I. Call to Order – Chair Dr. Barbara Spencer called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm. A quorum was established.

II. Review and Approval of September 21, 2018 Agenda
The Agenda was approved by common consent.

III. Approval of July 20, 2018 Minutes
The minutes were approved by common consent.

VI. Public Comment – There was no public comment.

V. Presentation – Gender-Based Violence and Justice in Ethiopia
Mebrahtom Tesfahunegn, Community Solutions Fellow, and Director, Legal Aid Center, Mekelle University, Ethiopia, presented. He shared a slide presentation and several videos on the free legal aid organization he directs in Ethiopia. Women and girls are historically targets of assailants for ritual sexual mutilation, rape, and theft of property in Ethiopia. While there are laws to prevent such treatment, they are seldom enforced. Mr. Tesfahunegn provides legal aid and his organization has served over 37,000 individuals over the past 2 years. Mr. Tesfahunegn is in the US as part of a leadership development fellowship, working with the Portland YWCA. During that time he will further a project that improves women’s rights internationally, working full time within the host agency. His project will develop a collaborative of peer-to-peer connection between US and Ethiopian women, training participants in Ethiopia as paralegals, connected with legal aid. Discussion followed. The OCFW thanked Mr. Tesfahunegn for his enlightening presentation and thanked him for his pursuit of safety and justice on behalf of women internationally.

VI. Commissioners’ Reports
As all Commissioners with reports to share were already on the agenda, the Commission moved on to Old Business.

VII. Old Business

A. Women of Achievement Awards Review and Timeline

The nomination materials are now out but no nominations have been submitted yet. They are open until October 20th. Commissioner Krifka has put the nomination notice on the OCFW Facebook page, and Commissioner Yoshimoto expects a nomination from her outreach. The Women’s Equity Coalition, YWCA, legislators and others have received the nomination form. Send out to community colleges and universities, through HECC with help from Commissioner Ochs.

B. Sexual Harassment at Capitol Follow-up

Chair Spencer provided an update regarding the OCFW’s Capitol Sexual Harassment letter sent to the Senate President and the Speaker of the House. The OCFW Chair and Vice-Chair and Lucy were invited to meet with the President and the Speaker that same week. The meeting included their Chiefs of Staff and General Counsel. There was good exchange between all present and Kim and Barbara covered the points in the OCFW letter.

Chair Spencer reported on the work going forward in a timeframe:
February 2018: Sexual Harassment exposed in a series of articles and statements.
March 2018: President of Senate and House Speaker engage the Law Commission to study and recommend.
May 2018: The BOLI Commissioner addresses OCFW.
June 2018: OCFW sends letter to the legislative leadership including the Speaker and the President, and are invited to meet with the Senate President, House Speaker and their key staff.
August 2018:
  8/1: The BOLI Commissioner submits complaint on several charges leading to investigating.
  8/1: Speaker and President send notice to the Capitol employees on all the work going forward.
  8/24: The legislature responds to BOLI.
End of August formal response of the legislature to the BOLI complaint.
September 2018: Family Forward/OCFW/AAUW met with House Speaker and House leadership to discuss the process, and the Speaker’s desire to hear from individuals who have complaints or reporting they wish to discuss.
December 2018: The Law Commission is expecting to report in December.

Sen. Monnes Anderson noted that there are guidelines coming forward.

The Chair and Vice Chair thanked all the Commissioners who have worked on this and agreed that remaining diligent and a positive force for change is important.

C. U-Visa Group Follow-up

Julia reported on the progress of the legislative U-Visa Workgroup. She reminded the Commission of the situation around individuals being eligible to apply for a U-Visa: If a person in the U.S., without citizen status, is a victim of a crime, the victim(s) need a certification from the investigating agencies that they have been involved in the crime.
Following that certification they may then apply for a U-Visa. The workgroup is moving forward to craft or introduce a bill in the 2019 session. Commissioner Yoshimoto has circulated the AILA (American Immigration Lawyers Association) letter to the OCFW, which addressed some of the issues raised in the workgroup, specifically that law enforcement or other investigating body has the discretion not to certify a person if they feel the individual will be a danger to society or others. AILA has proposed that an investigating body can certify an individual as a victim of crime while noting that the person has a criminal history. That way they would still be a qualifying person for certification to apply for a U-Visa. Law enforcement sees this differently and is not supporting it. It is unknown how many U-Visas are moving forward at a given time.

D. New Leadership Oregon Scholarships
Chair Spencer reported that the OCFW approved and has now provided five leadership scholarships to NEW Leadership Oregon for diverse women statewide. The recipients range in age from 18 to 57, some from rural areas.

VIII. New Business
A. OAC Policy Research Overview
Lucy reported on the intersectional research being conducted by the Advocacy Commissions in 2018:
1) OCAPIA/OCBA/OCHA/PID/Licensing Boards/Governor’s Office: Immigrant and refugee re-credentialing and pathways to employment in their original or related fields, with recommendations for 2019 LC’s. There are two workgroups associated with this effort being Co-Chaired by OCAPIA and PID (Partners in Diversity): Leadership Workgroup, Community/Governmental Stakeholders Workgroup.
2) OCHA/OHA/DHS/Governor’s Office/Mental Health Stakeholder group: Latinos and Mental Health/Behavioral Health, the first study of its kind in Oregon in 15 years, with recommendations for 2019 LC’s. There are three workgroups being chaired by OCHA associated with this research project: Leadership Workgroup, Policy Workgroup, and Community Stakeholders/Providers Workgroup.

B. Potential OCFW policy research projects
OCFW/ODE: Chair Spencer and Lucy have met with Colt Gill, Director of Oregon Department of Education, to follow up on his interest in a joint policy research effort on gender equity in education. Following that meeting, he has reached out to women superintendents statewide to ask them to participate, with much interest from that group. Mr. Gill has requested another meeting with OCFW on the subject, which Chair Spencer will coordinate with OCFW representatives and Lucy in October.

The Commission thanked Barbara for her update and leadership. They briefly considered other areas for potential joint policy research around justice involved women and other areas of long standing interest. There will be new OCFW members joining the Commission in late 2018, and the Commission will take up the discussion with them and the OAC/OACO’s new policy advisor from the Governor’s Office, Sophorn Cheang, soon.

IX. Administrator’s Report
Lucy reported on the mid-biennium budget review that she has recently conducted with the
Chairs and Vice Chairs. There are cost savings in some of the governmental service charges, including data and several other areas, that the Chairs will work with Lucy to approve for expenditure in other needed areas of the budget. Watch for more on this as the Chairs develop their recommendations for expenditure.

X. Introduction of Major (Ret.) Kelly Fitzpatrick nominated for Director, Department of Veteran Affairs.
The Commission welcomed Ms. Fitzpatrick in her new role and extended their congratulations. Kelly shared her vision for the Department of Veterans Affairs and some background about what has brought her to the work. She looks forward to working with the OCFW on issues of importance to service women.

XI. For the Good of the Order
A. The next OCFW meeting is November 16, 2018.
B. Announcements: Commissioner Krifka attended a Human Trafficking forum and met Officer Natasha Haunsperger.

XII. Adjourn - The meeting adjourned by common consent at 2:15 pm.