

**N.C Council for Women Meeting Minutes**  
May 5, 2022, 10:00 am until 12:00 pm  
This Meeting was Conducted Remotely by Zoom

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**Ethics Statement:** The State Government Ethics Act mandates that, at the beginning of any meeting, the Chair remind all members of their duty to avoid conflicts of interest and inquire as to whether any member knows of any conflict or potential conflict with respect to matters to come before the Council.

**Members Present:** Lyric Thompson, Vice-Chair, Liz Doherty, Candance Gingles, Alison Kiser, Dana O'Donovan, Elizabeth Outten, Dr. Joyce Payne, Beth Posner, Dr. Tracey Ray, Adrienne Spinner, Carrie Stewart, Judge Mary Ann Tally, Karen Wallace Meigs, and Kate Woodbury were present at roll call. Judge Robin Robinson attended part of the meeting.

**Members Absent:** Annette Taylor, Chair, Elsa Jimenez-Salgado, Del Mattioli, Mindy Oakley, and Dr. Patricia Parker.

**NC Council for Women & Youth Involvement Staff Present:** Danielle Carman, Charnessa Ridley, Deborah Torres, Lori Gerber, Mario Richardson, Angela Winston-Hill, Philisa Fowler, Alisa Milliken, Diane Blumel, Sebrina Phillips, Camille Hesterberg, and Debra Underwood.

**Guests Present:** DOA Secretary Pamela Cashwell, DOA Legislative Liaison Katie Hall, DOA Communications Director Julia Hegele, DOA Policy Director Evin Grant, DOA policy Analyst Gianna Quilici, and DOA Program and Policy Coordinator Jordan Hanna.

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**Meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Thompson at 10:00 a.m.**

Welcome/Member Roll Call: Vice-Chair Thompson welcomed everyone who was present and read the Ethics Statement. No conflicts of interest were noted. Carman conducted the roll call and members stated present as their names were called.

Approval of Minutes: Tally moved to approve the February 3, 2022 quarterly meeting minutes and the March 18, 2022 special meeting minutes as written. The motion was seconded, and all members who were present at roll call unanimously approved both sets of minutes.

Oaths of Office: The oath of office for reappointed Council member Mattioli was postponed.

Introductions: All Council members who were present introduced themselves.

### **Vice-Chair's Introductions – Lyric Thompson**

Thompson announced that there would be some changes to the agenda in light of recent developments. She said it was Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women's Day, and noted that she was joining the meeting from Lumbee territory. She added that the statistics bear out that Native women are disproportionately victims of violence and often suffer with impunity. She said some Committee chairs need to leave the meeting early, and she noted that Kiser had agreed to share some information about the implications of the leaked Supreme Court opinion in *Dobbs*.

### **Outreach & Partnerships Committee Report – Candance Gingles**

Gingles said the meeting materials included minutes from the last two committee meetings. She said two groups from the lower cape fear region (the YWCA and AARP) have inquired about partnerships and a desire to leverage the Council's reports for upcoming events about health disparities. She said she wants the committee to continue to brainstorm about those potential partnerships, and perhaps start working on an event for March 2023 that would address issues of women's health, housing, and employment. She added that the Council may be able to highlight its work in various newsletters and OpEds.

Thompson said these opportunities play into a larger conversation with staff about a communications strategy for the Council. She thanked Payne for her recent work drafting a sample OpEd about the Poverty & Opportunity report, and she asked for volunteers with communications experience who might want to work on a larger strategy that could be approved by DOA. She noted that it might be better to wait for a more developed strategy before drafting a piece for AARP's newsletter, and she said some of the draft that Payne prepared might be helpful. Payne suggested partnering with the AARP state office in Raleigh rather than a local branch.

Thompson asked if any Council members would be interested in working on a potential event for next March, and Outten and Ray offered to help. Gingles said she would schedule a smaller meeting to discuss.

### **Legislative Committee Report – Kate Woodbury**

Woodbury said she has had limited bandwidth to lead the Legislative Committee and, after speaking with Taylor, Thompson, and Carman, she thinks someone else might be in a better position to serve as Chair. She said the Committee met briefly in February and agreed that some consistent feedback about the issues that are on legislators' agendas and would benefit from Council advocacy would be helpful. She said the group also talked about power mapping and ways to enhance access to people who can advance the Council's policy recommendations. She said the Committee still needs to develop a solid approach.

Hall said the upcoming short session is expected to be short and to focus on the budget. She added that some unfinished business from prior sessions might come back up, such as a bill that would allow for anger management training as an alternative to Domestic Violence Intervention Programs. Hall said she would monitor legislation and offered to support the Council's efforts.

Moving forward, Doherty said she would be willing to serve as Co-Chair of the Legislative Committee with Woodbury.

## **Executive Director's Report – Danielle Carman**

Carman directed the Council members to her written report in the meeting materials, and said the terms of ten Council members will expire on June 31, 2022. She asked those Council members to let her know if they are interested in continuing to serve.

### **Discussion of Draft Supreme Court Opinion in *Dobbs***

Thompson invited Kiser to share some updates about the leaked majority opinion in *Dobbs v. Jackson*. Kiser said the Court is expected to issue the final opinion in late June. As drafted, it would return the issue of abortion access to the states, and 26 states are expected to ban or severely restrict access in the short term. Council members raised the impact of the 2022 election on this issue, and Thompson asked if the Council was permitted to discuss that issue in this meeting. Carman referred to the Council's enabling legislation, G.S. 143B-393, and shared the following language with the Council members via chat: "The programs listed in subdivision (1a) of subsection (a) of this section shall be administered in a nonpartisan manner and shall not disseminate or advocate partisan principles or ideas, promote the candidacy of any person seeking public office or preferment, or use State funds to disseminate or advocate partisan principles or ideas or to promote political candidates or appointees." All Council members agreed not to discuss political issues during the meeting. Thompson asked if DOA's General Counsel could share some guidance with the Council members about what activities they are permitted to undertake outside of Council meetings, and suggested that official meeting discussions be restricted to the substantive non-political issues and how the Council can provide thought leadership and advocacy in this area.

The Council members discussed the following potential initiatives

1. **Short-Term:** Issue an immediate statement from the Council on the adverse impact of overruling *Roe* and the disproportionate impact on vulnerable communities, including poor women and women of color. Thompson noted that Governor Cooper had already issued a statement on this topic and that the Council would need to coordinate its statement with DOA Communications Division. The following Council members offered to help with this initiative: Thompson, Doherty, Gingles, Kiser, O'Donovan, Outten, Payne, Posner, Spinner, and Stewart.
2. **Medium-Term:**
  - a. Work with CFWYI staff and DOA Communications Division to create a communications strategy and editorial calendar.
  - b. Contribute to educational events about access to reproductive care by attending in-person events that are already being planned by other groups and/or potentially sponsoring some virtual town halls. Consider engaging with groups on the ground in more rural areas, such as Down Home NC, New NC Project, and the Rural Center.
3. **Long-Term:** Explore the possibility of commissioning an outside report on the impacts (health, economic, racial, age, etc.) of the lack of abortion services in North Carolina. Any report should be approached through a lens of reproductive justice and racial equity. The group agreed that Council members and staff should explore whether other groups are already working on similar efforts. Posner offered to check with the UNC School of Public Health to see if they are working on anything similar. Thompson, Doherty, Kiser, Outten, and Spinner offered to help with this initiative as well, including providing advice on framing and potential resources. This initiative would require the Council to identify some funding sources, and the group discussed the possibilities of Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation and the Winer Family Foundation. The Council discussed other fundraising avenues, and Carman said it is not clear whether the Council should be engaging in direct fundraising outside of submitting grant applications.

### **Future Council Meetings**

Thompson asked whether Council members wanted to continue holding future meetings virtually or resume in-person meetings. Posner expressed a preference for virtual meetings due to a standing work conflict on Thursdays. Outten said she appreciated seeing Council members in person at the March roundtable at the Executive Mansion, and she encouraged the Council to think about other opportunities for in-person collaboration. Thompson suggested hybrid meetings with a virtual option for those who prefer to join remotely. Payne noted that several Council members will likely be rotating off the Council at the end of June, and she suggested some type of in-person reception before then. Thompson suggested inviting former Council Chair Jenny Black.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.