



Olympia City Council Referral Request

Tracking Number	2017-0027NJ
Date of Referral	July 17, 2018
Originator	MPT Jones
Referral To	General Government Committee
Request	Review proposed Charter for an Olympia Women’s Commission and associated draft documents (attached) and provide full Council with a recommendation regarding action on this matter.
Relationship of Request to City or Proposed City Business/Services	<p>As an employer, the City has moved to provide workplace equity and a culture of inclusion. A culture which assures safety and equity for all is fundamental to creating a healthy workplace. More work is needed for internal City operations.</p> <p>Further, Olympia’s community members are not free from gender discrimination. There is clear evidence that women and gender minorities continue to experience serious inequities and opportunity gaps when compared to their male cohorts.</p> <p>As proposed, the Commission will address issues relevant to the problems and needs of women and gender minorities, such as domestic violence, child care, child support, sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, and equal opportunities in employment.</p>
Connection to Comprehensive Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community, Safety and Health: <i>inclusive, respectful, civic participation; a safe & prepared community; health and wellness; adequate food and shelter; a quality education</i>
Options	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Recommend creation of Commission as proposed.2. Recommend creation of Commission with revisions.3. Recommend other means of addressing identified needs.4. Recommend no action.
Timing	The Committee is requested to bring forward recommendation in time to affect 2019 budget process.
Attachments	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Memorandum from MPT Nathaniel Jones2. Draft Charter3. Draft Code Amendment

CHARTER

City of Olympia Women's Commission

_____ __, 2018

The purpose of the Olympia Women's Commission is to improve the wellbeing of women and gender minorities in Olympia, by enabling them to fully participate in all fields of endeavor, and by promoting fairness and equity in the Olympia community. The Commission shall address issues relevant to the problems and needs of women, such as domestic violence, child care, child support, sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, equal compensation, opportunities in employment, and the specific needs of gender minorities. The Commission is charged with ensuring workplace equity and a culture of inclusion for City of Olympia operations, as well as the larger Olympia community.

To this end, the Commission chartered is to:

- 1) advise the City Council and the City Manager with respect to matters concerning women and gender minorities, to address the concerns of women and others, individually and as a protected class under City ordinance or other applicable laws; and
- 2) recommend policies to the City Council and the City Manager in matters affecting women and gender minorities and, as appropriate, recommend legislation for the implementation of such policies.

Methods of Operation

The Women's Commission is authorized and empowered to act as the research and fact-finding agency of the City, relative to issues of women and gender minorities. To that end, it may undertake research and analysis, and make reports as generally authorized or requested by the City Council. Upon such request or pursuant to such authority, the Women's Commission may:

- A. Make inquiries, perform investigations, and conduct surveys concerning the status of the City relative to matters concerning women and gender minorities;
- B. Formulate recommendations and propose annual objectives and multi-year goals to the City Council and City Manager, with respect to matters concerning women and gender minorities;

C. Cooperate with other public and private agencies in developing such recommendations, goals, objectives, and the conduct of associated research;

D. Monitor the Olympia Comprehensive Plan, Municipal Code, General Orders, and City Policies and recommend adjustments to these documents, to assure that they reflect the goals and values of Olympia's citizens relative to matters concerning women and gender minorities;

E. Advise the City Council on strategies which respond to citizen concerns and relevant state and federal regulations; and

F. Perform such other duties as the City Council may direct from time to time.

Initial areas of consideration for the Commission will include:

1. City workplace equity concerns such as:
 - ◆ pay equality
 - ◆ the "maternal wall bias"
 - ◆ organizational culture
 - ◆ hiring practices
 - ◆ workplace flexibility
 - ◆ representation in leadership
 - ◆ retention of women and gender minorities
2. An assessment of needs relevant to the problems and interests of women, girls, and gender minorities within the Olympia community.

As with other permanent City of Olympia commissions, the Women's Commission is tasked to present an annual work program proposal to the City Council for approval or revision, and may receive specific assignments from the City Council from time to time. The Commission is tasked with presenting a first work plan proposal for calendar year 2020.

Municipal Code Amendment

1) Established--Purpose and Membership

There is hereby established a Women's Commission to:

- 1) advise the City Council and City Manager with respect to matters concerning women and gender minorities, to to address fairly the concerns of women and others, individually and as a protected class under City ordinance and other applicable laws; and
- 2) recommend policies to the City Council and the City Manager in matters affecting women and gender minorities, and, as appropriate, recommend legislation for the implementation of such policies.

Members, term of office, vacancies, rules of procedure and bylaws, annual work plan, and staff liaison support for the Women's Commission shall comply with the provisions of OMC 2.100.040-090, provided that member appointments shall be made: a) from among those persons who are conscious of the discrimination against and oppression of women and gender minorities in this society and who are working to eliminate these injustices, b) in a manner so as to reflect the diversity of the community, and c) to include one designated young-adult position for an individual between the ages of eighteen (18) and twenty-nine (29).

2) Duties of Commission

The Women's Commission is authorized and empowered to act as the research and fact-finding agency of the City, relative to issues of women and gender minorities. To that end, it may undertake research and analysis, and make reports as generally authorized or requested by the City Council. Upon such request or pursuant to such authority, the Women's Commission may:

- A. Make inquiries, perform investigations, and conduct surveys concerning the status of the City relative to matters concerning women and gender minorities.
- B. Formulate recommendations and propose annual objectives and multi-year goals to the City Council and City departments, with respect to matters concerning women and gender minorities.
- C. Cooperate with other public agencies in developing such recommendations, goals, objectives, and research.
- D. Review proposed modifications to the Olympia Comprehensive Plan, and further, recommend amendments to the Plan, to assure that the Plan continues to reflect the goals and values of Olympia's citizens relative to matters concerning women and gender minorities.
- E. Advise the City Council on strategies which respond to citizen concerns, as well as state or federal regulations:
- F. Take such other actions as the City Council may direct from time to time.
- G. Other duties as appropriate.

3) Budget

The Commission's staff support and operating expenses shall be funded from the City general fund and from grants, donations and other like sources.

DRAFT

To: Council Colleagues
From: Mayor Pro Tem Nathaniel Jones
Subject: Proposed Olympia Women's Commission, Further Discussion
Date: July 16, 2018
cc: Steve Hall

Early distribution of materials associated with the proposed creation of a permanent Women's Commission for the City of Olympia has prompted a request for further definition of the needs such a commission would be chartered to address. I am happy to respond to this request.

If you are new to this proposal, please review the associated Council Referral Form, my June 27 memo to Councilmembers, and the proposed Commission charter.

The purpose of any City commission is to advise the Council on a specific set of issues. A commission's work will generally include recommendations regarding policy, budget, and operating procedures within their scope of work. The scope of work for a standing commission is defined broadly, allowing the group to evolve with the needs of the community and the Council. While commissions are chartered to focus on a general body of work, their work plan is established annually through Council action.

As proposed, the purpose of the Olympia Women's Commission is to improve the wellbeing of women and gender minorities in Olympia, by enabling them to fully participate in all fields of endeavor and by promoting fairness and equity in the Olympia community.

A May 2017 assessment of gender equity in the City of Olympia workplace indicated additional work is required in the areas of pay equality, the "maternal wall bias", organizational culture, hiring practices, workplace flexibility, representation in leadership, and the retention of women and gender minorities. Although some recent work has begun in these areas, a sustained effort will be required to reshape the City's operations. (See attached assessment).

The Council has undertaken discussions regarding pay equity in Olympia with the help of local advocates and community members. This dialogue has resulted in Councilmembers seeking additional tools to address the reality of persistent discrimination in workplace compensation throughout our community. To date, after years of discussion, no action has been taken and no tools have been identified.

Gender bias is represented throughout our culture, in the media, in the workplace, and through a broad array of cultural norms. Here are some points of reference:

1. On a single day in 2014, Washington domestic violence programs served 1,930 survivors.
(NCADV)

2. Women hold nearly two-thirds of the outstanding student debt in the United States — almost \$900 billion as of mid-2018. (AAUW)
3. 30 percent of women report that they have experienced some form of physical or sexual violence by their partner. (WHO)
4. Women currently hold 4.8 percent of CEO positions at S&P 500 companies. (Makers.org)
5. Less than 30 percent of the world's researchers are women. (UNESCO)
6. By 2020, there will be 1.4 million technology jobs in the U.S. and, at the current rate of students graduating with degrees in computer science; men will outnumber women 4:1. (ComputerScience.org)
7. American women are much more likely than men to experience major career interruptions related to family caregiving. (Pew Research)
8. In the U.S., the average annual price of child care exceeds \$10,000. In most states the cost of full-time care is more than the average annual cost of tuition and fees for a public four-year university. (employee-rights-atty.com)
9. Recent legislation in a variety of states has substantially restricted women's access to reproductive health services, while maternal and infant mortality rates in the US exceed rates for peer countries. (Guttmacher Institute)
10. 4.1% of the US population aged 18 to 44 years (more than 4.5 million individuals) identified as homosexual or bisexual. (2002 National Survey of Family Growth)
11. Among the most significant health concerns for LGBT patients are mental health disorders, particularly diagnoses of depression and anxiety, substance abuse, obesity, and tobacco use. (National Center for Biotechnology Information)
12. A 2013 Pew survey found that 21% of LGBT respondents had been treated unfairly by an employer in hiring, pay, or promotions.
13. When surveyed separately, transgender respondents report even higher rates of employment discrimination and harassment than LGB people. In a 2011 survey, 78% of respondents to the largest survey of transgender people to date reported experiencing at least one form of harassment or mistreatment at work because of their gender identity. (Pew Research)

These bullet points are simply representative of the recognized problem of gender discrimination that pervades our culture. There is not readily accessible data for the problem in Olympia or Thurston County, but we know anecdotally that Olympians are far from immune to the repression caused by gender bias.

As proposed, the Women's Commission would undertake an initial work plan that is focused on the internal operations of the City organization. With support from community organizations, strategic partners, and the 2017 assessment, the Commission would evaluate current conditions and bring forth recommendations for Council considerations. In addition, the Commission would launch an assessment of needs relevant to the problems and interests of women, girls, and gender minorities within the Olympia community. The community needs assessment is proposed to serve as the basis of future work of the Commission.

To: Council Colleagues
From: Mayor Pro Tem Nathaniel Jones
Subject: Proposed Olympia Women's Commission
Date: June 27, 2018
cc: Steve Hall

We find ourselves in a time where there is broad public dialogue regarding inappropriate, sexually harassing behavior and assault. Such dialogue is set in a larger context of generalized gender discrimination which is played out in the workplace, in our institutions, and in social systems. In our elected role, we have direct responsibility for safety and equity in the operations of the City of Olympia. We also bear a responsibility to the people of Olympia, to establish community norms which respond to known conditions of inequity and insecurity.

The #MeToo and #TimesUp movements have exposed widespread sexually harassing behavior, manipulation and coercion which cuts across all industries and professions. We are at an inflection point in our community, where change is possible and many are looking for leadership. It was on November 15, 2016, that we adopted the Olympia Charter for Compassion, affirming the need to create a just society where all people are able to live into their best selves, and where we live our shared values, building a community that welcomes and respects the unique gifts brought by all those who make up our diverse Olympia community. Olympia is well positioned to advance important dialogue, address inequities, and respond to the needs of women and gender minorities.

As an employer, the City has moved to provide workplace equity and a culture of inclusion. A culture which supports and preserves safety for all employees is fundamental to creating a healthy workplace. A recent internal assessment of employer-led strategies for gender equity reveals the unique challenges of the City's fairly small workforce.

Employment conditions at the City differ, depending upon the type of work performed and each position's labor representation (represented, non-represented, or public safety). Olympia has moved to address equity concerns such as the glass ceiling, pay equality, and the maternal wall bias through policies and practices, yet more remains to be done. Particular areas for action include: organizational culture, hiring practices, workplace flexibility, and senior leadership representation.

Washington State law prohibits sex discrimination in employment. Individuals may file a lawsuit in state court or file a complaint with the Washington State Human Rights Commission. And there is a legal right for an employee to sue an employer for a hostile work environment, sexual harassment, quid pro quo sexual harassment, and disparate treatment based upon gender.

Washington law also prohibits harassment, intimidation, or bullying in our schools. Policies and procedures have been developed to protect students, and our schools are required to take action if students report a problem.

However, these legal protections do not ensure that Olympia's community members are free from sexual harassment and gender discrimination. Rather, the evidence is clear that women and gender minorities continue to experience serious inequities and opportunity gaps when compared to their male cohorts.

Gender equity is an old and persistent problem. It will not be addressed through a handful of study sessions or public forum. Our community's progress will require a skilled and enduring effort. To this end I am proposing the creation of a new, permanent commission to address the wellbeing of women and gender minorities.

You will find attached, a Draft Charter and proposed Code language for the creation of the Olympia Women's Commission. I recommend that this initiative be added to the work plan of the General Government Committee for deliberation and the development of a recommendation to the full Council in September of this year.