

NAHT Board of Directors Meeting
January 9, 2017
Iowa State Capitol Bldg., Senate Rm. 116

Present: George Belitsos (Chair), Jan Beran, Ruth Buckels, Teresa Davidson, Steve Eckley, Taylor Houston, Brynne Howard, Jennie Kerger, Cathy O’Keeffe, Shirlee Reding, Bernadette Rixner, Maggie Tinsman

Excused: Sr. Shirley Fineran, Gail Sheridan-Lucht, Stephen O’Meara

Guests: Celine Villongco (Iowa Attorney General’s Office), Rachel Owens (sitting in for Liz Cox), George Beran (NAHT Supporter), Kay Rice (Informed Choices), Roxanne Ryan, (Dept. of Public Safety Commissioner), Sgt. Robert Deskin (DPS Human Trafficking Coordinator), Jonathan Chambers (Cedar Rapids Friends of the Family),

All present introduced themselves. George welcomed our new Board Members, Jennie Kerger and Taylor Houston, and all guests.

The meeting was called to order at 10:30. And Teresa took a Board photo. Bernadette offered to do the minutes since Margaret couldn’t be there.

Reviewed the outcome of Governor’s press conference and Proclamation signing George pointed out that it was good timing that we asked Lt. Gov. Reynolds to be our Honorary Board Member. She got our issue on the agenda for the first press conference of the year. The Governor, Lt. Governor and George all spoke.

George distributed the NAHT Board of Directors Directory and other material from today’s press packet. He then reported that many local groups have responded to the NAHT blog post suggestion that they have local governments issue a Proclamation of January as Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention and Awareness Month. So far: Ames has it scheduled for its Mayor and City Council; Davenport’s City Council and the City of Bettendorf and their Board of Supervisors will have one; Bernadette reported that Anthon, Iowa’s Council issued the Proclamation on Dec. 28, Sioux City, IA and South Sioux City, NE’s councils will issue it tonight, the Woodbury County Board of Supervisors voted it in last week and will issue the Proclamation tomorrow, and it is hoped the Dakota County Board of Supervisors will issue it this week. Steve asked if Des Moines has issued a proclamation. Shirlee Reding is working on this.

The minutes of the December 12 minutes were accepted with corrections (Tinsman, Davidson, passed) Corrections: Ruth Buckels was present; spelling of Jennie Kerger’s name corrected; (item 3 c) Rep. Baltimore not Sen.; (3e –last paragraph) It was Shirlee Reding not Sr. Shirley Fineran; (7) 210 people were present at the conference.

Progress Reports from DPS and the Attorney General’s Office. Commissioner Ryan reported and introduces Sgt. Robert Deskin, Human Trafficking Coordinator for DPS. DPS is ready to hire an analyst, but waiting for the final budget cuts to see if they can afford to. This position is particularly important since DPS’ approach is intelligence led policing. DPS has 2 or,3 analysts who have focused on human trafficking in the past.

DPS’ focus is on human trafficking organizations rather than the lower level traffickers. They have a number of investigations on-going, and they are learning a lot from each one about how these groups are working. They are getting invaluable resources. They are also working on getting good evidence, which makes it easy to prosecute. Having a victim who is willing to testify is important, although they may use other evidence if a victim won’t come forward, such as ongoing criminal conduct.

DPS is doing an intelligence led training next week for people who have had the previous 2 week training. They will do 6 more later in the year, but these, too, will be for people who have had the previous training. DPS' training is much narrower in scope than the Attorney General's Office's, which covers a broader group of people involved in law enforcement, including county attorneys. Commissioner Ryan expects over the next year to have more trained investigators across the state, and that the demand for them will grow dramatically.

Celine Villongco, Human Trafficking Coordinator for the Iowa Attorney General's Office, reported that she has 12 Train-the-Trainer sessions scheduled, 2 in each SADV region. They will be 2 ½ days and geared to law enforcement, social service agencies, attorneys and county attorneys, first responders and nurses. She would like to keep each session to 25-30 people. The sessions start next week. It will be on a more introductory level than DPS' trainings, and CEUs and LEUs will be available. Her office will focus on a multidisciplinary approach and will network with Homeland security and Iowa Law Enforcement. She will send a schedule to George to post on the Network website calendar.

The question was raised as to whether a human trafficking victim has to be in the courtroom with her trafficker. Commissioner Ryan explained that the accused has the right to face his/her accuser unless you can prove that serious harm will be done. Then it can be done via closed circuit.

Sgt. Deskin introduced himself and gave his background, including being Director of Intelligence from 2007 until his current Human Trafficking Coordinator position. He said intelligence reports have increased significantly.

A discussion of the merits to calling the national human trafficking hotline versus local police departments followed, with Sgt. Deskin pointing out that if the hotline is called, the report goes to his office and also to the local police dept. His office intends to follow up with local police in case they aren't equipped/trained to handle the cases, to help them become equipped. Celine said that according to Iowa Code, if a police dept. opens a human trafficking investigation, they are supposed to inform the Attorney General's Office.

Updates from the Human Trafficking VOCA Grantees Cathy pointed out that Braking Traffik got a grant to place PSAs around the state and to promote both the state-wide hotline number and the national one. They have gas toppers and counter mats at 150 Casey's around the state. She also said that the Attorney General Office's trainings are well set to provide training for victim services that are trauma informed.

Jonathan Chambers spoke for NAID and mentioned a regional mental health providers training on human trafficking intervention. He said that Cedar Rapids Friends of the Family received a VOCA grant. They serve a 14 county area. There is a shelter in Waverly that has been a domestic violence shelter for 25 years and is now serving human trafficking victims. He is in discussion with Teresa Davidson about setting up a Safe House in the area.

December 19 Executive Committee Report and Approval of Consent Agenda

- Motion to approve December 12 meeting minutes of the NAHT Board of Directors.
- Motion to select the following for NAHT Outstanding Service Certificates of Recognition to be presented January 9 or another date when awardee can be present:
 - Chris Branstad - First Lady and AMP/TAHT advocate
 - Kim Reynolds - Lt. Governor, honorary member NAHT Board member and advocate
 - Maggie Tinsman - Retired legislator who introduced Iowa's first H.T. bill in 2006 and founder of Braking Traffik
 - Cathy O'Keefe - Director of Braking Traffik and FBI Agency Award
 - Brad Fox - public school principal who exposed major child sex trafficking ring in eastern Iowa.

- Kevin Kenney - Iowa Senator, author of three human trafficking bills, and former human trafficking investigator
- Christi Geisler - survivor and spokesperson for survivors
- Motion to approve the treasurer's report. Jan Beran reports that as of December 19th, the NAHT recorded \$3,781 in the savings account and \$2,872 in the checking account.

It was moved and seconded to accept the consent agenda (Tinsman, Reding, passed).

Discussion on NAHT Legislative Priorities for 2017 Iowa State Legislature. Since Human Trafficking legislation should have bi-partisan support, Maggie asked Sen. Amy Sinclair to sponsor the bill to add human trafficking to the Rape Shield Law. Sen. Sinclair indicated she will probably do it. Maggie asked Rep. Jared Kline to sponsor it in the House, but he said that it doesn't need to be introduced in both the House and Senate, and that it should start in the Senate. Maggie also talked with David Boyle, Court Administrator, to see if the Iowa Supreme Court is doing/could do anything to change its Rape Shield rules. He didn't know, but suggested that it get started in the Legislature and then there can be discussion with the Supreme Court as to whether this is something that they could do.

Bernadette referred to the Governor's press conference where someone asked whether there would be legislation to charge the johns who purchase sex. Maggie said that originally they were asking for a life sentence for those convicted of trafficking. They wound up with it being a class B felony if the victim is under 18. If the victim is over 18, it may be a B,C, or D felony. She questioned what penalty the johns would get.

George said that there is a national group in Iowa that is looking for an Iowa legislator to sponsor The Human Trafficking Prevention Act which would fine every john and the fines would go to education and prevention. It has passed in some southern states. He will share the information with the Board to see if this is something we want to endorse. Much of the Act is devoted to reducing the availability of pornography, especially for minors.

Discussion of Erin's Law centered on the price tag, which is why it hasn't gotten out of committee. Maggie suggested that it could be passed without provision of funding and the schools would have to find the money. Ruth reported that AMP and TAHT are supporting Erin's Law. She said that some schools already have the material in their sex education programs and they can be adjusted to include information on sex abuse. She said that the schools who don't have sex education are the ones that would fuss. Bernadette reported that the Catholic schools of the Sioux City Diocese have started a Safe Touch Program for all grade levels, and that it is very good. The parent guide, if it is used is also excellent.

Nomination of Joy Fopma to the Board of Directors The Board considered Teresa's nomination of Joy Fopma as a new Board member. A cover letter and resume from Joy had been e-mailed to the Board. Teresa made the nomination motion. It was seconded by Jennie. Passed. Although Suzie Wright was also nominated, no information was sent on her, so we can't vote on that nomination at this time.

Formation of Advisory Council and Best Policy Committee George has a large list of volunteers who are interested in serving on the Advisory Council or Standards Committee. Taylor will look into getting an intern from Mount Mercy to help for the summer. George will send out an invitation for these people to participate.

Other Discussion Bernadette gave George a copy of the Siouxland Coalition against Human Trafficking (SCAHT) scheduled January as Slavery and Human Trafficking Awareness Month activities and a list of SCAHT's activities during 2016. He will share them on the website.

Meeting adjourned at 11:40 am.