



# **County Women's Advisory Commission: Options and Discussion**

*County Administration  
June 27, 2022*

# *Concept Discussion*

- May 16, 2022 – Item #7
  - Discuss the concept and direct staff to bring back information (budget, staffing, structure, etc.) and options for the Court to consider for the creation of a County Women’s Commission.
- June 13, 2022 – Item #8
  - Brief Staff Update

# History\*

- Active Women's Commissions in the United States:
  - Declined over the years
  - From a high of 230 to an unknown number today – probably less than 200
  - Texas – The Governor's Commission for Women
- December 1961 – President John F. Kennedy signed the order establishing the President's Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW)
  - Chair - Eleanor Roosevelt
  - Vice Chair – Esther Peterson (DOL Director)
  - Purpose – Dedicated to creating an action program that would provide greater opportunities for women to contribute skills and abilities to the nation's advancement and to remove existing discriminations against women.

\*nacw.org

# Research

- Successes:
  - Having governing body involved and supportive
  - Regular meetings and committee involvement
  - Review and creation of policies for consideration by the governing body
  - Commission goals set each year by the governing body
  - Focused committee research on key issues
    - Recommendations to the governing body
  - Serve as mode of communication on key issue with the public
    - Education and advocacy
  - Annual Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Event
  - Allow the Commission to provide input on legislative items being submitted to the governing body

# Research

## ■ Challenges:

- Commission name - Women's Commission may be outdated
- Focused purpose to deal with the current issues
- Governing body must be supportive for action to occur
- Not having a dedicated budget or staff to work on tasks
  - Minutes are not generated
- Meeting not livestreamed or recorded for the public
- COVID-19
- Difficulty recruiting commission members (working mothers, caregivers, etc.)



# Research

## ■ Best Practices:

- Paid staffed office and established budget
- Organized subcommittees
- Communicate with Administration and Communications teams
- Invite the governing body to the regular meetings
- Ensure governing body's expectations are clear – focus on the “why”
- Commission should work with County department heads
- Have a fully representational membership – Diversify!
- Involve the governing body in the appointment process
- Commission board chair should attend committee meetings
- Have regular meetings between the board chair and the reporting supervisor
- Invite the public to quarterly meetings – “what do you need help on?”

# Research

- Best Practices (cont'd):
  - Have quarterly/annual committee reports
  - Have commission annual report
  - Don't make binding decisions – focus on recommendations and education
  - Present to the governing body on policies, recommendations, etc.
  - Assist on legislation as needed
  - Have multiple commissions to address various issues affecting the community

# Local El Paso Associations

- The Woman's Club - 1894
  - Purpose – To offer educational and cultural opportunities for the enjoyment of their members, to plan various fundraisers to preserve their historic building, and to positively impact the community in a variety of ways.
  - Board Composition – Women
- The YWCA (El Paso Del Norte Region) - 1909
  - Purpose – To eliminate racism, empower women, and promote peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all.
  - Board Composition – Women
- Junior League of El Paso - 1930
  - Purpose – To promote voluntarism, develop the potential of women, and improve the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers.
  - Board Composition – Women



# Local El Paso Associations

- El Paso Women's Bar Association - 1971
  - Purpose – To advance the professional interests of women licensed to practice law, advance the cause of justice and the cause of women, and nurture and improve the relations among women attorneys, the judiciary, the entire legal profession, and the community.
  - Board Composition – Women
- El Paso Commission for Women - 1989
  - Purpose – To focus on honoring and recognizing women in all fields and to provide scholarships to women.
  - Board Composition – Women
- The Woman's Fund - 2004
  - Purpose – To connect women with resources available in the community and offer educational advancement and leadership development through scholarships.
  - Board Composition - Women
- Moms on Board - 2017
  - Purpose – To provide more family-friendly accommodations in El Paso and serve as a networking tool for families.
  - Board Composition – Women (2 Co-Founders)

# Option #1 – Create Your Own

- Design:
  - Assign staff to create policies, guidelines and bylaws prior to appointment
  - Assign no more than 3 goals to the commission each year
- Structure:
  - Create a County Boards and Commission Division
  - Hire one (1) new CC/Boards Liaison
  - Support Staff: County Administration, Communications, County Attorney's
- Operational Budget:
  - Travel, Office Supplies, Special Events/Hearings, Parking, etc.
- Approximate Total Cost: \$120,000
  - Position - \$115,000 (inc. fringe)
  - Operations - \$5,000

# Option #2 – State Consideration

- Texas State Commission:
  - The Governor’s Commission for Women
- Appointments:
  - 15 Commissioners
  - 2 Year terms
  - Last appointment – Cynthia Conroy, El Paso – Feb. 2022
- Letter of Support

<https://gov.texas.gov/organization/women>

# Option #3 – City Partnership

- City of El Paso, Texas
  - May 10, 2022 – City Council approved the creation of a Women’s Commission
  - June 22, 2022 – City Council approved the resolution to establish the City of El Paso Women’s Rights Commission
- Joint Membership
- Shared Resources
  - Budget and Staff

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*Discussion/Thoughts?*

