

Iowa NAHT Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 14, 2020

Present: Maggie Tinsman, Brenda Long, Dr. Shannon Findlay, Dr. Joe Moravec, Lori Freudenberg, Alyse Hardin, Sister Shirley Fineran, Shirlee Reding, Jonathan Causey, Teresa Davidson, Ruth Buckels, Bernadette Rixner, Lauren Camp, Jim Townsend, Katie Kyker, Dr. George Belitsos, Roxanne Riesberg, Jessica Rohrs, Kim Hilby

Excused Absence: Mike Tupper

Guests: Gretchen Brown-Waech (Human Trafficking Coordinator, Attorney General's Office), Devon Greiter (Law Enforcement Academy Human Trafficking Instructor)

I. Belitsos called the meeting to order beginning with a roll call.

Belitsos asked new board member, Kim Hilby from Dubuque, to introduce herself to the board. Hilby is professor of social work and an active member of the Tri-State Coalition Against Human Trafficking.

Camp announced that the Governor asked Legal Aid to set up a separate hotline for the COVID-19 virus (www.iowalegalaid.org).

II. Progress report from the Attorney General's Office and kickoff of PSA Trafficking Facts and Resources Campaign (Gretchen Brown-Waech)

Brown-Waech began by announcing plans for a Human Trafficking Summit to be held May 26 & 27, 2021 at Prairie Meadows. The theme will be "I Am Not Invisible" and will focus on labor trafficking.

Brown-Waech reported that the January launch of the PSA Project by the Division of Victim Services has been successful. The main goal was to identify and promote providers of human trafficking survivor services. She is behind on sending out posters and will try to catch up soon. Belitsos has requested posters for the NAHT and would still like to receive those.

Brown-Waech next discussed progress in developing service standards for provider agencies. She is consulting with domestic abuse coalitions and getting feedback on the standards. Belitsos asked if the NAHT could also be consulted on the standards. Brown-Waech will check with her supervisor for permission.

Camp raised a concern about labor trafficking and immigrant workers in pork plants in the western part of Iowa. She has been providing legal services to these victims. Rixner asked Brown-Waech who does one call to get an investigation into possible labor trafficking. There were several concerns expressed about the lack of interest in labor trafficking within some local law enforcement agencies. Belitsos asked Greiter, representing the Law Enforcement Academy, for her opinion. She brought up the possibility of contacting the Department of Public Safety for investigation of labor trafficking.

Brown-Waech offered to conduct a meeting with Rixner, Camp, and Greiter to further discuss the problem of investigations into labor trafficking. She will send Belitsos both the

outcome of the meeting and a written copy of progress report.

III. Update on YSS human trafficking services to youth under age 21 including prevention/awareness, emergency shelter, and transitional living (Buckels)

This agenda item was moved to the May 12th board meeting agenda.

IV. Approval of consent agenda (Belitsos)

- Motion to approve the March 10th meeting minutes of the NAHT Board of Directors
- Motion to approve the nomination of Ruth Buckels for a 2021 Outstanding Anti-Trafficking Service Award
- Motion to approve the NAHT 2020 budget
- Motion to approve the Treasurer's report for March 2020
- Motion to approve additions and corrections to the 2020 Strategic Plan
- Motion to accept with regret the board resignation of Sheriff Paul Fitzgerald and his proxy, Sgt. Quinn
- Motion to approve the nomination of Kim Hilby, University of Dubuque professor of social work, to fill a vacant board seat

There were several questions about the March treasurer's report and the 2020 budget proposal. Belitsos clarified that he prepared the March treasurer's report and was temporarily subbing for the new treasurer, Jim Townsend, until he contracts with a consulting bookkeeper who will be paid \$100 per month. This new contract position is in the budget and this contractor will process bills, checks, and prepare the monthly treasurer's report.

Rixner asked why there are three technology consultants and not just one. Belitsos explained that each consultant has other employment and therefore can only work a few hours per week on NAHT assignments. Belitsos would like to consolidate the three into one contractor, but he has yet to find one person who can give us enough time.

The consent agenda was passed unanimously.

V. Report from the Legislative Advocacy Committee (Tinsman & Causey)

Tinsman reported that the Human Trafficking Hotel/Motel Employee Training Bill was approved unanimously by the Iowa House of Representatives. The bill has now gone to the Iowa Senate and to the Senate State Government Committee, Chairman Senator Roby Smith. He has appointed Senator Chris Cournoyer as Chair of the Subcommittee for the Motel/Hotel Bill. Once approved by the Subcommittee, it will be voted on by the State Government Committee and hopefully passed by the Senate and signed into law by the Governor. This bill is a high priority for Senator Smith. Once the legislature goes back into session, Senator Smith will bring it up for passage.

VI. Review of 2019 annual human trafficking data report for the Iowa Call Center (Rohrs)

Rohrs reported that from January 1, 2019-December 31, 2019 the Iowa Victim Call Center answered a total of 32,128 phone calls. The Iowa Victim Service Call Center often finds that trafficking victims do not readily self-identify themselves as being sex or labor trafficked. This is reflected in the numbers below.

Unduplicated non primary human trafficking victimization Sex: 78 Labor: 5
Unduplicated primary human trafficking victimization Sex: 66 Labor: 4

The Iowa Call Center phone number is 800-770-1650 and is listed on the NAHT Rescue Sticker along with the national Polaris trafficking hotline.

VII. Postponement of April 28 & 29 statewide human trafficking conference. Progress report from the Johnson County Human Trafficking Coalition (Shannon Findlay)

Findlay reported that with the COVID-19 virus, this two-day conference was postponed from April 28 & 29 to September 8 & 9, 2020. Findlay did say that she was meeting with other networks. Belitsos reminded board members that Findlay is an emergency physician in Iowa City and is therefore on the frontline of fighting COVID-19 and thanked her for her service.

VIII. Postponement of the April 6th Mercy College of Health Sciences Child Sex Trafficking Research Symposium due to Coronavirus concerns (Moravec)

Moravec reported that the Child Sex Trafficking Research Symposium was postponed from April 6, 2020 to April 5, 2021. There had been 200 people already signed up for the April 6th, 2020 symposium, not counting a couple of quest speakers.

The topic of creating a training certification for human trafficking advocates and counselors was raised by Brown-Waech. Moravec stated that Mercy College may consider this in the future. Belitsos will add this need to the NAHT Strategic Plan.

IX. Report from Fundraising Committee. June 23rd is 15th anniversary of NAHT founding. Solicit board members for annual gift. #GivingTuesday May 5th. (Kyker, Townsend, Freudenberg & Belitsos)

Kyker reported that the Committee was hoping for 100% board participation as donors. However, due to the COVID-19 virus, donations are down. The committee will have more fundraising plans to share after their meeting on April 21, 2020.

X. Outcome of today's Service Provider Collaboration startup meeting (Hardin, Buckels, Davidson & Rohrs)

The startup meeting of the Survivor Service Provider Collaboration was held this morning from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM. Rohrs reported on a successful meeting with 20 participants on the Zoom conference call. The focus of the meeting was best practice to keep clients and staff safe during the COVID-19 health crisis.

Rohrs reported that due to the virus, it's difficult to keep volunteers involved, and fundraising has become an issue.

Davidson urged survivor service providers to apply for assistance from the federal paycheck protection plan. The Small Business Administration is also providing \$10,000 loans to nonprofits. The service providers feel that they are remaining positive and supportive of clients and staff despite the COVID-19 risks.

Belitsos wrote the April 1st blog post about traffickers taking advantage of vulnerable victims during the COVID-19 crisis. He also shared federal grant funding announcements in

the blog post.

Rohrs announced the next Survivor Service Collaboration meeting for 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM Wednesday, July 22. Board members are welcome to attend, and several did participate in today's meeting.

XI. Report on the NAHT Rescue Sticker Project and distribution of Spanish language Rescue Stickers (Belitsos)

Belitsos reported that he had ordered 1,000 Spanish language stickers and has already sent out 150. Now 300 more of them have been requested. The Sisters of St. Francis plan to distribute stickers in Dyersville, Iowa to prepare for the Field of Dreams Baseball event, plus a few more places. Belitsos also has Volunteer Distribution Instructions for the stickers. If anyone would like to volunteer, you can call or email him and he'll send the instructions to you (gbelitsos55@gmail.com).

The next NAHT Board of Directors meeting will be May 12, 2020 from 2:30-4:00 PM.