

**Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Regular Meeting – May 22, 2006**  
**Office of Personnel Management Room G91**

The Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women met in Room G91 of the Office of Personnel Management on May 22, 2006. Vice-Chair Pat Martin called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

**Commissioners Present:** Vicki French, Catherine Haynes, Kathryn Jones, Lou Kohlman, Pat Martin, Bernice Mitchell, Jennifer Paustenbaugh, Claudean Reynolds, Mary Walker

**Commissioners Excused:** Bob Darcy, Marilyn Ehlers, Sally Frasier, Rebecca Kennedy, Debbe Leftwich, Jilda Motley, Anita Norman, Patricia Presley, Renita Shofner, Marlene Smith, Margaret Swimmer, Ginny Wilson, Christie Woodson

**Commissioners Absent:** Betty Boyd, Lou Kerr, Denise Kinzie, Angela Monson, Rita Newton, Rowena Ogden, Sheila Sheaman, Renita Shofner, Marlene Smith, Janelle Walker, Christie Woodson

**Advisory Council Present:** Fern Green Bowling, Glenda Carlile, Kathy Huston, Chris Morriss, Penny Painter, Leslie Thomas

**Visitors Present:** Susan Hardy Brooks, Citizen's Policy Center

**Women's History Moment:** Bernice Mitchell shared stories of three women who are making a difference for women in Africa and the Middle East. Ellen Johnson Saleef was recently elected the first woman president of Liberia. A major campaign theme was the empowerment of women. Queen Renayah of Jordan has as her goal that women will be treated equally in all phases of life and at all levels. Finally, Moussa, a nine-year old Nigerian girl, lost an arm and a leg to a land mine. Interviewed later, she said she wants to be educated because she wants to be a doctor.

**Guest Speakers:**

Leslie Thomas, Advisory Council member, spoke about the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Ms. Thomas is the Society's Campaign Coordinator. Their next event is the Light the Night Walk, an evening walking event in Oklahoma City and Tulsa. Participants will carry balloons with blinding lights – survivors will have white balloons, and family and supporters will carry red balloons. Next year they will have a "Men and Women" event. For eight weeks before the black tie event, men and women "candidates" will campaign to raise money for the organization. At the event the most successful fundraisers will be rewarded. Rewards will also go to a "boy and girl", who will be patients rather than fundraisers. Ms. Thomas noted that Commissioners are welcome at both the walk and the fundraising event.

Susan Hardy Brooks, from the Citizen's Policy Center, spoke to the Commission. The CPC is a nonpartisan nonprofit research and education organization. It conducts policy research in order to develop solutions and share education, information and ideas with citizens, policy makers, opinion leaders and the media. The CPC believes the state will thrive if Oklahoma creates a cycle of opportunity, composed of healthy birth and good health, education and job skills, good jobs, business ownership and self-sufficiency, and homeownership and wealth accumulation. Areas they have analyzed include, broadly speaking: health care, education, economic development, tax systems and public funding, criminal justice, and civic engagement and leadership. Ms. Brooks brought Commissioners a handout with details about the organization. Ms. Brooks described a proposal the CPC wishes to put to the Commission. The CPC would like to partner with the Commission and the Women's Foundation to conduct a comprehensive study of the status of Oklahoma women in relation to the cycle of opportunity framework. The CPC has a \$100,000 grant with a \$150,000 matching grant from the Carl Albert Center, which must be used by November 2006. As Ms. Brooks explained it the CPC would manage the project and research, the Women's Foundation would help with funding, and the Commission would assist the CPC with other planning and committee work. The CPC would release the study and disseminate it to policy leaders, and the results could be presented at a conference, such as the Women's Summit, or a stand-alone conference. Results could also be presented in meetings with policy leaders around the state, using their ideas on issues and solutions, and the results to move policy.

In a discussion following this presentation, which was well received, Kathryn Jones noted that the Commission has been looking for ways to partner with the Women's Foundation. She and Bernice Mitchell noted that the Commission has, in the past, had outreach meetings of various types throughout the state. Pat Martin and Jennifer Pastenbaugh suggested that this proposal will be brought to a future meeting for discussion and consideration.

**Roll Call:** Designated Secretary Jennifer Pastenbaugh called the roll and noted that nine (9) Commissioners, *three (3)* Advisory Council Members, and one guest were present. The Commissioners present did not constitute a quorum.

**Minutes of April 28, 2006:** The Minutes were approved *as amended*.

**Elections:** The Nominating Committee presented the slate of officers. Nominated for Chair: Jennifer Pastenbaugh; Vice Chair, Catherine Haynes; Advisory Council, Jilda Motley; Nominating Committee, Mary Walker and Anita Norman. The nominees for Secretary, Marlene Smith and Ginny Wilson, declined the nomination. The Vice Chair called for nominations from the floor. Kathryn Jones nominated Lou Kohlman, and Pat Martin seconded the nomination. The slate was called again with Lou Kohlman as the nominee for Secretary.

## Reports:

The Vice Chair discussed the upcoming Retreat, to be held at the Oklahoma History Center on Thursday, June 15, 2006. The Center will be open at 8:30. The Commission's Business Meeting will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. From 10:00 a.m. until noon Commissioners will hear Laura Boyd and other women present a program on choices in policy making. Some current women legislators may be invited to attend this portion of the day, to hear this presentation. Lunch and a legislative update will happen from noon to one, and the program will finish at 3:00 p.m.

The Vice Chair also commented on the Southern Women in Public Service conference held May 7-9 in Nashville. Pat Martin, Kathryn Jones and Lou Kohlman attended that conference. Pat Martin noted that the Commission had voted last year to explore hosting that conference in Oklahoma City, and that the Commission is continuing to explore the possibility of hosting the conference in 2008 or later.

Lou Kohlman gave the group's report on the SWIPS conference.

Report on "Southern Women in Public Service" conference, hosted by the Stennis Center for Public Service, in Nashville, Tennessee, May 7-9, 2006.

Commissioners attending were Pat Martin, Kathy Jones, and Lou Kohlman. Other Oklahoma women attending included Senator Angela Monson, who was honored as a Pacesetter and spoke at the Monday morning plenary session; Laura Boyd, who spoke in one of the concurrent sessions; Greta Shepherd Stewart, and Marcia Bennett. Senator Monson is a Commissioner, and Drs. Boyd and Stewart are members of the Advisory Council.

The plenary session speakers were:

CN)CM Command Master Chief Jacqueline DiRosa and Vice Admiral Ann Rondeau, the two highest-ranking enlisted and officer women in the Navy;

U.S. Representative Marsha Blackburn of Tennessee;

U.S. Representative Debbie Wasserman Schulz of Florida;

Karenna Gore Schiff, Author and attorney;

U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao,

Tennessee Governor Phil Bredesen.

Governor Bredesen presented the Lindy Boggs Award to Dolly Parton in recognition of her public service, including founding the Imagination Library.

Workshops Commissioners attended included:

*5 C's of a Successful Campaign*, Deb Sofield

*Issues and Strategies for Women Business Owners*, Claire Gastanaga, Mary MacRae, both from National Association of Women Business Owners

*Developing Leadership in Others*, Dr. Carole Leland

*Making Hard Choices Wisely*, Laura Boyd, WILL; Beverly Marrero, State Rep. from Tennessee; Angela Monson, Former State Senator, Oklahoma; Diana Urban, State Rep. from Kentucky

*15 Rules for the Road*, Deb Sofield

*Taking Charge of Your Own Leadership Development*, Dr. Carole Leland

The Commissioners and women from Oklahoma discussed issues and compared programs with a variety of women, but particularly with members of other states' women's Commissions. There were many Commissioners there from throughout the South. We also discussed the possibility of bringing the conference to Oklahoma, as our Commission had previously discussed, and will deliver a separate report on that issue.

The Chair had no report.

The Advisory Council Chair had no report.

The Secretary had no report.

Commissioners will receive a Summit report at the next meeting.

**Committee Assignments:**

Bernice Mitchell noted that at one time Committees traveled across the state and held round-table discussions. She urges the Commission to resume this practice and suggested that the matter be discussed at the Retreat. She and Kathryn Jones remembered that the Advisory Council also held statewide meetings on Commission topics once or twice a year. These were public hearings involving women's issues. Kathy Huston noted the importance of the health care committee topic to rural communities. Commissioners agreed this idea might fit in with the CPC research study proposal.

**Other Business:** Bernice Mitchell discussed the National Association of Commissions on the Status of Women. She had her first conference call Board meeting for that organization. She submitted the Oklahoma Women's Almanac for an award. The NACW has a low profile at the moment because it has no permanent office space or staff. Plans for the upcoming convention are proceeding. Commissioners and Advisory Council members interested in attending include Bernice Mitchell, Jennifer Pastenbaugh, Anita Norman, Kathy Huston, and Claudean Reynolds.

**Next Meeting Date:** The Retreat, Thursday June 15 at the Oklahoma History Center, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.