

NAHT Board Meeting Minutes 1–13-26

Present: John, Sr. Shirley, George, Maggie, Lyna, Bernadette, Teresa Davidson, Tom, Karl, Sarah Simon, Heather, Linda, Bernadette

Guests: Vera Wallican, Threase Harms, Catherine Pollard

Excused Absences: Stephanie, Chief Thein, Austin, Kim, Sara K.

Key takeaways

- DHHS provided 2024 human trafficking statistics: 153 reports with 33 founded cases
- The Governor's Outstanding Anti-Trafficking Award ceremony is scheduled for January 22nd at the State Capitol with the Lieutenant Governor attending
- Two key legislative items are in progress: massage establishment licensure bill and House File 1036 (omnibus human trafficking bill)
- The Network received a significant \$10,000 donation from the Lohse Family Foundation
- The 2025 fundraising campaign exceeded its \$20,000 goal, raising \$28,532.99

DHHS Human Trafficking Statistics

Vera Wallican from DHHS presented 2024 child sex trafficking statistics. DHHS began formally assessing child sex trafficking allegations in 2014. In 2024, there were 153 reports accepted statewide, with 33 founded cases and 120 not confirmed. She explained that "founded" means there is a preponderance of available information demonstrating the alleged incident occurred. Teresa Davidson asked why DHHS produced different statistics through Teresa's public records request and will send those to Vera to resolve the discrepancy. Teresa also asked about the distinction between child sex trafficking and child prostitution categories. Vera replied that child prostitution (16 reports in 2024, all not confirmed) involves an exchange between perpetrator and victim, while trafficking typically involves no gain for the victim.

• Conclusion

- Vera will return in April to provide updated statistics for 2025
- DHHS policy reflects current state law regarding trafficking definitions

Governor's Outstanding Anti-Trafficking Awards Event (January 22nd)

John confirmed the Lieutenant Governor will attend instead of the Governor. George outlined the detailed schedule for the event, starting at 11:25 AM and requested volunteers for setup (10:30 AM) and staffing the information table. John shared the order of award presentations, starting with college student Allie Riches. George confirmed that award plaques are ready for all awardees.

• Conclusion

- Karl, Lyna, and Marielle volunteered to help with setup
- Lyna and Marielle will staff the information table
- Board members will bring NAHT t-shirts to sell (\$20 donation)

Legislative Update

Teresa Harms provided updates on current legislative initiatives. The establishment licensure bill should be introduced within a week with bipartisan support in both House and Senate. House File 1036 (omnibus bill) is being reassigned, likely to the Judiciary Committee. The \$1 million appropriation request is in process, but budget discussions won't start in earnest until March. Maggie asked about House and Senate support for the appropriation. Bernadette asked whether requesting \$500,000 instead of \$1 million might be more successful.

- **Conclusion**

- Board members should contact their legislators before the January 22nd event
- The appropriation process starts fresh each year and requires approval from both chambers
- The budget process won't begin in earnest until March

Fundraising Report

Tom presented the results of recent fundraising efforts. The Giving Tuesday campaign exceeded its \$7,500 goal, raising \$8,551.80. The 20-year anniversary fundraising campaign raised \$28,532.99, exceeding the \$20,000 goal. George noted a significant \$10,000 donation from the Lohse family through the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines and reported 100% board member participation in giving.

- **Conclusion**

- The fundraising committee was thanked for their successful efforts
- The Treasurer's Report was unanimously approved (moved by Maggie and seconded by Karl),

Human Trafficking Proclamations

George requested information about proclamations to include in the blog and noted that Des Moines has not yet scheduled a proclamation. Sarah Simon secured a proclamation with Madison County for the following Monday. Teresa mentioned Cedar Rapids had a proclamation that day.

- **Conclusion**

- Board members should send George photos and information about proclamations
- George will compile a total count of proclamations for the state

DPS and DOT Responsibilities

Bernadette reported that in 2023 motor vehicle enforcement was transferred from IDOT to DPS and expressed concern about whether HT training and the Iowa model are still being implemented. John noted there was a court case about DOT's authority to enforce laws with uniformed officers.

- **Conclusion**

- Need to follow up with Ray from DPS about current responsibilities
- George will remove DOT from the board directory contacts
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Screening Tools for Child Victims

Teresa explained issues with the juvenile court screening tool, which is only used when trafficking is already suspected and noted DHHS is not accepting the same screening tool, creating inconsistency. She pointed out the juvenile courts' tool doesn't include labor trafficking screening.

- **Conclusion**

- Coordination between agencies remains a challenge
- House File 1036 could help improve inter-agency coordination if passed

Challenges

- Des Moines city has not yet scheduled a human trafficking proclamation despite efforts
- Discrepancies exist between DHHS statistics provided to the board by Vera Wallican and those received through public records request
- Lack of coordination between juvenile courts and DHHS on screening tools for trafficking victims
- Uncertainty about whether human trafficking training programs previously run by DOT are continuing under DPS
- Senate support for the \$1 million appropriation remains uncertain

Action items

- **John**

- Send George the order of award presentations for January 22nd event
- Contact DPS to arrange for Ray to present their human trafficking statistics

- **George**

- Prepare revised itinerary for January 22nd event and send to John
- Update board directory to remove DOT contacts
- Prepare February blog post about Pieper Lewis case

- **Teresa Davidson**

- Send Vera the different statistics received through public records request

- **Board Members**

- Contact legislators before January 22nd event to schedule meetings
- Send George photos and information about human trafficking proclamations
- Bring NAHT t-shirts to the January 22nd event

- **Karl, Lyna, Marielle**

- Arrive at 10:30 AM on January 22nd to help with setup at the Capitol

- **Teresa Harms**

- Provide 50 copies of the legislative agenda for the January 22nd event