

Iowa NAHT Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 12, 2020

Present: Maggie Tinsman, Brenda Long, Dr. Shannon Findlay, Lori Freudenberg, Alyse Hardin, Shirlee Reding, Ruth Buckels, Bernadette Rixner, Lauren Camp, Katie Kyker, Dr. George Belitsos, Chief Mike Tupper, Jessica Rohrs, Kim Hilby, Roxanne Riesberg

Excused Absence: Dr. Joe Moravec, Teresa Davidson, Sister Shirley Fineran

Absent: Jonathan Causey, Jim Townsend

Guests: Patricia Reeves, Jess Johnson

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

- II. **Presentation from the Trafficking Awareness and Prevention Services (TAPS) US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (Jess Johnson and Julissa Ponce)**

TAPS Program Coordinator Jess Johnson reported that she and Julissa Ponce, TAPS Case Manager, are working primarily with survivors of labor trafficking. For the last eight weeks, they have been working remotely, providing direct services to survivors within a 100-mile radius of Des Moines. Johnson commented that TAPS could handle 4-6 clients at any given time. TAPS is survivor centered. The services provided are: for short term- food, clothing and housing; for long term- legal and education. Johnson recommended calling Gretchen in the Attorney General's Office when one suspects labor trafficking. Gretchen's hotline number is 1-800-770-1650.

Their primary goals include conducting training and public awareness events statewide, delivering direct services via survivor-centered case management, and evaluating community needs and impact via action research.

Because several partnering agencies do well to discuss the dynamics of sex trafficking, the TAPS program seeks to provide education and awareness specifically around labor trafficking. To date, TAPS has trained law enforcement, social service providers, and university students.

While TAPS capacity building activities primarily focus on the dynamics of labor trafficking, TAPS case management services are available for any survivor of human trafficking, regardless of age, gender, or immigration status. Case management activities are bound to a 100-mile service area radius of the Des Moines metro, however if an individual falls outside that service area, TAPS staff are happy to consult and co-advocate with other advocates and agencies.

Currently the TAPS program has one case manager, and they are in the process of applying for federal grant monies that would allow for an additional two staff. Johnson requested a letter of support from the NAHT in order to assist with obtaining a grant. Funding from OVC will enable USCRI Des Moines to strengthen local capacity to extend into rural Iowa and provide victims of trafficking with high-quality services and support that enable their

independence, self-sufficiency and well-being.

A motion was made by Bernadette Rixner and seconded by Shirlee Reding to authorize the chair of the board to write a letter of support for the federal grant. **Belitsos declared the motion was passed unanimously.**

If you would like to be in touch with the TAPS program, please contact TAPS Program Coordinator, Jess Johnson, at jjohnson@uscrimail.org.

III. Approval of consent agenda (Belitsos)

- Motion to approve the April 14th meeting minutes of the NAHT Board of Directors
- Motion to approve the Treasurer's report for April 2020
- Motion to approve additions and corrections to the 2020 Strategic Plan
- Rixner requested that the "*Motion to approve submission for COVID-19 Economic Injury Disaster Loan Emergency Advance for nonprofits from the federal SBA*" be removed from the consent agenda. She felt that it would be best not to compete with direct service programs for this federal funding.
- Motion to approve the request of YSS for a letter of support for a US Department of Justice grant for restoration housing and services for survivors ages 18-24

Tinsman raised concerns about the technology consulting.

Belitsos reported that the Consent Agenda was passed unanimously.

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

Tinsman reported that The Iowa Legislative is planning to go back into session May 15th. The Hotel/Motel Bill which passed unanimously in the House, must be passed by the Senate in order to be signed into law by Governor Reynolds. The Bill is now in the State Government Committee, chaired by Senator Roby Smith. He has assigned this bill to the Senate Sub-Committee, chaired by Senator Chris Cournoyer.

Both Senators Smith and Cournoyer are, "for" the Bill, and I believe that it is a high priority. It must get through Sub-Committee and be voted out of the State Government as soon as possible so that the full Senate can approve it. The Senate will be working mainly on budget bills when they return to the Capitol, but Senator Smith believes that HF2259 is a high priority. NAHT needs to help him by contacting the Senators on May 15th or shortly before or after this date.

A board member asked if the coalition lobbyist was still working, Tinsman answered, "yes, she is still involved and knows what we're doing."

V. Progress report from the Johnson County Human Trafficking Coalition. Plans for September 8 & 9 statewide human trafficking conference. (Shannon Findlay)

Findlay reported that the Coalition is working on a human trafficking awareness program, such as more ads in movie theaters, etc. They are trying to reach out to as many people as possible about human trafficking. "Power House" is making flyers with the logo and list of

funders including 100+ Women.

Findlay sent Belitsos a copy of the September 8 & 9 human trafficking conference flyer and asked that he send this out to the board. Belitsos encouraged that JCHTC begin to plan to do hotel/motel employee training and also distribute rescue stickers.

VI. Presentation on DHS anti-trafficking efforts, training, and coordination with other state agency partners (Riesberg)

Board member Roxanne Riesberg began her DHS report by sharing a four-year table of founded child sex trafficking. As you can see, the Child Sex Trafficking abuse category has been on the rise. While there were reports of suspected abuse that included allegations of Child Sex Trafficking in 2016 and 2017, there were no substantiated cases. In 2018, there were seven Child Sex Trafficking cases substantiated in five counties. In 2019, twelve cases were substantiated in eight counties.

As a result of Public Law 113-183, the “Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014” and Public Law 114-22, the “Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015”, Child Sex Trafficking was added as a category of child abuse to Iowa law, effective July 1, 2016. This category of child abuse was the first category to forego the requirement that the person responsible for child abuse had to be a caretaker. The law directs that any person involved in the commercial sexual exploitation of a child, commits child abuse.

As a result of these legislative and rule changes, Des Moines Regional DHS set up a multidisciplinary team to address child sex trafficking. Rixner asked if each DHS region has a similar multidisciplinary team. Riesberg answered that the Des Moines Regional team was essentially a pilot project, but that DHS would eventually like to have a similar team in each DHS district.

Calendar Year	Total of Child Sex Trafficking Substantiated	County Child Sex Trafficking Substantiated
2016	0	0
2017	0	0
2018	7	Dubuque – 1 Jefferson – 1 Polk – 2 Scott – 2 Woodbury – 1

2019	12	Boone – 2 Cass – 1 Dubuque – 1 Johnson – 3 Jones – 1 Linn – 1 Pottawattamie – 1 Woodbury -2
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Roxanne Riesberg also stated that “We certainly know that Child Sex Trafficking is occurring with children at a much higher frequency than the child abuse data shows. As lowans become more educated about human trafficking and know what red flags they may be looking for in their work with children, we can expect to see the child abuse data continue to rise.” Roxanne also works at DHS as the Child Protection Policy Program Manager.

VII. Progress report from hotel/motel face-to-face employee training projects. Progress report on training DVD to be developed for hotels (Reding, Moravec, Rixner & Davidson)

Reding commented that, due to COVID-19, it has been difficult getting into hotels/motels to do training. Once HF 2259 passes, she expects this will change very rapidly with hotels requesting employee training. Reding has talked with Dr. Joe Moravec, who mentioned that the video training will need to be postponed until the COVID-19 health crisis begins to decline.

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

- Outcome of May 5th Giving Tuesday Now
- Goal of 100% Board participation in once annual giving
- June 23rd is 15th anniversary of NAHT founding

Kyker mentioned that in April and May, \$860.00 on Facebook and the Network website in the Giving Tuesday Now campaign.

The Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking and Slavery marks its 15th anniversary since it was founded on June 23, 2005. The Network was Iowa’s first and remains the only statewide nonprofit all-volunteer organization devoted exclusively to ending trafficking in all its forms. Our mission is to coordinate Iowa’s solution to end human trafficking and slavery through coalition building, raising awareness, promoting education, and legislative advocacy.

A photo of Katie Kyker holding up an NAHT 15th anniversary support poster has already been sent to the board. On it, she wrote, “I support the Network because... I want my children to grow up in a community without human trafficking!” In the next few weeks, the Network will be asking board members and supporters to donate and fill out this poster and complete the sentence, “I support the Network because...” Be looking for this on our Facebook page and a future blog post. Between now and June 23, when you donate on our

website, you will be sent an NAHT support poster by email. Fill out why you support the Network, snap a photo with your poster, and send it to us for a chance to be featured in our next blog post or on our Facebook page!

IX. Update from Survivor Service Provider Collaboration startup committee (Hardin, Buckels & Rohrs)

Rohrs stated that the Service Provider Collaboration is a NAHT committee of providers of services to victims and survivors. This includes both labor and sex trafficking survivors. Their Collaboration is open for all. The Collaboration is going to have a second meeting on July 22 for all providers.

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

Buckels reported that they have applied for a federal grant to reopen Teens Against Human Trafficking. YSS is also applying for funding to be used to expand transitional housing for survivors ages 16-21.

Buckels noted that YSS provides sex trafficking prevention, awareness, diversion and residential services to children and youth. YSS also identifies vulnerable youth through mobile street outreach, referral and self-disclosure and assists and ensures that young victims are safe and diverted from further exploitation.

YSS provides emergency shelter for sex trafficked youth ages 12 to 17 in Ames and Mason City and restoration/transitional living services for those ages 18 to 24 in Ames, Marshalltown, and Des Moines (AKA Iowa Homeless Youth Centers). The transitional living program duration is up to 24 months. The transitional living program also provides housing and services to the client's children.

XI. Adjournment

Next Board of Directors Meeting is Tuesday, June 9, 2020 2:30-4:00 PM (Zoom conference call)