MINUTES
Oregon Commission for Women (OCFW)
Friday, March 17, 2017, 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm
800 NE Oregon Street, Room 612, Portland OR 97232

Attendees:
Chair: Dr. Barbara Ramírez Spencer
Vice Chair: Kimberly Olson
Commissioners: Dr. Doris Cancel-Tirado (phone), Clara Elena Beas-Fitzgerald, Nikki Fisher, Dr. Adrienne Ochs, Stephane Vardavas, Sen. Monnes Anderson (phone), Rep. Sheri Malstrom
Absent: 
Guests: Lili Hoag, Director, CaseWorks; Jessica Bull, OCFW Research Intern; Michele Malick, Department of Corrections
Staff: Lucy Baker, Nancy Kramer, Ty Schwoeffermann

II. Approval of the agenda
MOTION (Ochs/Beas-Fitzgerald): To approve the agenda as written. CARRIED.

III. Approval of the November 2016 Minutes
MOTION (Olson/Beas-Fitzgerald): To approve the January 2017 minutes as written. CARRIED.

IV. Public Comment
There was no public comment.

V. Guest Presentations
A. Lili Hoag, Director - CaseWorks, The Oregon Care Economy - The Case for Public Care Investment

Ms. Hoag discussed the challenges in providing care, including the unaffordability of childcare and elder care for many families. In the economy of care workers: childcare and elder care are low paying jobs, not family wage. Most childcare workers have no health insurance or other benefits. By comparison, Oregon infuses funds into construction jobs and subsidies to other fields, but not childcare and elder care. As elder care jobs increase with the aging of the Baby Boomers, it is difficult for people to live on the jobs’ low wages.

Tax credits, which might ease the financial burden, are not helpful for those who do not file taxes, many of whom work in the care industry. Oregon’s Project Independence that pays for in-home care, is facing elimination or severe cuts this legislative session. People living in group homes are government funded after spending down, but they have very large
employee turnover rates because of health and wage issues. CaseWorks and its allies are looking at ways to make the care giving system more livable and sustainable.

Ms. Hoag noted that providing care, either paid or unpaid, is a women’s issue. There is some movement towards normalizing the idea of men taking time off to care for children and parents, but it is slow and still dominated by women. Domestic work specifically has been excluded from the U.S. Labor laws. These laws have their historic roots in slavery and the Southern states which wanted to ensure there would be a plentiful supply of cheap domestic labor.

The Commission thanked Lili for her presentation and asked for ways to be helpful in the policy work ahead. Ms. Hoag offered to stay in touch and include the OCFW in upcoming policy work.

B. Jessica Bull, OCFW Public Policy Intern, PSU Capstone Project, Equity Toolbox Project

Jessica reported on her research with the OCFW and the Oregon State Library, conducting national best practice reviews, finding and compiling influential policy studies on state responses to women and poverty, some of which was focused on Welfare programs. Welfare is called TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) in Oregon. Ms. Bull worked with Chair Spencer to review the Count Her In findings to help narrow the focus of her OCFW research to poverty.

The resources and analysis she has begun to build are part of the OCFW’s commitment to creating Equity Policy Toolboxes with the State Library as part of their InfoPages application. InfoPages are used extensively by essential state agencies including the Oregon Health Authority, Department of Human Services and Department of Education, to make relevant data and studies widely available internally. Jessica compiled information about the ways states make Welfare/TANF more effective in addressing women’s needs and access to prosperity. She will partner with the State Library and the State agencies associated with Welfare/TANF to develop an InfoPage about this information during the next phase of her research.

In reviewing Welfare/TANF demographics nationally and in Oregon, it is primarily a women’s program.

Best practices for lifting women from poverty within welfare/TANF: Ms. Bull focused her work on addressing poverty among women and their families. She noted that there are a number of critical reasons for poverty that are different in urban vs rural settings and for people of color. Her national best practice review on welfare and related programs showed several successful practices:

1. Two Generation approaches.
2. Linking parent and child services and systems.
3. State investment in universal Pre-K.
4. Asset building – Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) linked to Individual Development Accounts (IDA), pre-IDA Savings accounts, and increasing EITC participation with targeted outreach and information.
**Research recommendations**: She recommends the OCFW consider the practices listed above areas as fruitful policy areas to explore with key state agency and community partners, and legislators.

**Existing programs to improve**: Oregon’s Parents as Scholars program could be better planned and would likely have improved outcomes through re-design. Some states have had good success in this area.

Jessica's documents will be available on the State Library and OCFW websites.

**VI. Commissioners’ Reports**

**Commissioner Dr. Adrienne Ochs** has accepted a new position at the Higher Education Coordinating Council (HECC), building relationships with colleges and universities statewide. Commissioners congratulated Adrienne on her new position.

**Commissioner Dr. Doris Cancel-Tirado** attended the joint AAUW/OCFW legislative day at the capitol with one of her Public Health students. She attended the Women of Achievement Awards and also wrote testimony on behalf of the OCFW. Ty supported Doris’ testimony work.

**Vice Chair Kimberly Olson** has accepted a new position as Senior Policy Advisor for the State Treasurer, focusing her work the Oregon Savings Growth Plan. Commissioners congratulated Kim on her new position. She also drafted the statement issued by the Advocacy Commissions on the EO regarding travel bans which has now been publically issued as a press release. Kim gave testimony in support of Sen. Monnes Anderson’s new Senate Continuing Resolution (SCR) 2 that recognizes the OCFW’s Women of Achievement honorees before the full Senate each year.

**Commissioner Clara Beas-Fitzgerald** has been using the Latinos in Oregon and Count Her In reports for her radio show. The public can call in and hear the show at 712-775-6634, Saturdays at 11am. Elected director of nonprofit, event is coming up. Started graduate school for leadership development.

**Commissioner Rep. Sheri Malstrom** was appointed to be the OCFW’s representative by the Speaker of the House. Commissioners congratulated Sheri and welcomed her back to the commission. As a Public Health nurse her experience has been in high demand in the legislature. She carried the first bill of the session and also was selected to be House Speaker for the day, an honor for new legislators. Rep. Malstrom serves on the House Healthcare Committee and Early Childhood Committee.

**Commissioner Nikki Fisher** attended the AAUW/OCFW lobby day, and the Women’s Foundation gathering. She wrote and delivered testimony on behalf of the OCFW on HB 2005, Pay Equity, and recognizing female veterans. Nikki also secured the donations of gifts and flowers for the Women of Achievement awards’ honorees and attended the event.

**Commissioner Stephanie Vardavas** wrote testimony for HB 3060 on behalf of the OCFW regarding state contractors and requirements of non-discrimination policies. She was unable to attend the WOA this year but was happy to contribute the cake for the celebration. Commissioners thanked Stephanie for the cake and commented on how beautiful and delicious it was.
VII. OCFW Old Business

A. Legislative Discussion

The Commission discussed which members will lead on writing and submitting testimony on priority bills:

- SB 242, Family Preservation Program funding – Dr. Adrienne Ochs
- SB 81, Establish a Veterans Services navigator – Nikki Fisher
- HB 3087, Paid family leave – Kimberly Olson
- HB 3391, Reproductive health – Dr. Doris Cancel-Tirado
- HB 2005, Pay Equity – Dr. Barbara Spencer
- HB 3078, Alternative Sentencing (Safety and Savings) – Dr. Ochs
- SB 242, Bill of Rights: Children of Incarcerated Parents – Clara Beas Fitzgerald
- SCR 2 and 27, for WOA – Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson
- HB 3060 Gender discrimination policies for contractors – Stephanie Vardavas

1. Joint AAUW Legislative Day 2/15 recap Dr. Cancel-Tirado reported on the excellent lobby day with speakers on the budgeting experience. A student attended with Dr. Cancel-Tirado and visited with a number of legislators on Equal Pay and other topics. The AAUW legislative director Trish Garner did a great job of preparing the AAUW and OCFW members for an informative and active day.

2. Review and approval of OCFW’s priority bill list: Ty reviewed the Tier 1 bills that the OCFW has prioritized from their bill search using key words. These are bills that will be tracked and supported with testimony. They are Tier 1: HB 2005, HB 2167, HB 2232, HB 2724, HB 3078, HB 3087, HB 3391, SB 81, SB 242, SB 5501, SCR 2, SCR 27.

MOTION (Olson/Beas-Fitzgerald): To approve OCFW Slate of priority bills in the 2017 session with the understanding that the OWHWA bill priorities may be considered for further additions. CARRIED.

3. Ratify OCFW’s e-votes. Since the last meeting of the OCFW several bills have been reviewed electronically by the Commissioners and have been approved as the subject of joint support by the Oregon Advocacy Commissions or the OCFW. They include:
   i. HB 2005 – Pay Equity
   ii. SB 752 – Pay Equity
   iii. HB 3391 – Reproductive Health
   iv. SCR 2 – Women of Achievement 2015
   v. SB 5501 – OACO Budget
   vi. SB 280 – Inclusive Oregon Studies
   vii. HB 2845 – Ethnic Studies
   viii. HB 3060 – Anti-discrimination in contracting

MOTION (Vardavas/Ochs). To ratify e-votes on OCFW support for the bills above. CARRIED.

4. Joint Health Committee meeting update: Ty and Dr. Cancel-Tirado reviewed the most recent meeting of the OAC’s Joint Health Committee. Lucretia Suarez addressed the committee on starting a collaboration in Mental Health called Connexiones. OCHA is initiating a policy research project with OHA and DHS on the subject of Latino Mental
Health Disparities which will include the collaboration partners. Fabiana Wallace also addressed the committee regarding cultural competence among healthcare providers.

5. Bi-weekly Legislative Update call reminder – Next update with Ty on OAC bills and the legislature is 3/31 at 11am. The call in number is sent by Nancy in advance to all commissioners.

B. Women of Achievement Ceremony Review
The Commission reviewed the WOA ceremony which went well. The Governor was able to stay for the reception immediately following. It was well attended and the honorees gave inspiring remarks. With the support of Sen. Monnes Anderson, the WOA honorees will now be recognized by the Senate for their leadership, which is a wonderful addition to the WOA experience. OCFW will work to have the ceremony and the Senate recognition on the same day if possible.

C. Women in Prison discussion
Chair Spencer, VC Olson, Commissioner Ochs, Sen. Laurie Monnes Anderson and Sen. Dembrow met by conference call to discuss whether a legislative workgroup devoted to recommendations on women in prison would be helpful in the 2017 session. After consideration and connecting with Heidi Moawad, Policy Advisor to the Governor on safety issues, the group felt that several prison focused discussions were already moving forward. The OCFW will track 2017 legislation developed from the existing work group on Safety and Savings, and will work with Ty to engage with further taskforce discussions on eliminating the need to build a new women’s prison in Oregon. Chair Spencer thanked all those who discussed the issue and will keep them engaged as the OCFW becomes a more regular participant in policy on prison issues for women.

D. OCFW’s Biennial report to the Governor and the legislature. The Commission made its final review of its 2015-17 biennial report.

MOTION (Vardavas/Olson): To approve OCFW Biennial report. CARRIED.

VIII. New Business
A. Proposal to convene workshop for underrepresented female communities on how to apply for boards and commissions on local and state levels
The OCFW considered ways it can raise awareness among underrepresented communities of women of opportunities to join and engage the boards and commissions that run parts of state government and associated policy. The Commission agreed that it will explore the possibility by hosting such a discussion in SE Portland and, from it, develop a template that could be replicated by Commissioner Beas Fitzgerald and others elsewhere in Oregon. A number of Commissioners had ideas on potential community partners to support the effort including reaching out to the other Advocacy Commissions, Rural Development Initiatives, Latino organizations, and the Bus Project. Chair Spencer will discuss the idea also with the Executive Appointments Director Mary Moller, and Diversity and Community Engagement Director Serena Stoudamire Wesley.

B. Commissioner Openings – Existing Strengths and Gaps
The Commission considered the diversity and skills represented on the OCFW and took stock of others that might be included. Ideas included a member of the Transgender community, women veterans, Native Americans, low income, and previously incarcerated women. The commission also noted that as the appointments to the OCFW become more diverse, it may need to
reconsider the time and day on which the OCFW meets to be more flexible. Commissioner Fisher observed that the members of the OCFW have not recently been given the opportunity to self-identify as being part of some of the diverse communities the Commission wishes to attract. She is willing to work with staff to develop a way for commissioners to do so.

The OCFW’s community partners are currently the AAUW and League of Women Voters, which consist mainly of retired professionals. It is important for OCFW to consider other options.

C. OACO’s Budget presentation 2/27/17 – recap.
Chair Spencer discussed the OACO budget presentation she made with the leaders of the three other Advocacy Commissions, and Lucy, for the Joint Ways and Means General Government Sub Committee of the legislature. All the OAC leaders presenting were women and Senator James Manning from Eugene, who is the past Chair of the OCBA, is now a Co-Chair of this legislative subcommittee. The presentation was strong and went well, with many good questions by engaged legislators. The OAC’s were able to use the full 90 minutes allotted for the presentation. Of special interest to the Chairs was a question from the other Co-Chair of the committee, Rep. Greg Smith, regarding the OAC’s understanding of rural populations’ issues. Lucy and OAC Leadership will be working with each Commission to consider and plan their engagement with rural members of their constituent communities.

IX. Administrator’s Report
A. Financial Report
   1. General Fund - A portion of remaining funds have already been used for Nancy's Project Management class and Ty increasing his hours to 3 days/week through the end of this biennium. Looking at possibly replacing staff computers using the remaining GF before the end of the biennium on June 30th, 2017.
   2. Other Funds - OCFW currently has about $3,600 of Other Funds.

B. Administrative paperwork
   Nancy sent the Authorization to Use Personal Vehicle paperwork around to those commissioners who had not yet completed one for 2017.

X. Good of the Order
A. Next OCFW meeting May 19th, 2017, same location.
B. Nominations for OCFW Chair and Vice Chair at May meeting.
C. Announcements. There were no announcements.

XI. Adjourn - Chair Spencer adjourned the meeting at 2:54pm by common consent.