



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
 JOCELYN BENSON, SECRETARY OF STATE  
 DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
 LANSING

**Task force on Women in Sports  
 Meeting Minutes**

Date: May 26, 2021

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Location: Virtual

The fifth meeting of the Task Force on Women in Sports was called to order by Chairperson/Secretary Benson at 10:05 a.m.

**Task Force Attendees**

	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Chairperson/Secretary Benson	X	
Penny Allen-Cook		X
Ketra Armstrong	X	
Kathy Beauregard		X
Keri Becker	X	
Lorin Cartwright	X	
Carolyn Cassin	X	
Ramona Cox	X	
Cali Crawford	X	
Joanne Gerstner	X	
Jennifer Granger	X	
Mike Guswiler	X	
Carol Hutchins	X	
Samantha Mullet	X	
Erika Swilley		X

Task Force Advisory Members attending included: Dan Gould, Mark Uyl, Deborah Antoine, Richard Lapchick, Heather Lyke, Suzy Merchant, Heather Mitts Feeley, Patti Phillips, Meg Seng, Malia Xie (for Mary Wilson), Renee Tirado, Neena Chaudry, Judi Brown Clark

## **I. Welcome, Introductions, Updates**

Chairperson/Secretary Benson welcomed everyone to the fifth and last virtual Task Force meeting.

The Task Force members present constituted a quorum. Secretary Benson highlighted a few recent sports news items:

- Micaela Kelly from Martin Luther King, Jr. High School in Detroit and Central Michigan University was drafted 21st overall pick (2nd round) in the 2021 WNBA draft by the Connecticut Sun.
- Coach Carol Hutchins and her team won the 2021 Big Ten Softball Championship. The Wolverines completed the 2021 season with a 38-8 record, captured the program's 22nd Big Ten Conference title and third in a row, and reached the NCAA Tournament for the 26th straight year.

Additionally, Secretary Benson noted that Sally Marsh, Director of Special Projects, has left her role with MDOS to attend Stanford Law School in the fall, and Michele Lewis Watts, Ph.D. was hired as director/consultant for the Task Force.

## **II. Chair's Report**

- a. The December 2020 Meeting Minutes were approved by the committee (Keri Becker moved, and seconded by Carolyn Cassin).
- b. Secretary Benson provided an overview of Task Force Director role and introduced Michele Lewis Watts, Ph.D. as the new director.

## **III. Summary of Task Force Member Conversations – Michele Lewis Watts, Ph.D.**

Dr. Lewis Watts summarized her introductory conversations with Task Force members which included several themes:

- Broad-based free access to physical activity (emphasis on underserved groups)
- Pipeline to leadership roles (mentoring, role models, barriers, awareness)
- Accountability & incentives (knowledge of rules, enforcement)
- Allyships & Partnerships (local, statewide, national)
- Intentionality & Specifics (narratives, research)

## **IV. Review Draft Planning Timeline – Michele Lewis Watts, Ph.D.**

Dr. Lewis Watts reviewed the project timeline from May 2021 to June 2022 which concludes with a public release of the final report of recommendations for the governor. In highlighting the research that had already been done, Dr. Lewis mentioned that the Task Force had initially indicated researching out-of-school programs; however, the membership, led by a recommendation from Dr. Armstrong, decided that secondary research could be used to support any recommendations for decisions.

The Task Force will have future “concentrated conversations” on developing recommendations by category: K-12/youth opportunities, college experiences, and employment opportunities/leadership. Each conversation will address legislation, policy, investments & funding and programming recommendations.

There was lively discussion on establishing a rubric to evaluate recommendations. Through discussion, the following criteria were suggested for consideration: sustainable, measurable, accountability/ownership, replicable, breadth and depth, fundable, quality and practical. Sarah Axelson of the Women's Sports Foundation offered to investigate the evaluation tools of the Foundations' research team for their application to this work.

Dr. Dan Gould suggested the use of a logic model which includes defining expected outcomes. Additionally, Secretary Benson suggested a funding model be aligned with the recommendations.

Sarah Axelson requested the Task Force's support of their letter "Addressing NCAA Gender Equity Review." The letter is to the NCAA urging full transparency for the findings and recommendations of the comprehensive gender equity review which is currently being conducted by Kaplan Hecker & Fink LLP in light of the gender-based differences for athletes made public during the 2021 NCAA Women's and Men's Basketball Tournament. A motion for the Task Force to sign the letter was carried (Carolyn Cassin moved, Ramona Cox seconded.)

## **V. Public Comment**

Alana Glass, Director, Project Play Southeast Michigan, addressed the Task Force, stating that she has been following the work of the Task Force and is in full support of its efforts.

## **VI. Next Meetings**

The next meeting of the Task Force will include three "concentrated conversations" in June and a full (in-person) meeting in the Fall of 2021.

Chairperson/Secretary Benson thanked everyone and adjourned the meeting at 11:48 a.m.