

Iowa NAHT Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 9, 2020

Present: George Belitsos, Maggie Tinsman, Lori Freudenberg, Jessica Rohrs, Teresa Davidson, Mike Tupper, Dr. Joe Moravec, Shirlee Reding, Kim Hilby, Roxanne Riesberg, Brenda Long, Alyse Hardin, Bernadette Rixner, Lauren Camp, Ruth Buckels, Sister Shirley Fineran

Excused Absence: Katie Kyker, Jonathan Causey, Dr. Shannon Findlay

Absent: Jim Townsend

Guests: Kevin Winker, DPS Office to Combat Human Trafficking

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

Belitsos declared a quorum and began the meeting at 2:32 PM. Lauren Camp announced that she has been hired to continue in her Iowa Legal Aid position after her trafficking attorney fellowship ends.

II. Report from the DPS Office to Combat Human Trafficking (Kevin Winker, Director of Investigative Operations)

Belitsos introduced Winker and thanked him for reporting on the progress being made by the DPS Office to Combat Human Trafficking. Winker reported that there was a large increase in the number of Iowa trafficking convictions with a total of 14 traffickers sent to prison. Winker stated that he has been working with a newly hired DPS manager, Pat Waymire - Division of Intelligence. In 2018, Winker reported that there were 47 tips from the National Hotline and 9 tips from other sources. In 2019, there were 64 tips from the National Hotline and 3 from other sources

In 2019, DPS conducted 39 investigations for human trafficking. This is an increase up from 25 in 2018. Most were from larger Iowa counties.

III. Approval of consent agenda (Belitsos)

- Motion to approve the May 12th meeting minutes of the NAHT Board of Directors
- Motion to approve the Treasurer's report for May 2020
- Motion to approve the updated Advocates and Allies of the NAHT List

There were a few additions to be made to the Advocates and Allies list. Belitsos will amend the document, which can be found on the NAHT website.

Belitsos reported that the consent agenda passed unanimously.

IV. Progress report on opening of Garden Gate Ranch (Brenda Long)

Long stated that Garden Gate Ranch opened on April 1st and was taking job applications from prospective employees. The Ranch has yet to place survivors since staff are still being hired. The Garden Gate Restoration program serves women survivors with children 4 and under.

- A. GGR has hired a skeleton crew who are in training
- B. One young woman coming next week – first resident
- C. The Ranch is in the greater DSM area, 30 miles from DSM
- D. They will also take women who are sexually abused, but not labor trafficking survivors
- E. They have four rooms ready (four moms and eight children- max)
- F. They have a plan to do emergency shelter, food and medical, but it is not currently set up yet. Long reported that she is witnessing an amazing need for emergency shelter. Garden Gate Ranch provides restoration services and not shelter.

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

Tinsman reported for the Committee, and on HF 2259. An amendment was offered by Democrat Senators Tony Bisignano and Kevin Kinney because they were afraid people from other countries who are working for hotels would not report human trafficking if they were asked about their immigration status. In the amendment, immigration was changed to residency status. Legislators appeared okay on that. Employees who report human trafficking will not be asked about immigration, just where they live. There was no negative repercussion about residency. This amendment was actually offered by Senator Chris Cournoyer. SF2259 passed unanimously with amendment out of the State Government Committee on to the Senate Debate Calendar. Senator Roby Smith expects SF2259 will be debated on Wednesday, June 10th – 1st day of Legislature this week, which will be in session 3 days. It is called a Bouncing Bill. Once the bill passes the Senate, it will be walked over to the House on Wednesday where it can be brought up immediately. Rep. Gary Mohr says it will pass with amendment. Belitsos thanked Tinsman and Riesberg for their hard work and effort to get these bills through the Iowa Legislature.

Tinsman will let Board members know when Governor is signing HF2259.

HF 2554, Continuous Sexual Assault of Children, has now passed the Legislature. Riesberg reported that this bill will result in increased time in prison to traffickers who exploit children under age 14. The NAHT signed on to this bill, as did DHS. Last year, 156 offenders were sentenced on sexual assault/abuse, and 60 had abused child victims.

“The crime for continuous sexual abuse (3 incidents by the same person to the same child 14

years or younger, with each incident occurring more than 30 days apart) has been elevated to a Super Class B felony, which carries a 50 year sentence. 1) The bill only pertains to minors 14 yrs or younger- 2. The events must have occurred within a 30 day period. 3) It also doesn't necessarily pertain only to traffickers although the perpetrators may be traffickers. 4) Lastly, the purpose of the bill is to eliminate having to try a perpetrator three times , which is the way this type of situation has been handled. In doing so none of the perpetrators prior arrests, convictions, etc could be introduced into testimony. Under the new law, all of the investigational materials and criminal history relating to these 3 cases can become part of the record.

VI. Report from the Public-Private Partnership Advisory Council to End Human Trafficking in Washington D.C.

Davidson reported that she is now the Co-Chair of the Survivor Care Committee. Davidson stated after a Washington D.C. meeting of the Public-Private Partnership Advisory Council, they identified a major national problem for survivors on parole. The Council needs the federal government to help with visas, passports, employment, etc., and wants input from the Public-Private Partnership Advisory Council. Davidson received a lot of information about the 30 states that have a "Safe Harbor Law". Iowa does not have this law.

VII. Presentation on Dubuque and Tri-State Human Trafficking Coalitions (Freudenberg & Hilby)

Belitsos introduced Hilby and Freudenberg as our newest board members and asked them to report on their work in eastern Iowa to fight trafficking.

Hilby shared that she teaches a class on human trafficking to teachers, law enforcement, social workers, nurses; Hilby has also done a 5K Run/Walk with 250 people to bring awareness about Human Trafficking. Hilby uses "Set Free" – education in Dubuque, working with the local Task Force, Iowa Legislature, with 30 different people wanting to help with raising awareness of human trafficking. The hotel/motel training "has been a battle" getting the hotels to give training access to their employees.

Freudenberg works for Sisters of St. Francis (Clinton has had a lot of public awareness speakers: from Iowa Legislature, Mike Ferjak, Arizona Task Force member, Braking Traffik, etc. Freudenberg has also given "Boys into Men" curriculum to coaches to work with young males (violence never equals strength). She has also worked with Truckers Against Violence. Freudenberg described the work of the Tri-State Coalition Against Trafficking and their very impressive projects to fight trafficking. They have trained employees at nine hotels in Clinton. They have distributed rescue stickers, plus window decals on car windows.

VIII. Report from Fundraising Committee (Kyker, Townsend, Freudenberg & Belitsos)

Kyker was unable to attend today's board meeting. Freudenberg reported that to reach the 100% of the fundraising goal, the Committee needs 6 more Board members to donate. Freudenberg also commented that ALL Board members need to complete the "I support the Network because..." poster and send photos. Here are the current goals of the committee:

- Evaluate the May 5th Giving Tuesday Now campaign
- Goal of 100% Board participation in once annual giving
- June 23rd is 15th anniversary of NAHT founding
- Board members and donors to complete "I support the Network because..." poster and send photos

IX. Startup of the Survivor Service Panel (Hardin, Buckles & Rohrs)

Hardin stated that the Survivor Service Panel will be more involved with a purpose to engage survivors in the NAHT and reviewing materials and information. Hardin reported that 3-4 survivors will be invited to the panel to provide information to the Board with feedback on policy we develop. Rohrs stated that they have a similar advisory group within her agency.

X. Report from the Evaluation/Research and Best Practices Committee (Moravec & Reding)

Dr. Moravec reported that the Committee is currently focused on producing a hotel/motel training video. The Committee would like to find someone who knows how to edit the video. The video will start with an introduction, training, then an ending. Moravec is wanting a long shelf life for this video, so that it is current for a long time. They will be forming a Hotel/Motel Training subcommittee

XI. Progress report from the Johnson County Human Trafficking Coalition. Plans for September 8 & 9 statewide human trafficking conference, distribution of rescue stickers, plans for Hotel/Motel Employee Training (Shannon Findlay)

Findlay could not attend today's meeting. Britney, reporting for Findlay, stated that they have now rescheduled the September 8th & 9th conference in Johnson County (Iowa City). Further developments with hotel/motel training is expected.

XII. Adjournment

Next Board of Directors Meeting: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 2:30-4:00 PM (Zoom conference call)

No July Board meeting

Quarterly Executive Committee meeting: Tuesday, July 7, 2020 2:30-4:00 PM