

## Women's Health Initiative Advisory Council Meeting

### Meeting Minutes

August 30, 2024, 9-11 am

The meeting of the Women's Health Advisory Council (WHAC) was called to order at 9:06 am by Kathryn (Kate) Fiandt, Chair. The meeting was held at the American Cancer Society Hope Lodge located at 8030 Farnam Drive, Omaha, NE 68114.

*In accordance with § 84-1411 of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act, copies of the agenda were 1) e-mailed to the Board members. The agenda was also posted on the DHHS web site at <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Womens-Health-Initiatives-Contact-Us.aspx>. The Women's Health Advisory Council Meeting Notice along with the agenda were posted on the Public Meeting Calendar at least 10 days before the meeting.*

#### **Roll Call (Introductions)**

##### **Members Present:**

Kate Fiandt

Victoria Vinton

Janelle Ali-Dinar

Jennifer Severe-Oforah

Timothy Tesmer

Erica Anderson

Celeste Illian

##### **Members Absent:**

Ebony Byars

##### **DHHS Staff Present:**

Tina Goodwin

Melissa Leypoldt

Leah Snyder

#### **Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

Kate asked for additions or corrections to the February 1, 2024 meeting minutes and there were none. Victoria moved to approve the minutes and Janelle seconded. In favor: Kate Fiandt, Victoria Vinton, Janelle Ali-Dinar, and Jennifer Severe-Oforah. Opposed: none. Abstentions: none. Absent: Timothy Tesmer, Ebony Byars, Erica Anderson, and Celeste Illian. The minutes were approved as presented.

#### **Public Comments**

There were no public comments or outstanding past public comments.

#### **DHHS Report Outs:**

Jennifer gave the DHHS update, which focused on reorganizations within the offices. Shirley Pickens-White's last day with DHHS was March 1, 2024. Her position was absorbed, and the duties were assigned to various other staff of the Lifespan Health Services Unit. DHHS will continue to fulfill the statute. The Unit Administrator and the Women's and Men's Health Program staff are taking some of the work.

#### **Membership and Vacancy Update:**

Most of the discussion of the meeting was around the continued difficulty of the Council in obtaining appointments from the Governor's office. There was legislation put forward to sunset some of the councils, but it did not pass.

As long as the statute is in place, DHHS will continue to call meetings for this Council. However, the Council is free to pursue other options for continuing their work, should the statute be dissolved. The meetings are open to the public and

non-members can routinely attend if they desire. The Council must still maintain quorum for all meetings and guests to not count in the quorum.

### **Future Initiatives:**

The Council decided to send a letter to the Governor explaining the status of the Council, what they strive to do and what they have done in the past for women's health. They will also provide the names of individuals who have applied but have not heard from the Governor's office on the status of their application. This letter will be drafted by September 18<sup>th</sup> and will be sent the following week. Council members will request to receive a response sometime in December.

The Council is planning a Health Policy Forum for November of 2024. This will be discussed at the next Council meeting.

The Council is planning another ice cream social for the legislators in February of 2025. In October, Victoria will reach out to her contact at the Capitol to try to get this event on their calendar. This event will not be scheduled until the letter to the Governor has gone out.

### **Subcommittee Report-Outs:**

#### **Membership Committee:**

Not currently soliciting applications.

#### **Legislative Committee:**

Victoria gave the legislative report: The Council supported 12 bills last year and commented on the bills through a DHHS-provided portal. They also contacted senators and communicated the intent of the subcommittee. Only one of the 12 bills passed: LB 857, the Prenatal Plus Program. Victoria reported on the ice cream social held in February of 2024. About 6 senators and several aids attended.

#### **Strategic Planning Committee:**

The Strategic Plan will be discussed during future meetings.

### **Next Meeting:**

The next meeting will be held in-person in Lincoln. The exact date, location, and time are still to be determined.

Meeting adjourned at 10:42 am by Kate Fiandt.

Minutes by Leah Snyder