

MICHIGAN CITY COMMON COUNCIL

ORDINANCE NO. 4167

ESTABLISHING A COMMISSION FOR WOMEN IN THE
CITY OF MICHIGAN CITY, INDIANA AND CREATING SECTION 2-458 IN THE
MICHIGAN CITY MUNICIPAL CODE

WHEREAS, the Common Council acknowledges that if a segment of our residents and community are not doing well, this affects the overall well-being of our entire community;

WHEREAS, according to the 2010 U.S. Census, women comprise slightly more than half (50.8%) of the population yet their annual median earnings is 78% of men's median earnings for the same positions;

WHEREAS, the percentage of women, many with children, living below the poverty level is even greater (55.5%) than that of men; and

WHEREAS, there is a need in the City to create practical proposals and to find workable solutions to problems in the areas of employment, education, health care, and family issues.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Common Council of the City of Michigan City, Indiana that a Commission for Women shall be established and Section 2-458 in the Michigan City Municipal Code is created to read as follows:

Sec. 2-458. Commission for Women.

(a) Establishment; Purpose and intent.

(1) There is hereby established a Commission for Women. The purpose of this Commission is to ensure that women and men have equal opportunity to function fully and optimally as citizens of the city, as equal participants in the economy, in politics and government, in education, in social development, in the system of justice, and in all other facets of life.

(2) It shall be the aim and goal of the Commission to:

- a. Increase awareness and understanding of the status of women, the needs of women and their families, and the issues women face;
- b. Identify available resources and services meeting their needs and the gaps that remain in existing services;
- c. Monitor, review, and provide balanced analysis of federal, state, and local policy for its impact on City women and to make recommendations regarding those policies to the Human Rights Department for appropriate action to ensure women's equity;
- d. Stimulate and encourage legislation for the development of social services of particular benefit to women, allowing them to become better educated, better

connected to their communities, better aware of resources and opportunities, and better engaged in resolving the challenges they face;

- e. Advocate for pay equity, better health care, affordable quality child care, better workplace environments with no sexual harassment, and other issues identified in Listening Sessions of the Indiana Commission for Women;
 - f. Issue publication/educational material(s) and the results of research, legislative review, and investigations in order to educate the entire community as to the aims and goals of this Commission;
 - g. Establish and maintain close working relationships with the Michigan City Human Rights Department and Human Rights Commission, the LaPorte County League of Women Voters, other women's advocacy groups, and other state, local, and federal programs that relate to the needs and opportunities of women;
 - h. When appropriate and subject to the approval of the Mayor and the Common Council, enter into contracts and accept grants for the administration of research projects that may contribute to the strengthening and refinement of a coordinated program; and
 - i. Assure a coordinated City-wide effort in achieving a comprehensive program to improve opportunities for women of the community.
- (b) Membership; Governing Regulations of the Commission.

(1) Appointments. The Commission shall be composed of nine (9) members. The appointments shall be made as follows:

- a. Three (3) members shall be appointed by the Mayor, and mayoral appointments shall be for a fixed term of four (4) years; one (1) of these appointments shall initially be for only two (2) years, renewable for four (4) more years upon reappointment by the Mayor; at least one (1) of these shall be a representative of a non-profit or not-for-profit health-care agency, and at least one (1) of these shall be a representative from education;
- b. Two (2) members shall be appointed by the Common Council, and the Common Council appointments shall be for a fixed term of 4 years; one (1) of these appointments shall initially be for only two (2) years, renewable for four (4) more years upon reappointment by the Common Council; at least one (1) of these shall be a representative of a non-profit organization dealing with women's issues;
- c. One member shall be appointed by the Michigan City chapter of the NAACP for a term of four (4) years;
- d. One member shall be appointed by the LaPorte County Minority Health Coalition for a term of four (4) years;
- e. One member shall be appointed by the LaPorte County League of Women Voters, for a term of four years, with the initial appointment for two (2) years; and
- f. One (1) member shall be appointed by the other eight (8) members and said appointment shall be for a fixed term of four (4) years.

- (2) Qualifications. The members of the Commission shall be representative of the diverse educational, employment, economic, business, and community service elements of the community. Preference for appointments shall be given to persons with experience working for women's issues, knowledge of legislative and policy making processes, and direct knowledge and experience working with women's needs and community resources. To assure that the concerns of the total community be adequately represented on the Commission, membership may include both women and men.
- (3) Compensation. All members shall serve without compensation.
- (4) Removal. A member of the commission may be removed by the appointing authority for absenteeism or for cause during his or her term.
- (5) Vacancy. The appointing authority shall fill a vacancy on the commission by appointing a new member for the unexpired term.
- (6) Election of officers. At the first meeting in January of each year, the members of the commission shall elect one member of the commission to be the commission's chairperson, one member to be the commission's vice-chairperson, and one member to the recording secretary.
- (7) Meetings. The commission shall meet on a minimum quarterly basis and is subject to notice of such meetings pursuant to the Open Door Law of the State of Indiana.
- (8) Minutes. The minutes of all meetings shall be sent to the City Clerk and the Mayor within thirty (30) days following said meeting.
- (9) Quorum. Five (5) members of the commission constitute a quorum.

(c) Duties and responsibilities. The Commission shall have the duties and responsibilities to carry out the aims and goals as defined in this section, including but not limited to the following:

- (1) Advise the Mayor, and where appropriate, the Common Council, on the hiring of any personnel necessary to the implementation of this section, and all such personnel shall be employees of the Human Rights Department and shall be subject to supervision and direction by the Director of the Human Rights Department;
- (2) Hold hearings and undertake any other activities which may be necessary, desirable, or proper to carry out the purposes of this section;
- (3) Develop annual and long-range goals;
- (4) Develop action committees addressing neighborhoods, criminal justice, education, employment, health and healthcare, social factors, awareness, and conference planning; which may use resource individuals or organizations who are not members of the commission;
- (5) Gather and distribute information and to issue such publications and educational information and the results of such investigations and research as in its judgment will further the purposes and intent of this section;
- (6) Report at least annually, in writing, on its activities to the Mayor and the Common Council;

