

**Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking and Slavery (NAHT)  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, February 11, 2020

2:30-3:30 pm

Conference call Dial In: 605.472.5569

Access Code: 934203

**Attendee:** Ali Brokaw, Jonathan Causey, Lauren Camp, Sister Shirley Fineran, Dr. Joseph Moravec, Shirlee Reding, Maggie Tinsman, Jim Townsend, Bernadette Rixner, Jessica Rohrs,

**Excused:** Dr. George Belitsos, Sheriff Paul Fitzgerald, Sgt. Elizabeth Quinn, Jim Townsend, and Mike Tupper (Please note: Alyse Harding, Katie Kyker, and Roxanne Riesberg are all three on maternity leave)

**Guest :** Shannon Findlay, Holly Witt

**Meeting was call to order** by Causey who introduced the guest speaker, Holly Witt, Special Agent with the Department of Public Safety.

**Presentation by DPS Special Agent Holy Witt (Causey)**

Special Agent Holly Witt with the Department of Public Safety opened her presentation by explaining that she had been assigned to the Eastern Iowa area to do human trafficking investigations. One of the items she was asked to discuss was how the new city ordinances for massage parlors are helping to combat human trafficking, and what are the pros and cons. In her speaking with Police Department in Davenport, the massage ordinance caused a no-go zone for illicit massage parlors and caused the massage parlors to be licensed. However, they found that the trafficking issue was moving elsewhere in the area. The message that human trafficking is not tolerated needs to be sent throughout the state of Iowa.

Witt also discuss the need of additional agents to help with investigations. The Iowa City Police Department in Johnson County has been doing an exceptional job investigating human trafficking tips. The difficulty facing the Iowa City Police Department was that they would end up taking officers off their regular duties in order to investigate. To solve the problem, they looked at ways to reallocate their resources. The Iowa Police Department in working across jurisdictional lines and boundaries found some minimal assistant from the State of Iowa and the FBI. This made it possible to handle more cases loads. However, Witt pointed out that for smaller jurisdictions, this would not be an option as they simply don't have the same depth of resources that the Iowa City Police Department had.

Witt went on to discuss briefly the difficulties authorities faced when pressing charges on the victims. However, if you can leverage a charge on a victim, then the possibility of sending them to mandatory drug treatment can be reached. She felt there is no simple answer with pressing charges as cases need to be handled on a case-by-case basis and need to be done thoughtfully with victim services. Witt felt that the trend in law enforcement right now is never to charge anyone except the trafficker. This has resulted in some real challenges for prosecution of traffickers, as victims don't want to participate, and they don't want to show up. Because a lot of these cases require testimonials from the victim, the human trafficking charges get dropped.

## **Approval of consent agenda (Causey)**

- Motion to approve the January 16<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes of the NAHT Board of Directors
- Motion to accept the Treasurer's report for January 2020
- Motion to elect Teresa Davidson to serve on the Board of Directors. This fills the vacancy created by the resignation of Shana Kargbo representing Chains Interrupted.
- Motion to adopt the following vision statement for the NAHT: "An Iowa Without Human Trafficking and Modern-Day Slavery"
- Motion to elect Ruth Buckels to serve on the Board of Directors. This fills the vacancy created by the resignation of Dr. Alissa Stoehr. Ruth is returning to the Board after retiring two and half years ago.
- Motion to authorize the treasurer to pay the Human Trafficking Coalition of Iowa a \$5,000 membership fee for legislative services.

As the treasurer's report was not sent to the Board prior to the meeting, Causey asked that the treasurer's report be removed from the consent agenda. Question was asked about the Human Trafficking Coalition of Iowa. This coalition was set up as a means of making payments for the advocacy and lobbyist work of Angela Davis and a means of protecting the Network Against Human Trafficking non-profit status. With no other changes to the agenda, the agenda was approved unanimously.

## **Report from the Legislative Advocacy Committee (Tinsman & Causey)**

Tinsman started out saying that the Legislative Advocacy Committee had a meeting on February 5<sup>th</sup>. The committee discussed not only the hotel/motel bill but also a variety of bills that would fit NAHT's Legislative priorities.

Tinsman stated that HF2259 (Hotel/Motel Training Bill) has been sponsored by Representative Gary Mohr and is in the Public Safety Committee. It has been assigned to a subcommittee, which includes Representative Gary Mohr (Chair), Representative Wes Breckenridge, and Representative Jon Thorup.

Tinsman explained that the Hotel/Motel Training Bill is requesting that all employees (full time and part time) be trained on signs of human trafficking and whom to call when someone suspects it. It is necessary to educate hotel and motel workers of the signs of trafficking in an effort to stop activity in hotels and motels statewide.

Tinsman further explained that the elements of training are in the bill. If a hotel or motel chooses not to provide training, state and local governments will not use these establishments for any governmental activities including staying at this hotel or motel. It is important to get this bill out of committee as soon as possible so that the entire House can vote on it. The Legislative Advocacy Committee would like for the NAHT Board to contact the following Representatives to move HF2259 out of committee right away.

Representative Gary Mohr – [gary.mohr@legis.iowa.gov](mailto:gary.mohr@legis.iowa.gov) – House District 94 – Scott County  
Representative Wes Breckenridge – [we.breckenridge@legis.iowa.gov](mailto:we.breckenridge@legis.iowa.gov) – House District 29 – Jasper County  
Representative Jon Thorup – [jon.thorup@legis.iowa.gov](mailto:jon.thorup@legis.iowa.gov) – House District 28 – Jasper, Lucas, & Marion County

If you would rather contact your own representative, please ask him or her to support HF2259

and to contact one of the above three representatives to move the bill out of subcommittee as soon as possible.

### **Progress report from the Johnson County Human Trafficking Coalition and plans for Statewide Human Trafficking Conference on Tuesday, April 28 (Shannon Findlay)**

Findlay reported that at the moment Johnson County's biggest project is the collaborating with the Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP) in Iowa City to host their Human Trafficking Conference on April 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. The first day of the conference will focus on human trafficking and Findlay would send out a link for the Board to register for that day. Their next meeting is scheduled for March 21<sup>st</sup>.

### **Kickoff of PSA Trafficking Facts and Resources Campaign (Gretchen Brown-Waech) – no report**

### **Outcome of January 23<sup>rd</sup> training session, Lifting the Shadows: Human Trafficking in Iowa**

Reding reported that the Plymouth Human Trafficking Task Force held a training event called "Lifting the Shadows" on January 23<sup>rd</sup>. Speakers included Donald Gault from "Men Breaking Free" and Karen Gale, an FBI agent.. Gault's session focused on what led men to commercial sex. Gale led a session on what draws boys and girls into life of commercial sex and sexual exploitation. Reding is hoping that Plymouth might be able to host another training session on a Saturday that would focus on young men on "What it means to be a man."

### **Plans for April 25 & 27 conference on the pornography epidemic sponsored by Siouxland Anti-Trafficking Coalition (Rixner)**

Rixner stated that Siouxland will be holding a Pornography Epidemic Conference in Sioux City, Iowa on April 25<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 to 8:30 pm (open to the public) and 27<sup>th</sup> from 9 am-3 pm for professionals (CEU can be earned). To attend the conference, people can go register on their website, <https://siouxlandagainstrafficking.org>. The conference is focusing on becoming educated, enlightened, and equipped about the porn epidemic! Keynote speaker is Mr. Josh McDowell an international speaker and author of The Porn Epidemic Portfolio, who will discuss documented research on the impact of pornography on society.

### **Report from Evaluation, Research, & Best Practice Committee and reminder to register for Monday, April 6 12:30-4:30 research symposium on child trafficking (Moravec and Reding)**

Dr. Moravec stated that they have already 20 people signed up for the Research for Symposium on Child Trafficking: Issue and Challenges to take place on Monday, April 6, 2020 from 12:30-4:30 PM. There is no cost to attend, but registration is limited to 250 attendees. Speakers include Stephen Patrick O'Meara, Jordan Greenbaum, and Teresa Davidson, who will be focusing on prevention, investigation, and treatment of exploited children. Parking will be limited as attendees will not be able to use the student parking lot so attendees may incur parking fee.

## **Report on Crime Victims Justice Corps Fellowship and my legal work in human trafficking (Camp)**

Camp would be sharing the compiled data of her first year and half of her fellowship of serving victims of all forms of human trafficking throughout the state of Iowa for a year and a half so far. This information is preliminary data pulled from her federal grant reporting numbers between 6/30/18 to 12/31/19. Complete statistical information will be calculated when the fellowship concludes June 30, 2020. Lauren stated that she generally did not get referrals from organizations that served minor victims, but has been primarily working with adult clients. She has served two minor clients in federal human trafficking cases to date that were referred from the US Attorney's office.

### **Findings:**

Of the verified victims of human trafficking served, the data showed a surprising number of male victims of human trafficking. While men can be sexually exploited, and Lauren has had clients who are victims of sex trafficking, a majority of the male clients Lauren served were victims of labor trafficking. Surprisingly, 67% of victims also identified as white. These statistics conflict with many current perceptions regarding common characteristics of victims of this crime, such as the young female victim, or a victim who is an ethnic or racial minority.

### **Statistics:**

The estimated persons trained and educated on Human Trafficking was approximately 330 people from various backgrounds, including social service providers, advocates, victim specialists, attorneys, law enforcement, volunteers, and persons in correctional facilities. Speaking events were primarily at the local level in Iowa around Des Moines and Cedar Rapids, with one speaking event at a National Conference in Detroit, MI (NLADA Conference 2019).

**A 130 people were screened.** These people were either referred to Lauren through the Iowa Legal Aid intake system or referred from an external or social service provider. Iowa Legal Aid intake staff would ask applicants 4 human trafficking questions (2 questions regarding sex trafficking, 2 questions regarding labor trafficking). Answering "yes" to any of the 4 questions would get the case sent to Lauren for additional screening and follow-up. External referrals from support organizations were received regularly and generally were confirmed survivors/victims of human trafficking crimes. External referral organizations consisted of various social service organizations throughout the state, as well as federal agencies, the Attorney General's office, and referrals from co-fellows in other states.

Based on this referral process, all persons screened were generally identified as high risk or provided information that was indicative of a potential trafficking situation. Internal referrals for screens through Iowa Legal Aid generally presented with domestic violence issues or employment issues. There were several instances where clients were "walk-in" clients at the Cedar Rapids office and presented trafficking issues and did not go through the referral process. All persons screened were referred to appropriate social service agencies regardless of human trafficking victimization.

Of the 130 screened from internal and external referrals, 71 remained in contact with Lauren to receive legal advice, brief legal services, or direct representation. Lauren has been involved in 3 federal criminal human trafficking cases, but the majority of her cases involved state law matters. Lauren helped victims enforce their crime victim rights in federal court and requested restitution in two cases. Common legal issues involving state law included: family law issues (divorce, custody/visitation, child support, DHS investigations, terminating parental rights, domestic violence protective orders, emancipation); issues around consumer or court related debts (bankruptcy; payment plans with county; license reinstatement); Housing and Evictions (including various cases of sexual exploitation of tenants by landlords); and employment issues (not being paid wages, claims of forced labor and employment fraud).

***Gender/Age/ Ethnicity statistics:***

49.2% male

49.2% female

1.4% other- (1) non-conforming gender identity

Under 25: 19.7%

Over 25: 80.3%

Ethnicity: White or Not White

64.7% white

35.2% non-white identifying

**Progress report from hotel/motel employee projects. Progress report on training DVD to developed for hotels not in face-to-face service areas (Reding and Rixner) - No report**

**Startup of Service Provider Collaboration (Hardin, Brokaw, and Rohrs) No report**

**Next Board of Directors Meeting is Tuesday, March 10, 2020**

**Meeting was adjourned.**