

	<p> INGHAM COUNTY COURTHOUSE P.O. BOX 319 MASON, MI 48854 TELEPHONE: (517) 676-7200 FAX: (517) 676-7264 </p>
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INGHAM COUNTY WOMEN'S COMMISSION MISSION STATEMENT *To serve as advisors to the Board of Commissioners regarding the impact of the County's actions and policies on women and children in Ingham County. The Commission researches and recommends better ways of meeting the needs of women and children through County resources. They also partner with other County committees to explore and recommend methods of overcoming discrimination against women and removing barriers to women in Ingham County.*

**THE WOMEN'S COMMISSION WILL MEET ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2024
AT 6:00 PM, IN CONFERENCE ROOM D AND E OF THE HUMAN SERVICES
BUILDING, 5303 S. CEDAR, LANSING AND VIRTUALLY AT
<https://ingham.zoom.us/j/85101992978>**

AGENDA

Call to Order
Approval of the Minutes
Additions to the Agenda
Public Comment

New items: Welcome newly appointed/reappointed board members

Speaker: Nyshell Lawrence, Socialight Society

Old items:
Follow up from January presentation
zoom link to the meeting for community participation.
Unity in Community Event timeline
By laws guiding Womens Commission

Additional items:
Review previous board goals and evaluate/compare with current work in progress
Depending on the presenter time frame these can be brief updates and longer discussions can be tabled till next meeting etc.

Announcements
Public Comment
Adjournment

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INGHAM COUNTY WOMEN’S COMMISSION
Ingham County Human Services Building
5303 S. Cedar Street, Conference Room D and E
Lansing, MI 48911
Wednesday, January 17, 2024, at 6:00 pm

A Women’s Commission Committee meeting of the Ingham County Board of Commissioners was held at the Human Services Building on Wednesday, January 17, 2024. The meeting was called to order at 6:06 p.m. by LaVerne Mickel.

Present: Danielle McCann, LaVerne Mickel, Tracey Wooden

Absent: Kris Gilbert, Daniella Mata

Also Present: Irene Cahill, Simar Pawar

Public Comment

None

Approval of Minutes

Motion moved to approve the December 6, 2023, minutes were approved as presented by LaVerne Mickel and supported by Cahill.

New Business

LaVerne Mickel won the raffle item provided by Irene Cahill.

Speaker – Julie Mullin, Hope Sports Complex, General Manager/Owner

Julie shared how she started a business being a female in her industry and surviving COVID. She had four children that all participated in different sports. The younger two children were very interested in soccer. Her and her husband operated a small soccer club then purchased the club for \$1. Their club started with 50 athletes and grew to over 1000 athletes. She recruited UK soccer coaches to relocate to Lansing and coach for her club. The soccer club, MI Chill, found host families for coaches to live. Originally Julie's family hosted five coaches living with her family until she decided to buy a home for the coaches to live in.

She heard that Hope Sports Complex was shutting down. She reached out to Sports Facility Advisors to provide a feasibility study to determine if the Hope Complex would be a facility to invest in. The study researched with all parks in the Lansing area and supported the purchase of the Hope Complex. The Hope Sports Complex was built on an old landfill. It has six soccer fields on top of it.

Citywide soccer tryouts are hosted annually each June. Julie has a passion for helping kids in need. Julie purchased Hope Sports Complex 2013 with a private partnership with the city. She believes in Lansing. It wasn't being used well under the prior ownership and no maintenance was done. Julie took out a loan to complete necessary upgrades. To be put back into service, it required replacement irrigation on the fields and special lawn care. She made a lot of mistakes. She is nice by nature and was taken advantage of in the beginning. Julie learned a lot through the process and she's now covering her expenses. She believes her mission is a community service. The complex hosts many events including wedding receptions over 4 weekends each year, the Women's Soccer Club (LAWS) leagues, and a variety of age groups of men's soccer leagues.

Julie opted to sell the soccer club to a company called Nationals to focus on managing of the park. This included learning everything from field scheduling, lawn care and adding a restaurant for food/coffee/drinks. Julie took out a \$2.5M in debt for much needed improvements. She has reduced her debt to \$1.1M since opening. Her partnership agreement with City included installing a turf field but to charge the same fee to all groups.

Julie constantly was researching ways to improve her business including understanding construction on top of a landfill that included a restaurant on top in. Originally there was a bathroom building but it had dropped about 18" because the land that settled underneath it. Julie opened Cleats Bar and Grille, the restaurant, the day before COVID shut down the county. Her favorite childhood memory was eating dinner with her family. In 2014, she ordered a metal Quonset hut to create her restaurant vision.

During COVID, it was uncertain times. It required her to have the fields ready for use including cutting the grass and paying for the needed chemicals for the fields. COVID was hard to navigate. She paid \$12K to have beach volleyball courts brought in and was unable to make any money because the state shut down. The Hope Complex lost overall approximately \$250K due to the COVID shutdown. A lot of decisions were made without the science to back it up in her opinion. Julie has a Masters in BioChemistry. She was disappointed that it became political and based on opinions. Big companies made lots of money on COVID. When the state started opening back up, Cleats reunited families after COVID because it had a patio that could hold up to 600 people. It put her business on the map.

The Hope Complex consists of 120 acres with 30 acres currently developed. Julie engaged with many CHILL families to build the hut and stadium. The complex is closed during the winter. Many improvements have been added over the years to service all types of sports besides just soccer. She installed a press box and a score board. Fobs operate the score board by specific sport. The complex has hosted many events including Men's rugby, the Balloon Festival, and Youth flag

football to name a few. It is the second largest soccer club in Michigan with an indoor dome that'll be ready in Nov-24. Julie has offered \$1M in scholarships for kids in the Lansing area to participate in soccer at a higher level. Scholarships were also offered to athletes who could volunteer a certain number of hours to earn a scholarship.

It's important as a business owner to know what you want your end goal to be. Business owners need to be flexible. It is important to research and understand what you need. She wanted to know all aspects of her business so she could train her employees properly. It was important to listen and have a positive attitude throughout the process.

Confirmed Speakers for 2024

February 7, 2024

Nyshell Lawrence, Socialight Society

Assigned Member to Schedule: Laverne Mickel

March 6, 2024

Nikki Thompson Frazier, Sweet Encounter Bakery & Café

Assigned Member to Schedule: Laverne Mickel

April 3, 2024

Becky Bennett, Ingham County

Simar Pawar will confirm this date availability with Becky Bennett. Requested that group prepare questions before this date.

May 1, 2024, and June 5, 2024, are unconfirmed speakers at this date.

Old Business

Simar asked Becky to attend tonight's meeting, but it conflicted with Finance Meeting due to the WIC meeting date change. Becky will discuss the procedures of the Women's Commission. Simar requested a Zoom link to have future meetings virtually. Becky requested a point of contact to "host" the meeting. Simar will provide tablet for hosting meeting.

Discussion/Announcements

Irene Cahill: Wants to confirm Unity in the Park date in the future so the committee can participate, and proper plans can be made. Irene also shared the shared Safe Medication Storage and Disposal handout for the minutes which is attached.

Simar shared that MLK Day was celebrated in Lansing on 1/15/24. There were many women leaders who participated including Governor Whitmer, Representative Elissa Slotkin and U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow. Youth awards for writing about the event were handed out. It was great to see many women on the stage sharing about MLK's dream. Simar recommended all members of the commission attend next year's event through the county if possible.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

Next Meeting

Regularly the first Wednesday of each month with the next meeting rescheduled at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, February 7th, 2024, in Conference Rooms D and E of the Human Services building at 5303 S. Cedar Street, Lansing.