



FACT SHEET

Key Findings from the KU study commissioned by the Women's Foundation:

1. Women who have not served feel that they don't have ***the knowledge and expertise needed, and feel less confident*** in their leadership skills. Previous volunteer work added to their confidence.
2. Women believe that ***they won't be asked to serve, although they would like to do so***. They were concerned about selection processes, not knowing how selection was done.
3. Structural issues were equally important to all groups: ***women wanted to be absolutely sure that time was spent efficiently***; that meetings were conveniently scheduled; and that they would see results of their efforts for the time spent.
4. ***Women need support*** in order to feel knowledgeable, confident, and to feel a sense of belonging.
5. ***Commission leaders need training*** in how to be more inclusive of women and minorities, how to run meetings democratically, and how to hold timely and efficient meetings.

Recommendations to Mayor Sly James' administration:

1. Affirm women's self-confidence to lend their voice by ***asking them to serve*** and being clear as to why they are being asked.
2. Empower women of all ages, ethnicities, and socioeconomic status to value their own experience by ***providing them with a support system that includes accomplished and confident role models*** who share their experiences and help women to feel knowledgeable about civic structures.
3. Incorporate structural changes that ***make meetings more accessible*** and value women's schedules and contributions (e.g., provide paid parking, schedule meetings at times that are convenient for women, demonstrate sensitivity to childcare issues, use technology to include the participation of women).
4. ***Train leaders of commissions and boards in efficient and effective meeting strategies*** and reporting structures (e.g., clear agendas, time limits on agenda items, prior electronic communications in lieu of "readings", etc.) that value women's time and demonstrate to them that they can have an impact.
5. ***Train leaders of commissions and boards to be inclusive of women's voices*** in their scheduling and running of meetings, as well as in how they call upon and encourage women's opinions to inform the business of the task force, commission and/or council.