

Domestic Violence Commission Meeting
Minutes – February 12, 2010
Public School Forum Conference Room
3739 National Drive, Suite 100
Raleigh, NC 27612

Commission Member Attendees: Lisa Angel, David Badger, Marisol Barr, Ericka Shearin (representing Senator Doug Berger), Kristin O'Connor (representing Sherry Bradsher), Jennifer Brobst, Lynn Bryant, Gwendolyn Burrell, David Elliott, Beth Froehling, Janeen Gingrich, Dr. Peggy Goodman, Chief John Guard, Annette Hampton, Kathy Hodges, Linda Holden-Cox, Jo Liles, Tracy Little, Representative Marian McLawhorn, Deputy Secretary June Michaux, Dr. Beth Moracco, Karen Parker-Thompson, Sheriff Richard Webster and Betsy Wells.

Department of Administration (DOA) Attendees: Jill Dinwiddie, Robin Colbert, Tara Minter, Cindy Olsen, and Christy Agner

Guest Attendees: Monika Johnson Hostler, Debbie Allen, Keith Sutton, and Lucy Horton

I. Opening/Welcome - Karen Parker-Thompson

- Chair Karen Parker-Thompson welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the meeting. She stated that notebooks for new Commission members who have not received them are on the table. Travel forms are available for members who want to be reimbursed for travel. She asked members to think about the current time frame for the meetings (10 am to 1 pm) and let her know if you have any suggestions about the meeting time (since there is no money for lunch).
- Chair Parker-Thompson thanked Lisa Angel for her many years of dedicated service serving as the Chair of the DV Commission (since 2005) and presented her with a plaque in appreciation for her service. Ms. Thompson added that Ms. Angel has agreed to stay on with the Commission until June 2010 to help with the leadership transition.
- Chair Parker-Thompson outlined the major points contained in Executive Order 34 and 35 (included in the handouts). They were as follows:
 - * Commission members need to report to the commission if they have any conflicts of interest in serving as a member of the Domestic Violence Commission.
 - * Members of boards and commissions are not permitted to accept gifts.
 - * There is a 75% attendance standard. For that reason, it is important for members to sign in at each meeting.
 - * Ms. Thompson will begin each commission meeting with a reminder of the Ethics Standards that DV Commission members should adhere to.

II. Introduction

- Everyone introduced themselves and stated their affiliation.

III. Approval of Minutes

- Karen Parker-Thompson asked for approval of the minutes.
- Representative McLawhorn moved to approve the minutes as written. David Badger seconded and all were in favor. The minutes were approved as written.

IV. Executive Director's Report- Jill Dinwiddie

- Since becoming Executive Director, she has had a chance to meet with numerous people in Raleigh and around the state. She indicated that she is not here to maintain the status quo, rather to recommend and initiate needed change. One of her recommendations is that the name of the agency be changed to the "North Carolina Council for Women and Girls". She wants to make the Council more widely known and to focus on prevention of domestic violence and sexual abuse.
- Ms. Dinwiddie may recommend a name change for the Displaced Homemaker program as well, since over 50% of the workforce is now women. She would like to focus on additional areas of assistance like helping women who are interested in starting and growing their own business and include a greater emphasis on empowering girls.
- Ms. Dinwiddie announced that the study group on sexual assault, to be reported on later, is recommending that sexual assault be added to the agenda of the Domestic Violence Commission.
- The CFW/DV Commission 2010-2011 budget includes a request for funds to hire an Abuser Treatment Coordinator.
- Ms. Dinwiddie is working on streamlining the grants administration process. Although there are currently no funds to create an online process, the applications are being condensed and, going forward, the DV and SA grants will be for two years. She stated that the CFW/DV Commission is expanding their website to make it the "go to place" for information on women in NC.
- The Council for Women has established a taskforce to address the desire for more female appointments to Boards and Commissions and is also part of a legislative study group addressing work/family balance issues.
- Ms. Dinwiddie announced two upcoming events that will be sponsored by the Council for Women:
 - A Celebration of Women's History Month will take place on March 22, 2010 at 6:30 pm at the NC Museum of History. Professor Sally McMillen will be discussing her latest book, Seneca Falls and Governor Beverly Perdue and Julian Malveaux, President of Bennett College, will speak as well. "Stella" a women's singing group will perform. The event is open to the public and all are invited to attend.
 - The Governor's Conference for Women will be held on Nov. 9, 2010 at the Raleigh Convention Center. Ms. Dinwiddie added that she has been working on the Advisory Board for the conference. For more information, go to the website www.ncwomensconference.com.
 - Ms. Dinwiddie stated that she recently met with Governor Perdue and has been given a list of legislators to meet with. She will be discussing the idea of adding sexual assault to the DV Commission, changing the name of the agency, and adding an emphasis on prevention.
- Discussion ensued on the name change and whether a vote should be taken to endorse the name change. The group decided to wait until the next meeting to vote, thus allowing members to think about the issue.

V. Committee Reports

- **Victim Services Committee** – Currently there is not a Chairperson so the committee has not met.
- **Workplace Violence Committee** – The committee has not met.
- **Legislative Committee** – A copy of their report from Judge Beverly Scarlett was distributed to the members. They will be reviewing Chapter 50-B and 50-C to determine whether changes should be recommended. They are also looking at whether there is a need for a more structured form of sentencing. The committee will meet again on March 11.
- **Abuser Treatment Committee** – Jo Liles distributed a copy of their report. She stated that the committee has met several times and they have reviewed Abuser Treatment Application packets for certification. She added that they have met with Child Welfare staff at DHHS regarding the results of a survey conducted last year by the Domestic Violence and Child Welfare Advisory group. In addition she reported the following:
 - * Kathleen Balogh, CFW/DVC Western Region Director, was invited by DHHS to provide (3) two-hour training sessions on Abuser Treatment programs for their Multiple Response System/System of Care (MRS/SOC).
 - * Lack of information and misunderstandings regarding the difference between anger management and abuser treatment are some of the issues that their committee is working to address. There is also a need for more curriculum training for staff, so they are looking at offering training next year.
 - * Robin Colbert, Bernetta Thigpen and Kathleen Balogh with CFW/DVC have been approved to attend the upcoming NC PAT (State Coalition of Abuser Treatment programs) meeting in Charlotte.
 - * The committee has developed a first draft of their “Best Practices” manual. They would like to post the manual on the CFW/DV Commission website once they have a final copy.
 - * The absence of a full-time Abuser Treatment Coordinator position has made addressing these issues more difficult.

Discussion included: The issue of battering being categorized as a mental health issue. More training needs to be done to correct this perception. Jennifer Brobst suggested collaboration between mental health agencies and the Parenting Program that her office oversees. In addition, DHHS’s “Strong Fathers” program would be a good resource. It was pointed out that there is not enough domestic violence specific training. A course offered through the psychology or social work field might be possible or a **public awareness campaign**.

- **Law Enforcement Committee** – Chief John Guard reported that the Law Enforcement committee will be meeting on March 12 at 10 am at NCVAN.
- **Professional Education Committee** – Dr. Peggy Goodman reported that she has found that there isn’t much information out there in regards to national standards. The ECU Nursing School has the most to offer since their Nursing Education curriculum has recently been revamped.
 - * Dr. Goodman pointed out the potential to offer online curriculum.
 - * She added that she will bring the results of her findings to the next DV Commission meeting.

- * She stated that an ECU student who recently received a Fellowship award may be able to participate in the gathering of information.

VI. Presentation “Domestic Violence and Pre-trial Release Conditions” – Chief John Guard

- Chief John Guard gave a powerpoint presentation on what is being done across the state to deal with domestic violence. Chief Guard stated that he met with the Joint Legislative Committee on January 11, 2010 and gave this presentation.
- He began with the definition of domestic violence, the dynamics and the barriers victims face when they try to leave. He stated that domestic violence is unlike any other crime in that it is about power and control and therefore the threat of violence becomes much higher when the victim tries to leave their abuser. He continued with the following points:
- He began his career with the Sheriff’s Department and work with domestic violence in January 1997 and he has seen many changes. As more information has been gathered by working the field with domestic violence cases and national surveys have been conducted; changes have come about.
- Domestic violence is not just physical, but also includes threats, verbal abuse and sexual violence. He added that the majority of law enforcement will not make an arrest unless they see evidence to support the abuse, i.e. bruises, etc.
- Many of the problems are due to lack of training and communication in law enforcement.
- Barriers that the victim may encounter were identified as the need for: transitional housing, low cost legal services, and affordable child care, etc. These barriers could lead the victim to return home.
- The Pitt County Sheriff’s office was experiencing overcrowding in their jails, so they looked into contracting with nearby counties to use their jails. The cost to contract out with another county was \$56 a day, per offender. The GPS monitoring pilot program was put in place by the Pitt County Sheriff’s office. The cost of housing an offender using their home as an annex was \$6 a day.
- Many of the offenders continued the abuse and were arrested multiple times. In response to ongoing problems with pre-trial release, his judicial district created a “Bond Modification form”. The form spells out for the offender under electronic monitoring, what will happen if he violates any of the terms of his pre-trial release. The offender would immediately be arrested and given a higher bond.
- After 36 months of using the monitoring system, the Pitt County Sheriff’s office analyzed the data to see if the system was working.
- The Crawford vs. Washington case that came about in March 2004 had a negative effect on domestic violence cases. The “evidence based prosecution” or “no victim, no case” rule allowed offenders to manipulate the court system. If the victim doesn’t testify in court, the offender is released.
- There is a need for more training to clarify the changes in the existing statute that allows an offender to be picked up for violating a pre-trial release condition. There is no charge, only a bond sheet.
- Chief Guard added that law enforcement must have the power to subpoena victims while on the scene, which would save a lot of time and streamline the process.

VII. Update on Automated Protective Order Management and Notification – Debbie Allen

- Debbie Allen, with the Governor’s Crime Commission, gave an overview of the SAVAN system. SAVAN provides consolidated domestic violence information to the victim and the criminal justice community about the offender’s movements. The process for obtaining a protective order electronically, checking on the status of it and receiving notification of upcoming court proceedings would be streamlined. Officers would have the ability to access the victim’s history while they’re out on a call.
- HB2189, HB1586 and HB115 ask for the DV Commission, the Governor’s Crime Commission, the Administrative Office of the Courts, and the Dept. of Justice to work collaboratively on the feasibility of creating a system where the victim can get information about her offender and access to her protective order. The process of getting a protective order would be simplified in an electronic way.
- In the past year and a half, Ms. Allen has written a grant to the Bureau of Justice Assistance and has received federal “SAVAN enhancement funds” in the amount of \$500,000 to improve the SAVAN system.
- She has identified Alamance County as the pilot county for this project because they received \$400,000 from the Office of Violence Against Women and have created a Family Justice Center.
- The SAVAN system would allow a victim to go before a Clerk or Magistrate and obtain a protective order. With the SAVAN system, this protective order would be created electronically, which would then be sent electronically to the Judge. The fact that it might be after hours or on the weekend would not affect the process; as it currently does.
- The electronic file would be sent to the Sheriff’s office and the offender would be served with the protective order. The victim would receive notification once the protective order has been served. The Clerk would be notified electronically.
- Ms. Allen asked the DV Commission members for their help and support by contacting legislators when changes or modifications in legislation are needed in order to move forward with the expansion of the SAVAN system.

VIII. Report on HB115 Study re: Sexual Assault Services – Jill Dinwiddie

- Jill Dinwiddie gave a powerpoint presentation regarding the report of the Sexual Assault Study Group. It included the following points of interest:
- The history of Sexual Assault Services began with a legislative study in 1977
 - In 1984, the General Assembly allocated funding for 14 SA programs and in 2009 that number was 85.
 - In 2009-10, the total amount of SA funding for SA programs was \$2,750,000.
- The history of Domestic Violence Services began in 1977 when the General Assembly created the “Battered Women Project”.
 - In 1982, the General Assembly allocated funding for 17 DV programs and in 2009 that number was 101.
 - In 2009-10, the total amount of DV funding for DV programs was \$5,997,000 and came from three different funding sources.
- Ms. Dinwiddie stated that the study group conducted an online survey to gain information on SA programs and services provided in other states.

- The SA programs in the following states were surveyed: Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Louisiana, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia.
- Responses were received from Georgia, Iowa, Louisiana and Virginia.
- None of the surveyed states has a Sexual Assault or DV Commission.
- **HB115 Requirements:**
 - “The DV Commission, in consultation with the NC Coalition on Domestic Violence and the NC Coalition on Sexual Assault, are to study whether sexual assault should be included as a focus area of the Commission.”
 - The following possible recommendations were presented along with the pros and cons of each:
 - No. 1 – Revise the mission of the DV Commission to include Sexual Assault
 - No. 2 – Create a Sexual Assault Commission
 - No. 3 – Take no action
 - Discussion included the following points:
 - If SA were included in the DV Commission, it’s possible that SA would not receive all of the attention that it needs and deserves.
 - SA needs its own focus group of expertise in the SA area.
 - SA is an important part of DV. However, the DV Commission as a forum for DV issues, has worked very well for the past 10 years. Concern was expressed that by adding SA to the DV Commission, the work and impact of DV might be diluted.

A vote was taken and the majority of those present directed the study group to report to the Joint Legislative Committee the #2 recommendation that a Commission on Sexual Assault be established as a stand-alone group with its own statute describing its membership and activities.

IX. Closing Remarks/Adjournment

- Ms. Parker-Thompson pointed out that the yellow handout has the DV Commission meeting schedule for the rest of 2010.
- Ms. Parker-Thompson thanked everyone for coming.
- Meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Cindy Olsen