

NAHT June 11th, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes

Present: John Chesser, George Belitsos, Maggie Tinsman, Thomas Barr, Teresa Davidson, Linda Harrell, Karl Schilling, Shirley Fineran, Mike Tupper, Jackie White

Excused Absence: Stephanie Olson, Bernadette Rixner, Kim Hilby, Teresa Davidson

Guests: Threase Harms, Chelsea Hoyer

I. Call to order and attendance: start recording

The meet was called to order at 2:32 p.m. by Chesser, NAHT chair

Belitsos stated that we should introduce Karl Schilling who stated that he's been on the legislative committee. He comes from the Iowa organization for victims' assistance where he's been for 30 years. He is involved through Rotary and NAHT with Human Trafficking. Chesser stated that he sees Karl lobbying for victims' assistance.

Chesser stated that the minutes needed approval. Belitsos said Marielle (Tinsman's Assistant) would be doing minutes. Chesser asked for motion to approve the minutes and the minutes passed unanimously. Chesser then handed the meeting over to Belitsos to discuss the Treasurer's Report.

Belitsos stated that he's reviewing the may treasurers report. Iowa's Federation of Women sent thank you letter and gift of \$250. 30 women's clubs around the state the president is making human trafficking the main goals to join the fight. Expenses are down. Belitsos moved to approve the May Treasurers report, which was approved unanimously. George additionally stated that his CPA filed the NAHT as a tax-exempt organization, which Belitsos will forward to Chesser. Furthermore, there is a \$387 paid by John Chesser, which needs to be changed to NAHT.

Chesser then handed the meeting back to Belitsos to discuss the proposed budget. He began by stating that at the top the actual expenses for 2018-23 proposed for 2024. Chesser offered to put the budget up on the screen. Budget is important to see the trend year to year. The writings are things that apply to past years. Moving on to contract and consultants. Under number 7 you will see the people who worked for us in 2023 and what we paid them and what the totals were. Maggie asked why we need 3 technology people and Belitsos said that the students are good people for doing this work, but he has to juggle a lot of scheduling, so they are all part time. Belitsos said he might need a fourth person.

Belitsos went on to discuss the new Facebook webmaster and proposed the same amount as last year. Mailchimp went up ten dollars a month. Belitsos asked about reimbursement to Chesser for reimbursement of payment. Belitsos then discussed out of pocket expenses. We have a lot of postage with stickers. Moving on the page 3, Belitsos stated he might want to know what the eleven-hundred and forty five dollars which pays the bills for subcontract we are providing for the Johnston County Human Trafficking Coalition. We manage their grant. Eleven hundred is left. Advocacy Strategies we amended our budget and paid more than our contract was so that's why it's fifteen thousand. Next year it's back to ten thousand. Belitsos asked if there were any questions. Tinsman asked how much was in the budget Belitsos answered twenty-two thousand seven hundred and eighty-five dollars. Fineran stated that it should have both the income and expenses. Belitsos asked for help explaining. Belitsos said that the total amount we have in the bank is what's on the balance sheet. Since he has forecasted expenses, he needs to forecast income. Belitsos stated he didn't have the time to do a whole new budget. Chesser stated he would step in and help, even though the revenue is guesswork. Thus, if forecasting is low, we can plan fundraising. Fineran stated Belitsos did a good job, but we need a report on income and expenses. Chesser took a vote to table the budget until August. Finneran asked if we could just approve the expenses. She also said Belitsos did a great job, moved to accept the expenditures. Tinsman seconded the motion.

Belitsos asked if we should discuss the Pieper Lewis letter. Chesser said Teresa Davidson has had the most communication with Pieper Lewis. Davidson thinks the letter needs to be rewritten or write our own letter. Davidson stated that there are things Shared Hope doesn't know about this case. The letter blamed the DOC for placing her 900 miles away, however this was indicated by trauma informed advocates. Fineran stated that she wants to write her own letter and Davidson should do that. She thinks it would be great to write a letter that comes only from the NAHT. Belitsos stated that when we wrote the Mitchell letter – there was a lot of going back and forth. For example, the letter stated she was a survivor of trauma without mentioning sex trafficking until the end of the letter. Belitsos thinks we should join forces with Shared Hope. Fineran stated Tinsman and she wanted to do their own but let Shared Hope know what's wrong in the letter. Belitsos stated that it makes much more sense that she is an endangered person, working with Shared Hope. Tinsman stated that the State of Iowa was not helping her at all. Barr stated that Davidson should have the chance to make her changes and there should be two signatures, one from Shared Hope and one from the NAHT. Barr stated it was important that we present cohesiveness and a unified front. Fineran and Tinsman still want to refer to Davidson. Chesser stated that we know more about this case than standing in Shared Hope's shadow. Belitsos disagreed with this. Chesser stated that we know more about this Pieper Lewis case than they do. Fineran moved that the NAHT ask Davidson to compose a letter that would be from the Network and if she finds it appropriate contact Shared Hope. Fineran motioned for two letters. Belitsos stated that he is voting against that. Belitsos feels there's strength in numbers and we are not riding Shared Hope's coattails. Belitsos stated two letters would make a big message.

Barr, Tinsman and Fineran stated they want Davidson involved in what happens next. Belitsos stated we take a vote or defer a new motion not saying two separate letters but leaving it up to Teresa to do. Chesser changed the motion to delegation to Davidson regarding the Lewis letter. Fineran stated that Davidson should know some members want two letters. Tinsman agreed with that. Fineran asked the secretary to read back the minutes. Fineran wanted two letters, but Davidson was going to make that decision. Fineran moved that Chesser contact Davidson and in response to her comments to the Board about the Shared Hope letter regarding Lewis and that we contact Shared Hope with any incorrections that may have been made and that we give Thereasa the opportunity to write a new letter that will or will not be along with the letter from Shared Hope. Tinsman seconded the motion. Barr suggested two signature blocks and Tinsman stated that it was not in the motion. Fineran called upon Tupper for advice. Tupper stated he was interested in seeking advice from Teresa. Shilling stated that Davidson does not speak for the board, however Schilling agreed. Davidson will decide whether it will be a joint letter or a separate letter. Fineran said her motion for to have the opportunity to write a letter. Belitsos stated clearly everyone has different ideas and Davidson needs to understand this. Tinsman voted on the motion and it was passed unanimously.

Chesser called upon Hoyer to discuss legislation. She stated we had a Legislative Advocacy Committee meeting last Thursday when we discussed a recap and what transpired in the past few years. Increased funding remains high on priority list. Education during interim including a educational webinar targeted towards legislators so human trafficking is on their mind. So we can move funding in the right direction. Teresa Davidson and Melody Stone agreed to put this together which would be a Zoom call and taped and emailed out to all legislators and law makers. So we are able to identify new candidates and lawmakers. The other webinar being one for advocates, we have a big email list and people want to get involved. We could offer them several levels of tiers of engagement. A drafted letter or email, setting up a coffee with a legislator. This would be a recorded webinar and be stored on the NAHT website. Hoyer discussed a media push campaign. Iowa has a problem with human trafficking, we have a failing grade and – this is what we need to do to handle this problem in Iowa. Hoyer stated we are going to continue our work over the summer. Tinsman added that the Legislative Advocacy meeting was great, yesterday Mohr stated there was good news on human trafficking. Fineran stated that when Hoyer prepares webinars providers should be included. Tinsman stated when the next date of the Legislative Advocacy Committee Meeting will be on July 25, 2024 at 3pm.

Chesser stated that he sent everyone a copy of the bylaws starting with committees. Section IV and Section V. We have no chairs for the Prevention Committee or the Fundraising Committee. Fineran stated she need to leave and is not available to Chair any of these committees. Chesser stated that the Chairs of the committee have to be on the board, but other people interested in fundraising don't have to be on the board. Swenborg stated that she would help with fundraising.

Belitsos stated that it is important to point out that we don't have one functioning committee and we used to have six. Two or three years ago we ended two committees and rewrote the prevention and education committee. The board used to have very active committee work, and we used to have reports from all committee members. Belitsos stated it is very important to have a fundraising committee, putting a big effort into Giving Tuesday or donating on their birthdays. Belitsos is concerned we are going to use up the reserves and we will be in big trouble. Belitsos stated we need committees very much.

II. May minutes, regular reports and approvals