings of the study. Debby will contact Sue again before we go to news/radio outlets.

Commission discussed working with the Commission on Children & Youth to write a joint letter to the Herald Times or WFIU.

Old Business – WLD – March 8th, 2018

Beth gave an update on the Women's Leadership Development event. Beth noted the theme for the event, "Women & Media." The event will include panelists who will address portrayals of women in the media but also how women use media to promote

activism. Currently, Ashley, Sylvia, and Beth serve on the sub-committee. Lisi will present on the use of hashtags.

We discussed the possibility of having Sharlene's daughter as a panelist.

Beth also shared that she will not seek another term on the commission, as she will be serving on the Board of the Indiana Chapter of AFCC. Jacqueline asked whether we could begin process to fill the vacancy. Sue noted that Beth should submit her letter of resignation early so that we may begin filling the spot.

High School Representative Report – Lisi Skiba

Lisi noted she took careful notes as Sharlene spoke and wondered the extent to which her peers experience overt and/or covert racism. Lisi noted that the new principal might not be responsive to the issue, as he has not been reaching out to students generally.

Debbie reminded the group that we will likely meet for 2 hours in November. She asked that we bring additional ideas for events to November's meeting.

Meeting adjourned: 7:08pm