

DECEMBER 12, 2019 | NEWS

Shumaker Attorney Works with Pasco County Citizens and Leaders to Re-establish Commission on the Status of Women

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PASCO COUNTY, Fla. – Pasco County resident and partner at the full-service business law firm Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, **Michele Leo Hintson** is working with Pasco County Commissioner Kathryn Starkey, several Pasco women business owners and community leaders to re-establish its Commission on the Status of Women, which was originally approved by County ordinance in 1979 but has sat in the books inactive for more than 35 years.

The ordinance was discussed at a Pasco County public hearing today and will be voted on at the Pasco County Commission meeting on September 13.

U.S. President John F. Kennedy originally formed the President's Commission on the Status of Women during the civil rights movement on December 14, 1961. Its purpose was to investigate questions regarding women's equality in education, in the workplace and under the law. Since then, Florida and numerous other governmental bodies have established commissions to make change at a local level.

"I have seen what these commissions have been able to do in nearby counties and thought it could be extremely valuable in Pasco County," said Hintson. "In a chance meeting with Pasco County *Commissioner Starkey* about two years ago, we decided to research the issue and work toward amending the 1979 ordinance."

If enacted, each Pasco County commissioner would appoint one member and other key local and county nonprofit organizations would nominate 10 additional members to serve.

“This is a very exciting opportunity for Pasco County,” said Pasco County Commissioner Starkey. “As our county grows, it will be critical to have this commission research and inform county leaders about important issues that pertain to women and make recommendations on how to help with issues that are germane to women in our community like equal pay, homelessness, education, human trafficking and many others.”

The Pasco County Commission on the Status of Women would serve in an advisory capacity to provide information to county leaders that it may not otherwise have that effect women in a unique way.

“I am so pleased after two years of work with women in the community of many different backgrounds this ordinance may finally come to fruition,” said Hintson. “It is extremely gratifying to be part of something that will bring together strong community leaders in Pasco County to discuss important topics unique to women in the community to help research such issues, make recommendations and potentially assist the county leaders in making policy.”

Eventually, Hintson said she would love to see the commission establish its own Women’s Hall of Fame – similar to that which is done in neighboring Hillsborough County and in Florida. The Women’s Hall of Fame could help frame the legacy of women who have given back substantially to the community or shaped policy in some exponential way to encourage others, particularly young women and men, to help make positive changes in their community.

Hintson is a graduate of the Leadership Pasco program, and Shumaker Loop and Kendrick, LLP is an investor in the Pasco Economic Development Council.

About Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP

Founded in 1925, Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP is a full-service law firm with more than 245 lawyers and five offices in Toledo and Columbus, Ohio; Tampa and Sarasota, Fla.; and Charlotte, N.C. Shumaker is a premier provider of quality legal services. Whether it's commitment to clients or work in the community, involvement lies at the core of all of Shumaker’s initiatives.