

Meeting Minutes

Iowa NAHT Board of Directors

Tuesday June 8th, 2021 2:30-4:30 pm

Present: Heather Brown, Dr. George Belitsos, Ruth Buckels, Lauren Camp, Teresa Davidson, Shirley Fineran, Lori Freudenberg, Katie Kyker, Dr. Joe Moravec, Shirlee Reding, Linda Harrell, Bernadette Rixner, Jessica Rohrs, Maggie Tinsman, Mike Tupper, Alka Khanolkar, Alyse Hardin, Kim Hilby, Dr. Shannon Findlay, and Brenda Long

Excused Absence: None

Absent: None

Guests: Gretchen Brown-Waech (Attorney General's Office), Jesse Johnson (Refugee Trafficking Prevention Project), Rocky Vest (Hope for Justice), Dr. Richard Schoeberl (US Team Leader- Hope for Justice), Kira Finifrock (University of Dubuque and intern for Tri-State Coalition Against Human Trafficking), Amber Anderson (University of Dubuque student intern), and David Gonzales (Iowa human trafficking investigator for Hope for Justice)

1. Call to order (Belitsos)

Belitsos welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 2:33 pm. He stated that there are several special guests to be introduced as we move through the agenda.

2. Presentation by Hope for Justice and newly opened Iowa office. New staff hired and function. Program goals and future plans. How can NAHT support or collaborate? (Rocky Vest, Iowa Partnership Manager and Dr. Richard Schoeberl US Team Leader)

Belitsos began by introducing Dr. Richard Schoeberl from Hope for Justice. Belitsos also introduced Rocky Vest. Two years ago, the Network recommended Vest for an outstanding anti-trafficking service award, which was presented by the Governor. Vest's 200 mile Iowa bike ride has raised nearly 1 million dollars to fight trafficking. Vest is now employed by Hope for Justice.

Dr. Schoeberl began by stating that he is the US Team Leader for Hope for Justice. The headquarters are based out of the UK, but the United States headquarters are based in Nashville Tennessee. Brake the Cycle 200 has now become a part of Hope for Justice and Vest has been hired full time to work for Hope for Justice.

Hope For Justice is on five continents, pushing 40 offices. They help fight modern slavery through preventing exploitation, rescuing victims, restoring lives, and also reforming society. The US model is based on training, prevention, rescue, and community engagement. Over the past two years, the Nashville USA hub has opened over 115 investigative cases, built from over 320 referrals, leading to 66 rescues. In the same period of time, they have trained over 20,000 people from the law enforcement community, financial sector, clinical medical field, and others. They have two active hubs and they have private investigators who work hand in hand with law enforcement. One full time investigator is now in an office in Iowa. All of their private investigators are retired law enforcement or military intelligence, who are licensed private investigators. Prosecution works alongside law enforcement to build cases against traffickers and help trafficking victims. The typical cases that they work are sexual exploitation cases, runaways, homeless, foster care, massage parlors, substance abuse, and online exploitation. They are seeing a rise in labor trafficking, sex trafficking, and domestic servitude.

Their investigative process in these U.S hubs basically involves active search on social media. One of their investigators is a certified social media investigator, and they just look for missing children, ones that have run away, ones that are exploited online, and engage with law enforcement and the family in order to locate the missing person. They have access as private investigators and certain levels of databases that they can use such as open source information. They also go out and conduct surveillance on a regular basis to look for potential trafficking victims. Victims might be out on the street in certain areas, or at illicit massage parlors, or those who might be victims of labor trafficking in businesses. One of the training that they have conducted this past year was for the Department of State. They were asked to develop and deliver training for them that focused heavily on the healthcare industry. They were paid \$100,000 for this training.

They are in the process of developing an online training database. This will be much like what you will see in a college curriculum. This will allow people to go through and take certified courses that are specifically designed for those particular sectors. What a bank teller might see will be completely different than what a hotel maid might see. They try to make the training specific to the business.

Schoeberl next introduced their Iowa private investigator, David Gonzales. Prior to joining Hope for Justice, he worked with the Iowa City Police Department. He began working human trafficking cases 20 years ago. His first Iowa trafficking case was with Senator Kevin Kenny. Gonzales described his work and answered several questions.

Vest stated that Break The Cycle 200 really hasn't changed very much in the sense that they still ride bikes 200 miles in one day to raise human trafficking awareness and funds. Since they have merged with Hope for Justice, their funds now go to support Hope for Justice. Instead of money being given to different non-profit organizations, it now is fueling Hope for Justice programs that are both in Iowa and around the United States, even around the world.

Vest stated his job title is Partnerships Manager, so what he does is engage with communities, first and foremost, and try to promote these ultra endurance bike events and in so doing, he is creating bike rides for Hope for Justice throughout the U.S.

Belitsos thanked Vest and Schoeberl for their presentation then opened up for questions.

Davidson stated that she sees a lot of the things that Hope for Justice is doing in Iowa that other organizations are also doing, especially regarding training. Her question was, what are you doing so that we're not all doing the same thing, so that we're not duplicating services or overlapping?

Schoeberl replied that there's a lot of nonprofits that are out there and a lot of people are doing great anti-trafficking work. There is not one to his knowledge, that is actually doing private investigative work in Iowa. As far as training goes there are a lot of people developing training curriculums. Where they are actively conducting training, Hope for Justice works with other organizations to either develop training together, or they develop training for other organizations that may not even be within the state of Iowa, for example "At the Department of Treasury, we developed their finance training. At the Department of State, we've developed their training to deliver across all the U.S embassies across the globe. So there's training that we provide that is probably more specialized that wouldn't be offered by others in Iowa. My goal would be for us to have an opportunity to meet with everybody doing training because yeah there's no sense in you and me doing the same training."

Schoeberl went on to state, "But I don't know what training you're doing and you don't know what training I'm doing until you and I have an opportunity to sit down and say hey, how can we work together. Not to be stepping on people's shoes because that's not why we're here. They're not in a position to work competitively with people, we want

to work collaboratively with people. So we're not going to be beaten down by the same training that you're doing, because if you're right it's just not beneficial to anybody, so the collaborative pieces that we're looking forward to doing is working with people collaboratively.”

Davidson asked what the process is for that? She mentioned her role as the Anti-Human Trafficking Coordinator at Mercy Hospitals in Iowa. It's the first medical training program in Iowa, only the fifth in the nation. Davidson asked “is it the specific organization's job to reach out to you to let you know or are you actively trying to figure out what everyone in Iowa is doing. “

Schoeberl stated that he didn't know Davidson was doing hospital and clinic employee training. He stated they do provide a clinical training curriculum that was developed for several medical schools. They have medical doctors that they work with that help them deliver their curriculum. “Let's look at both training platforms and see how we can make a great platform together and see how we can work on this together!”

Fineran asked Vest if their Bike Ride funding is just for Hope for Justice or can other organizations apply to you for money for funding. “I'm founder of Lila May house, which is a home for adult women survivors who've been sex trafficked and we're always looking for money for our services.”

Vest replied Hope for Justice provides quality programs. They are not in a position to disperse money to other service providers. “Formerly, our role was to raise funds, and then we would talk to people and interview Iowa agencies and figure out how we could help fight trafficking in a significant way. But now it's different with all our Bike 200 funding going to Hope for Justice.”

Fineran asked, “do you charge for the training that you do and then my last question is have you also hired some women or is it all men in your organization?” Vest replied that his two bosses are women.

Heather Brown asked a couple of questions. The first being that she heard that the Hope for Justice trainings is very heavy into law enforcement being the answer to trafficking. Brown asked if they have any survivor input on any of your trainings? Are your trainings trauma informed?

Schoeberl replied, yes, they do have what they refer to as lighthouses, which are their recovery centers all over the globe, they have four in the United States. “It's trauma based and we also include victims testimony. Their training curriculum is also research based and they make sure that they can back it up. When the training is being delivered they do take into account a lot of the survivor care research. They interview

them extensively in order to identify some of the unique patterns and stuff that's going on in the trafficking world.

The question was asked as to how they fund training and who does the training.

Schoeberl stated that from a funding standpoint, they are funded privately, but then also they have their own team that writes grants for public funds. They just wrote three federal grants to deliver training. They developed a training platform for a national bank and the bank donated a couple hundred thousand dollars for the training platform for Hope for Justice to deliver to over 9000 employees. They also have individual monthly donors; the training applies for federal and state grants and get paid by some organizations to do specialized training. This is just within the US.

Their licensed private investigators do some training but, they do hire people that aren't like our trainers to deliver this. As far as the training with the Iowa hotel industry goes they would not use private investigators.

Belitsos thanked Hope for Justice for their presentation and will invite them back in a few months to continue to dialogue and look at ways to collaborate.

3. Hotel/Motel Training Subcommittee and recommendation on how/where hotel/motel employees should report suspected trafficking. (Davidson)

Teresa Davidson stated there's a bill, house file 2259, that passed the Iowa legislature mandating the education of hotel motel staff, in order for state employees to be able to utilize the services of that hotel. Teresa stated she feels our state is going about this education a bit backwards, as we should be providing the education for those who are going to be called by hotel workers (Law Enforcement, hotlines, etc.) and that those who are going to actually serve the people that will be identified after training occurs (emergency shelters, restoration homes, advocacy agencies, etc.). However, this bill goes into effect January, 2022 so we need to proceed.

Davidson has been advocating, along with several others on the Network BOD, to educate law enforcement "in tandem" with the hotel staff education. She feels we also need more services available (especially in the area of emergency referrals). Davidson is afraid once we start training hotels and motels a lot of people will be identified, and we won't be ready.

She reported that the INAHT decided to create a training video (versus a PowerPoint) because 1) we would be able to include a variety of presenters, 2) a video may be a bit more entertaining, and 3) for ease for our members to present. Davidson wanted to go

on record with a very big thank you to Terry Pounds for his generosity in partnering with us in this video production at a greatly reduced cost.

Davidson reported the NAHT Script and Roles Subcommittee started with the basic requirements of HF 2259, then added a few things. It's very important to many of us in the Network to keep this video survivor centered and Teresa gave a big thank you to Heather Brown for her help with this particular issue. Davidson reported it was important to the subcommittee to create this video to be trauma informed and evidence based. They feel that when we are training hotel motel staff we're not simply training them to look at their patrons, but some of the staff may be victimized by labor or sex trafficking themselves. The subcommittee also felt there may be buyers or even traffickers in the audience and are addressing that as well.

It was very important to many on the subcommittee to use generalizations versus specific statistics, especially those which sources cannot be verified. Another wish was to keep this video as timeless as possible, which is why they didn't select many current figures in office to speak on the video, or use dated statistics (example: the Iowa Victim Service Call Center received x# calls from people victimized by human trafficking in 2020). Their goal is to use diverse and relatable participants in the video from across the whole state. The subcommittee wants to keep the video at a fifth grade (or below) level with Spanish subtitles, as many in the audience will not have English as a first language or have a higher education.

The subcommittee is addressing six objectives in the video: 1) what human trafficking is, 2) how it happens, 3) who's involved in it, 4) the important role that hotel motel staff can play, 5) how to detect it and 6) what to do. Extra topics that will be address include addressing buyers and the complexity of trafficking. Due to the fact the subcommittee was unable to find someone who had been victimized by Labor trafficking to share their story, they will be using an actor (which will be made clear in the video). They were also unable to find a hotel who was trained, identified a person that was being victimized by human trafficking, call 911 and have a successful outcome.

Most hotel/motel trainings simply tell the staff to call 911 if they see something that signifies human trafficking. The subcommittee disagreed with that plan for a number of reasons. Teresa wanted to personally go on record at this point stating she is a very strong supporter of Law Enforcement. She has a lot of Law Enforcement in her family. The subcommittees recommended Plan of Action is in no way a reflection that they think anything is wrong with Law Enforcement.

However, there are situations in hotels where a person that is victimized by human trafficking simply needs services at that moment. Heather Brown helped us to understand that many times, she was actually at a hotel with a buyer and no trafficker

was there. She would have not wanted 911 to be called, nor would she have been able to be cooperative with law enforcement due to coercion. Heather said if she had been discretely offered assistance through an advocate by hotel staff, she may have been able to get out of trafficking much sooner.

The subcommittee feels that advocates can/should assist survivors in reporting to law enforcement in a trauma-informed manner. Sometimes, people that are victimized by human trafficking are themselves arrested. They may have committed previous crimes (traffickers often force them to commit crimes so that they will be arrested if they seek help from law enforcement) or arrested for prostitution. There's potential deportation if the victim is here illegally. Teresa stated she has been told by multiple survivors that they were lied to about law enforcement. Their traffickers asked buyers to literally dress up like law enforcement and brutally assault them. These survivors thought it was law enforcement buying them and assaulting them, so they were terrified of law enforcement. And then, lastly, of course, the trauma bond where the person victimized falls in love with their captor and are not going to be cooperative, even if Law Enforcement is called.

The subcommittee's recommended plan of action is as follows:

There are times that law enforcement SHOULD be called: 1) if someone that is victimized asks for law enforcement to be called, 2) if there's imminent danger, 3) to report a tip, 4) if there is a minor involved.

The subcommittee is advocating that hotels make relationships up front with law enforcement and so that they can have a collaborative plan of action that is much more controlled and helpful. Hotel/Motel staff may also call the National Human Trafficking Hotline. The subcommittee will offer the Iowa Victim Service Call Center as another option for assistance and resources. The Iowa Victim Service Call Center is working on strengthening their collaboration with the National Human Trafficking Hotline.

Davidson reported that the subcommittee has had multiple meetings with Pat Waymire (DPS), and feel they have worked out a compromise with them regarding their suggested training plan of action, so they are considering beginning to film the footage. If the current compromised plan of action is not approved by DPS, Teresa wants to go on record stating that even if we start filming this, she doesn't want us to proceed with a training because people that have been victimized by human trafficking can be harmed by the wrong plan of action and if we don't have services in place for them. The subcommittee is currently working on filming plans and filling in the last few gaps regarding scripts and roles.

4. Approval of consent agenda (Belitsos)

Belitsos reviewed the following motions and asked if anyone had items to **remove** for further discussion?

- Motion to approve the May 11th, 2021 meeting minutes of the NAHT Board of Directors.
- Motion to approve the Acting Treasurer's report for April 2021.
- Motion to authorize the board chair to send a letter of support to the Administration for Children and Families Transitional Living Program HHS-2021-ACF-ACYF-CX-1905.

Belitsos called for a vote on the consent agenda which was **unanimously approved**.

5. Report from Fundraising Committee (Kyker, Freudenberg, Forsyth & Belitsos)

- July 30th World Day Against Human Trafficking in Persons non-celebration fundraising invitation.
- Encourage Board members to please make a once annual gift to NAHT.
- Amazon Smile and how to designate to NAHT.
- ½ page NAHT ad in Business Record.

Kyker stated that she **had** to jump off in about five minutes and needed to report quickly. She reported she had a really good meeting with the fundraising Committee last month July 30 is World Day Against Trafficking. The committee is planning a non-event invitation so it's an appeal letter, but in the form of an event invitation. It's just a different way to advertise our cause and fundraising. If anyone is interested in seeing examples let her know. It just stands out as being a different type of fundraising letter. "We think it would be really, really cool so we're going to work on that and then have one of the technology consultants put together a cool invitation for us to send out via email and social media, as a way to raise some funds as well as some awareness."

"I know we say this often but I really encourage every board member to make a gift to the network at least once each year. It can be as little as \$5 whatever you are able to give we really, really appreciate that."

A reminder about Amazon smile and to designate the network as your cause it's really easy to do. We are working on ads in several different publications and we do have one that's been posted on Facebook and in the blog that we can use for several other news outlets. If you have any connections, please send them our way.

I'm happy to reach out to anyone about possibly getting some free ad space and using our ad or any type of other advertisements if this one doesn't work for your papers or local magazines, but has been published once and I think we have two others that are hopefully going to be giving us free spots soon.

6. Update on distribution of Rescue Sticker (Belitsos)

This agenda item will be moved to the Executive Committee agenda on June 29th.

7. Update from Survivor Service Provider Collaboration. Outcome of the June 3rd quarterly meeting. (Hardin, Buckels, Rohrs & Davidson)

Rohrs reported that there was a good turnout by providers on June 3rd and excellent discussions. The new FBI Victim Services Officer was introduced and had a new idea for legislation the NAHT should prioritize. Providers felt that next year four of the five priorities from 2021 should be carried over to 2022. These all address the needs of the survivors. Gretchen Brown-Waech also expressed concerns about the proposed human trafficking Task Force that will be carried over into the 2022 legislature. Her concern is that it is too law enforcement oriented.

Another concern was the need for more training of law enforcement especially those that are older officers and maintain the attitude that sex trafficking victims need to be arrested and charged with prostitution and other crimes they were involved in while being trafficked.

Buckels commented that she recently had the privilege of being able to work with and train 180 State of Iowa Public Defenders. Young officers have more knowledge about trafficking. First off, it's the training that Stephanie was able to do at the Law Enforcement Academy, and Stephanie was an incredible trainer. Unfortunately, she was somewhat managed by the upper management of the Academy. She wasn't allowed to give the real survivor stories or to bring in advocates to speak. She was allowed to bring in approved people that weren't going to go too far into it or upset the officers, etc. And that was a frustration, both for Stephanie and some of the people that were in the trainings.

It also comes down to those of us that are doing the training. There are some trainers who don't have personal experience with human trafficking survivors. Once somebody

hears a training and they go well I've already attended a training on human trafficking, I don't need to go to another one. Every person that trains on human trafficking gives a different perspective or from a different angle, so people that are sharing information that is not firsthand to them or is not something that they have been directly involved with might actually be doing damage to the to the real population we're serving.

8. Final report from Legislative Advocacy Committee and begin to look at priorities for the 2022 Legislative year. (Tinsman)

Tinsman stated, as you all know, some of this is a repeat of what she said last month. However, she wanted to highlight passage of the House File 452, which was a priority of the network and pertains to human trafficking offenses and massage parlors passed and was signed by the governor. This requires a licensed massage therapist or cosmetologist just to show a copy of a valid license and the government ID when a police officer so requests. It will be an aggravated misdemeanor to supply a person with fraudulent license or ID and it's a class D felony if a person's under 18 years old. Also, affirmative Defense is allowed for a person cooperating with law enforcement. That means for the victim/survivor of human trafficking. It does set a penalty for owners who rent to human traffickers.

Also we did secure \$150,000 funding in the Department of Public Safety for the hotel motel law, which was a priority of the Network. As you remember, last year incentivized hotels and motels to train employees on the signs of human trafficking and how to safely report suspicious activities.

The Supreme Court is to look at adding human trafficking victims to the Iowa rape shield law in the fall of 2021. That was a priority of the Network.

One of our 2022 plans is to work on senate bill 521 and that's the establishment of a Human Trafficking Statewide Task Force of both the private sector and the government sector. When I brought this up, with the NAHT Survivor Provider Collaborative meeting they didn't like the idea that it was called a Task Force. To them this means law enforcement oriented. They would like to say that it's either a multi disciplinary committee or a coalition.

9. Report from the Evaluation/Research and Best Practices Committee. (Moravec, Reding, Freudenberg, Davidson and Hilby)

- **Discuss entering a collaboration with the Iowa Secretary of State to create a new awareness training and recognition program to be called Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking. (Executive Committee)**
- **Addressing/ending the Demand Subcommittee and Trafficking Free Zones (Freudenberg)**

- **Best Practice for Survivor Services Subcommittee (Hilby)**

Moravec began by stating that Kim is doing a phenomenal job on developing the Best Practice Standards Policy. We sent it out to all the different practitioners in Iowa and different non-profit organizations. He thinks that gives them an opportunity for input. He believes that's a real collaborative gesture that we're making, and so he really encourages we continue to do policy development like this. As we're going to move forward on filming the Hotel/Motel training. Moravec believes that the Commissioner, as well as Patrick Waymeyer are going to be really taken seriously our video script suggestions. I know they're going to really work hard at trying to backfill the training for the oldsters as Ruth was saying, some of the old guard. At the Department of Public Safety, Pat Waymeyer really believes in what we're doing and he's going to keep us involved as a Network.

Freudenberg reported on progress establishing Iowa's 1st Trafficking Free Zone. She stated "Eastern Community College has just signed on to be a Trafficking Free Zone. They are the first college in the United States to do that. That includes Clinton, Scott, Muscatine, Jackson -there's like six or seven counties in which they perform. Their college is encouraging citizens in those communities to take the zone training. Every time Freudenberg speaks, she informs the public it is not just a proclamation it also entails training. Those entities that declared themselves a Trafficking Free Zone also encourage their employees and their customers and their church members. Awareness is the mission behind the whole trafficking free zone. Everyone can be trained to recognize the signs of trafficking and help prevent human trafficking, and also to end the demand. Essentially, that's what they're trying to do is end the demand, so the more people who get trained, the more we will see fewer buyers. There are also employee policies that they can adapt that would say that anyone who is caught buying or trafficking, they are automatically terminated from their employment. At Eastern Community College, there is a statewide organization, that is all made up of all the Community colleges. They've contacted Freudenberg, and so they might be considering becoming zones as well. She knows it seems like it's a lot of work but it truly isn't. You must have a citizen subcommittee that's willing to take this on. She would encourage all to do this and the US Institute is extremely helpful.

Belitsos and the Executive Committee reported on a meeting with the Secretary of State Office. They are proposing collaborating on a project that they call Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking (IBAT). What they want to do is create more awareness within Iowa's 300,000 businesses about trafficking. They are going to ask businesses to get trained on awareness of trafficking and want the NAHT to help promote and identify training. The Network is proposing that at least 50% of employees at all levels

get some training. This appears to be a huge undertaking, but only a small portion of them will jump at the opportunity and give the time of their employees to get trained.

Moravec commented that the secretary of state is looking to us to assist them as they try to replicate what's already going on in Texas. He encourages Board members to go to the Texas Businesses Against Trafficking website. They're trying to adopt and utilize that and morph it into an Iowa type program. It's really awesome and it really is a fabulous idea, a great concept.

But what they need from us is the training resources. They don't have the connections, they're not the experts in human trafficking. So this is probably one of the biggest opportunities the network has to expand the states awareness of human trafficking. I think we could become a key resource to the Secretary of State. The Network works with 11 local coalitions and has boots on the ground that could also come alongside and help local businesses to participate. By engaging local coalitions, this could be a real uniting factor for our whole network for our state. And it can also develop and build relationships, for all of our nonprofits because part of being certified is they make a commitment to support efforts locally. This could be a boom for all of the non-profit agencies and organizations.

Adjournment at 4:30 pm

Belitsos adjourned the meeting and ended with "bless you all for what you're doing to fight human trafficking in Iowa." He reminded the Board that the July Board meeting is usually skipped due to vacations. Therefore the next Board meeting will be August 10, 2021.