



## **Tulsa Women's Commission**

Regular Meeting | August 1, 2025 | 12:00 – 1:00 pm

City Hall at One Technology Center | Room 411

### **Meeting Minutes**

Commissioners Present: Premadonna Braddick, Susan Crenshaw, Ashleigh Frohrip, Charisa Jacobs, Laura Latta, Kate Neary, Maria Carlota Palacios

Commissioners Absent: Mary Quinn Cooper, Dezeray Edwards, Betsy Jackson, Deidra Kirtley, Meg Myers Morgan

#### **I. Call to Order**

- a. Chairwoman Latta called the meeting to order at 12:05 pm.

#### **II. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- a. Chairwoman Latta entertained a motion to approve the June meeting minutes.
  - i. Vice Chair Neary made a motion, Commissioner Palacios seconded.
    - 1. Aye: 7, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0
  - ii. Motion carried, June meeting minutes approved.

#### **III. Chair / Vice Chair Report**

- a. Recognize New Company Signing Pay Equity Pledge: ProRecruiters
- b. Chairwoman Latta expressed gratitude for the Title V Commission Retreat. Highlighted support from fellow Tulsa Women's Commissioners.

#### **IV. Review and Vote: Tulsa Women's Commission Nomination for Humanitarian of the Year Award**

- a. Vice Chair Neary shared her proposed nominee from TWC for the Human Rights Commission's Humanitarian of the Year Award. Commissioners reviewed Vice Chair Neary's nomination letter.
- b. No questions or alternate proposed nominees were brought forward.
- c. Chairwoman Latta entertained a motion to approve TWC's Nomination for the Humanitarian of the Year Award.
  - i. Commissioner Crenshaw made a motion, Commissioner Palacios seconded.
    - 1. Aye: 7, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0
  - ii. Motion carried, nomination approved.
- d. Vice Chair Neary will submit the nomination to HRC.

#### **V. Recap and Reflections of Previous Unit of Inquiry: Women's Mental Health and Trauma Recovery**



- a. Chairwoman Latta provided a brief review of the first two units of inquiry and pointed to a document that synthesizes learnings from the second unit of inquiry on women's mental health and trauma recovery.
- b. Reminder of the goal to produce three documents that will be submitted to the Mayor and other City officials to increase awareness of these issues.
- c. Commissioners reviewed the second unit of inquiry summary document (Appendix A).
- d. Commission Discussion
  - i. Commissioner Jacobs highlighted the importance of a survivor-led model: true empathy and cultural responsiveness, benefits person receiving support and the person supporting.
  - ii. Commissioner Crenshaw reflected on impact of hearing AnnMarie speak. Chairwoman Latta echoed that sentiment for Melissa as well.
  - iii. Chairwoman Braddick noted a successful operation in Alabama to rescue approximately 10 children ages 3 – 15 from being trafficked, another successful rescue of 60 children in Florida. A challenge facing those who have been rescued is going back to their trafficker due to trauma.
  - iv. Chairwoman Latta expressed gratitude for the expertise within the commission, allowing TWC to surface critical issues.
  - v. Vice Chair Neary reflected on TWC's role as advisors to the Mayor and advocates for these issues. In a position to tell stories and offer facts, even when difficult.
  - vi. Commissioner Crenshaw thanked Chairwoman Latta for preparing such an effective summary. Excellent reminder of what we hope for Tulsa, hope City resources can address these issues.
- e. The commission can:
  - i. Identify and advocate to fill system gaps
  - ii. Promote cross-sector collaboration
  - iii. Advocate for trauma-responsive policies
- f. Next steps can include edits, how should the summary document be used, and offer changes to units of inquiry process moving forward. Chairwoman Latta welcomed commissioners to share their feedback.
  - i. Commissioner Palacios suggested staying with a certain topic to push an initiative, not file away the learning and move onto something else. Chairwoman Latta responded that is the intent of this era of exploration. Offered the opportunity to reflect after three different units, then identify an area to focus the commission's next initiative.
  - ii. Vice Chair Neary: Goal could be once a month a couple commissioners commit to speaking with other groups. Could be corporate lunch, chamber event, etc. to share learnings to bring awareness.
    - 1. A few commissioners agreed they are interested in doing this.



2. Commissioner Palacios agreed it's important to reach groups that wouldn't normally hear this information.
  3. Commissioners agree that it will be helpful to have consistent talking points or a prepared one pager/slides
  4. Commissioner Crenshaw noted it's important for women in the community to know that this group is a direct line to the Mayor, if certain women don't feel heard TWC needs to know that.
- iii. Commissioner Jacobs: Curious how we can promote certain organizations that the commission has learned from, something tangible for people in the community to do after learning about these issues.
1. Chairwoman Latta echoed importance of brevity and accessibility of information, digestible talking points.
- g. Previewed third unit of inquiry, September – November
- i. No scheduled speaker on safety for September or empowerment in November.
    1. Commissioner Crenshaw suggested Public Safety Commissioner Laurel Roberts for safety. Lexi will reach out to her.
    2. Vice Chair Neary suggested Commissioner Myers Morgan, Commissioner Braddick suggested Kelli McLoud-Schingen, and Commissioner Frohrip suggested Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma for empowerment.
  - ii. Vice Chair Neary and former commissioner Janet Levit are scheduled for October. They will provide an overview of the reproductive health and family planning landscape in Oklahoma.

**VI. Review and Discussion of Policy Issues Impacting Women and Childcare**

- a. Chairwoman Latta shared current policy issues and headlines on a national and state level that are impacting women.

**VII. Old Business – no old business**

**VIII. New Business**

- a. Proposed Changes to Pinnacle Awards Process
  - i. Chairwoman Latta welcomed Zoe Cauley with YWCA Tulsa to review a document outlining proposed changes to the Pinnacle Awards process.
  - ii. Commissioners agreed the proposed changes will strengthen the process.

**IX. Announcements / Public Comments - none**

**X. Adjournment**

- a. As a quorum was no longer present in the meeting, there was no motion to adjourn the meeting.
- b. The meeting concluded at 1:06 pm.



## **Tulsa Women's Commission: Centering Mental Health, Healing, and Trauma Recovery**

From April through June 2025, the Tulsa Women's Commission focused its second inquiry term on the intersecting issues of mental health, trauma recovery, and personal safety. The Commission heard from subject matter experts, nonprofit leaders, and community advocates on the mental health challenges disproportionately affecting women in Tulsa. Key discussions explored trauma-informed care, human trafficking, intimate partner violence, reentry from incarceration, and culturally responsive supports.

This summary reflects insights gathered across three monthly sessions, and highlights the ongoing challenges and strategic opportunities for supporting women's recovery and mental wellness in Tulsa.

### **Understanding Trauma and Mental Health Needs**

Experts shared that trauma often begins early and can take many forms, including acute, chronic, and complex trauma. These experiences often compound over time and are closely linked with long-term physical and mental health outcomes.

#### **Key findings include:**

- Oklahoma continues to rank among the top states for domestic violence-related deaths. Most fatal cases involve individuals who never accessed services (Family Safety Center, 2025)
- Women who seek help through agencies like the Family Safety Center often experience multiple forms of violence, including domestic abuse, sexual assault, and stalking.
- High Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) scores remain prevalent in Oklahoma and are linked to poor outcomes in health, education, and employment (Resonance, 2025).
- Economic hardship, lack of access to care, and stigma continue to prevent many women from receiving the mental health support they need.

## **Polyvictimization and Its Impact**

Commissioners examined the effects of **polyvictimization**, where individuals experience multiple types of trauma—such as domestic violence, sexual assault, neglect, financial abuse, and discrimination—often across their lifespan.

Data shared by Family Safety Center indicates:

- **87%** of adult women served by FSC reported emotional abuse
- Over **62%** experienced strangulation or positional asphyxia
- Nearly **50%** reported histories of stalking, financial abuse, or chronic poverty
- Mental health symptoms were widespread:
  - **87%** reported anxiety
  - **83%** reported sadness
  - **77%** reported sleep disturbances
  - Over **60%** reported attention and concentration issues
  - Nearly **50%** reported suicidal ideation or self-harm

These findings affirm that mental health interventions must be trauma-informed, long-term, and coordinated across systems.

## **Human Trafficking and Exploitation**

Presenters highlighted the growing prevalence of human trafficking, particularly among vulnerable youth. Rather than abduction, many victims are groomed and manipulated over time by people they trust, including family members and romantic partners.

Key insights:

- Social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat are now the most common recruitment tools used by traffickers.
- Trafficking often intersects with housing instability, poverty, and previous trauma. Victims are frequently isolated from their support systems and coerced into silence through psychological control, threats, and shame.
- There is a growing need for coordinated, trauma-informed responses that recognize trafficking as both a public health and public safety issue.

## Pathways to Recovery and Stability

Speakers with expertise in reentry services and community mental health emphasized that trauma recovery requires a whole-person approach, including access to safe housing, stable employment, and long-term mental health care.

Highlighted programs and strategies include:

- Culturally responsive mental health support, including the CRAC (Culture Responsive Access to Care) program and the Community Engaged Genealogy Project (City of Tulsa, 2025)
- Trauma-informed housing and employment programs for formerly incarcerated women, such as Take Two Café at Resonance Center for Women.
- Increased access to mobile crisis response teams, peer recovery services, and community-based support networks.
- Strengthening pathways for diverse representation in the mental health workforce to improve trust and care access for underserved populations.

## Strategic Opportunities

The Commission identified several key opportunities to improve systems of care and support for women in Tulsa:

1. Expand **trauma-informed training** for educators, law enforcement, healthcare providers, and service agencies.
2. Increase access to safe, affordable, and recovery-centered **housing options**.
3. Provide school- and community-based **education on digital safety and exploitation prevention**.
4. Invest in community health workers and **culturally competent providers** to reach diverse populations.
5. Support **survivor-led programming and mentorship models**, especially for women exiting the justice system.

## **Conclusion**

Mental health and trauma recovery are essential to women's long-term wellbeing, economic opportunity, and safety. This inquiry term elevated the urgent need for coordinated, responsive services that meet women where they are and support their healing journeys. The Commission remains committed to identifying system gaps, promoting cross-sector collaboration, and advocating for policies and programs that prioritize the mental health and safety of women in Tulsa.

## **Acknowledgments**

The Tulsa Women's Commission would like to thank the following individuals for generously sharing their time, insights, and expertise on Mental Health, Healing, and Trauma Recovery during this inquiry term:

- Suzann Stewart, Family Safety Center
- Dr. Rebecca Hubbard, City of Tulsa
- Melissa Hoover, Resonance Center for Women
- Commissioner Deidra Kirtley
- AnnMarie Hayden
- Commissioner Premadonna Braddick