

**Denver Women's Commission**  
**Minutes**  
**August 4, 2011**

Present

Caitlin Quander  
Eric Gonzales  
Dolores Atencio  
Kathy Bacon  
Jane Frances Echeozo  
Marcia Helfant  
Ursula Null (telephoned in at 6:40)  
Michele Ostrander  
Toni Panetta  
James Smithwick  
Chaer Robert  
Derek Okubo, special guest, new Agency Executive Director

July Minutes

Caitlin Quander made motion to adopt. Jim seconded the motion, commission unanimously voted to adopt.

New Commissioners Welcome

Caitlin Quander welcomed new commissioners - Dolores Atencio, Kathy Bacon, Michele Ostrander and Toni Panetta. Each Commissioner introduced themselves.

Sunni Rodgers last meeting as a commissioner with the DWC. Caitlin Quander thanked her for her contributions and time as a commissioner. Derek Okubo presented the DWC framed certificate to her.

New Director for HR/CR Derek Okubo

Derek Okubo introduced himself, talked about his past experience, how he has worked with Mayor Hancock in the past, and his goals as Director of HR/CR.

Events and Marketing Committee

Committee Chair, Brandi Shigley, is out of state for her Grandmothers' 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

HR/CR Diversity Awards Event – October 27, 2011. In Brandi's absence, Caitlin Quander presented summary put together by Mayra Rosa (absent) on the HR/CR Diversity Awards Event set for October 27, 2011. Mayra Rosa attended the planning meeting for the event. The Commission for People with Disabilities is taking the lead on planning this event. Apparently, they are trying to get back to having this event every year, hosted by a different commission. Caitlin Quander noted that the event date is close to the date of the Colorado Lawmakers' Award Event hosted by the Denver Women's Commission and the Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce. It is currently unclear what amount of money the Commission for People with Disabilities is asking each commission to commit to the event. Caitlin Quander contacted the organizer prior to the meeting, but didn't hear back. Some clarifying questions were asked regarding what HR/CR is and each commission's relationship to it. Marcia Helfant asked if we could make a motion to provide up to a certain amount and that if the amount was higher another vote would be needed. Toni Panetta asked a question regarding our budget and allocations of funds. Chaer Roberts explained that the Commission has 3 pots of money for the DWC: 1) anniversary money that was fundraised by Commissioners contained in a special revenue fund; 2) annual city money; and 3) official function money. If the annual budget from the City of Denver is not used the money will revert back to general funds. The anniversary money was raised by DWC and would not revert if not used. Toni Panetta asked how much money is used by DWC per year, Chaer said about \$600 annually. The Colorado Lawmakers' Award Event budget comes from the Denver Women's Chamber of Commerce, DWC provides print and mailing. The legislative breakfast cost \$35 and the cost of a ream of paper. The next planning meeting for the HR/CR Diversity Awards Event is August 11, 2011.

Ursula Null made a motion of providing up to \$100 to the HR/CR Diversity Awards Event. Marcia Helfant seconded the motion. The Motion was passed unanimously by all commissioners. The comment was made that each commission should have to provide the same amount; we shouldn't have to contribute more than others.

Caitlin Quander continued the presentation on the HR/CR Diversity Awards Event set for October 27, 2011. The DWC will select a person to be recognized at the October 27<sup>th</sup> event, Chaer went over the criteria that the event planning committee outlined for the organization or person that commissioners should use: 1) must work or live in Denver; 2) cannot be a current member of a Denver commission/board; 3) cannot be a City or State employee or city or state agency. The following ideas were thrown out for consideration by commissioners and some discussion occurred: Hazel Whitsett-retiring Exec Director Northeast Women's Center, The Gathering Place, Women's Bean Project, Warren Village, Juana Bordas- A MiCasa Founder, Diane Keene, former Mayor Peña- Created DWC. Caitlin Quander then tabled the discussion until the September meeting where Commission will take a vote on who to honor. If any commissioners have further ideas in the meantime, they were directed to email the group.

#### HR/CR Advisory Board

Jan Frances Echeozo reported that the advisory board held its retreat last week. The new Executive Director Derek Okubo was present and introduced himself to all the commission representatives. Jan Frances Echeozo reported that they talked about police brutality which took up most of the meeting.

The group was not sure how to present the issue to the police. Jan Frances Echeozo reported that there was discussion by the advisory board about planning a fair like event for the public for all of the commissions so that commissioners can get to know each other and learn about the other commissions. There is an opening for the chair and vice chair of the advisory board.

### Legislative Advocacy Committee

Marcia Helfant and Jane Frances Echeozo went over the nomination list for the Colorado Lawmakers' Award and why each person was being nominated: Senator Betty Boyd, Representative Amy Stephens, Councilwoman Carla Madison, and Representative Brian DelGrosso. Marcia stated that the Colorado Women's Chamber has voted on these nominees and passed them. There was discussion among commissioners about concerns regarding some of these nominees and their voting records on women's issues. Chaer Roberts stated that she did review their voting records prior to this meeting and found that the Republican candidates which several commission members raised concerns over had better records than most of their Republican members. However, they did follow party-line votes on some legislation which was not in the best interests of women. Ursula Null discussed the need to find people that were acceptable to both the Denver Women's Commission and the Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce. Ursula Null stated that she and Caitlin Quander were currently doing outreach to various people and organizations that knew Councilwoman Carla Madison to put together a summary that can be read when the award is presented to her. Marcia also discussed that the Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce wasn't amenable to several more liberal nominees.

Caitlin Quander made a motion to nominate each nominee individually and held a vote (do not have record of who seconded):

Senator Betty Boyd passed

Representative Amy Stephens passed (Dolores and Jim abstained)

Councilwoman Carla Madison Passed

Representative Brian DelGrosso Passed (Jim, Dolores, Toni abstained)

There was some discussion on who would present Councilwoman Carla Madison's award and who would accept it on her behalf (her husband). Ursula Null would follow up with Donna Evans to clarify if she wanted to present it.

Denver Sick Day Ballot Initiative. This item was on the July agenda as well. Chaer Roberts put this on the agenda again for awareness as the proponents have obtained enough signatures that it will now be on the ballot. Chaer Roberts previously emailed out the ballot language to Commissioners after requests at the July meeting. The Mayor has not taken a stand on the issue. Marcia Helfant stated that she would like the DWC to take a stand on it. She felt that we should support it because women are often the person who needs to stay home with a sick child or take them to the doctor and are also the people that are in more likely in lower end jobs that don't allow for these days. We need to protect their jobs. Dolores Atencio proposed that the DWC could vote on a resolution on the issue. Toni Panetta provided a summary of why she thinks the DWC should support the ballot initiative and

volunteered to assist with the drafting of the resolution. Because of the timing of this ballot initiative in light of the November ballot, the DWC decided to take a position on the ballot initiative at this meeting. Marcia Helfant, Jane Frances Echezeo and Toni Panetta will draft a resolution and then the commission will vote on it at the next meeting.

Marcia Helfant made the motion to support the Denver Sick Day Ballot Initiative and that the DWC would prepare a statement providing the reasons for our support. Caitlin Quander made the motion to amend Marcia Helfant's motion to call it a resolution and Marcia Helfant accepted Caitlin Quander's motion to amend and her motion was amended. Motion passed unanimously (do not have record of who seconded).

Marcia Helfant, Jane Frances Echezeo and Toni Panetta will have draft resolution for commission members to review and vote on at the next meeting.

#### City Government Transition and Director's Report

Chaer Roberts talked briefly about some possible combining of different organizations or areas of the City of Denver government under the umbrella of the HR/CR agency. Running low on time at meeting so she will present more in the future on the director's report, but did provide copies of her report on her job performance standards.

#### New Business

Eric Gonzales talked about googlegroups and how it worked and communicating via email. He stated that he would send an invitation and invite the new members to be part of googlegroups before the next meeting and if any problems still exist he will work with the individual commissioner to work through them.

Caitlin Quander asked new members to think about what committee to be on and it would be discussed further at our September meeting.

Jane Frances Echezeo talked about an event that she is involved with, the National Council of Women Society USA. She invited Chaer Roberts to speak at the event and asked if the DWC would buy a table for the event at a cost of \$200. Several commissioners asked some questions about the event and who would be attending. There will be about 300 people attending and they will mostly be from the Denver and Colorado area. The event will be held at a hotel on Colorado Blvd on Sept 3, 2011.

Toni Panetta made the motion to buy a table for \$200, Marcia Helfant seconded the motion and the commission unanimously voted to pass the motion.

Caitlin Quander raised discussion regarding how we can utilize former commissioners and other members of the public interested in the commission. Currently, they are friends with us on facebook

and receive the monthly Newscard, but that is about it. We have had interest and don't have a specific committee or organization to direct them to for involvement. Caitlin Quander suggested some type of subcommittees. A commissioner suggested using them for specific events on committees. Dolores Atencio suggested forming a fundraising arm called "Friends of the Denver Women's Commission." Caitlin Quander then tabled the discussion for the September meeting as we were reaching 8:00.