

**Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking and Slavery (NAHT)**  
**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, December 11, 2017**  
**2:30 pm - 4:00 pm Conference Call**

**Present on Call:** George Belitsos (Chair), Jan Beran (Treasurer), Liz Cox (Secretary), Teresa Davidson, Taylor Houston, Jennie Kerger, Liz Quinn (Fitzgerald Proxy), Shirlee Reding, Bernadette Rixner, Maggie Tinsman (Vice Chair), Suzanne Wright

**Excused:** Sr Shirley Fineran, Paul Fitzgerald, Brynne Howard, Stephen O'Meara, Erin Schneider, Alissa Stoehr

**Absent:** Joy Fopma

**Guests:** Linda Holub (guest of Bernadette Rixner); Celine Villongco, Human Trafficking Coordinator, Office of the Iowa Attorney General Crime Victim Assistance Division

**Taking Minutes:** Margaret Epplin

**Roll Call and Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order and roll was taken. Rixner introduced guest, Linda Holub. Holub and Rixner co-chaired the Siouxland Coalition against Human Trafficking. In January, Holub will be the lead Chair, and Rixner will be Executive Director.

**Update from the Attorney General's Office**

Belitsos welcomed Villongco and asked for an update on when the Attorney General will release the needs assessment. Villongco said AG Miller will release the needs assessment via a press release in January since January is Human Trafficking month. Belitsos asked if the NAHT Board could have an early review of the needs assessment. Villongco said not until the report is released and posted publicly on the website so that all organizations can review the report at the same time. Belitsos asked for pre-release information. Villongco said there were no surprises and the presence of gaps in serving human trafficking victims is straightforward. Belitsos thanked Villongco for following up on the NAHT Board request to ask the AG to release this long overdue study.

Belitsos said he noticed that Rhonda is no longer with the AG office, and asked for an update. Villongco reported that Rhonda retired her position with the AG's office to open a BBQ restaurant in NW Iowa. The AG's office is in the process of hiring a replacement for her position.

Tinsman asked Villongco if the DOE has been contacted to be included in the planning for the Human Trafficking Summit in April so that the focus of prevention workers is covered. Villongco reported that the DOE is currently not co-sponsoring the Summit, and Villongco will speak to her supervisor about involving DOE in planning. The current co-sponsors are the Attorney General's Office and the Department of Public Safety (DPS), and the training of law enforcement personnel is the focus of the April Summit.

Cox asked Villongco if Cox could sit in with a Bureau Chief or division director to have a conversation with Villongco and/or others inside DPS about cooperating with DOE in development of a prevention program to address sexual abuse in schools. There have been reports across state about sexual abuse by teachers or coaches. These kids become higher risk of being groomed and swept away by a trafficker. Cox stated that cooperation is needed among DOE, DPS, and IDPH to prevent sexual abuse of youth. Villongco reported she spoke with Amber Lawrence, and Teens Against Human Trafficking (THAT) is providing a training with more emphasis on prevention and education. Villongco is coordinating with Lawrence so that there is no competition between the two conferences.

**Review 2018 Meeting Dates** The 2018 monthly meeting dates were in the meeting packet. The Chair asked Board members to place these meeting dates into their calendars.

**Consent Agenda**

- Motion to approve November 13 Board meeting minutes.
- Motion to move the Board meeting date to the third Monday of each month.

- Motion to elect Jodie Butler to the Board of Directors.
- Motion to add to the NAHT legislative agenda the following anti-human trafficking laws (same as in Nebraska) to the Iowa code:
  - a. Punish sex purchasers the same as traffickers by adding solicitation to the definition of human trafficking.
  - b. Increase the penalty for trafficking minors under age 18 from 10 to up to 20 years.
  - c. "Immunity" from prosecution for the trafficking victims.
  - d. Iowa should add a civil penalty option for victims of trafficking.
- Motion to accept the report of the treasurer that as of November 20, the balance in NAHT checking was \$2,725.14 and savings \$1,781.89.

Belitsos removed the Consent Agenda motion to elect Jodie Butler to the Board of Directors. Butler has taken a large role as a member of the NAHT Legislative Advisory Council but she declined to replace O’Keeffe’s on the NAHT Board of Directors.

Marissa Mansfield, of Braking Traffik of Eastern Iowa, was recommended by Cathy O’Keeffe to replace O’Keeffe on the NAHT Board. Mansfield has agreed to serve on the NAHT Board. Tinsman noted that Mansfield was her intern several years ago.

Tinsman **nominated** Mansfield to become a member of the NAHT Board of Directors. **Motion carried** unanimously.

Tinsman has agreed to co-chair the NAHT Legislative Advisory Council with Cox, but Cox would like to step back from the Legislative Advisory Council. Cox noted that Butler is a huge asset to the Legislative Advisory Council as she knows whom to talk to and what to ask and say, but Cox doesn’t know if Butler will be willing to serve as co-chair. Tinsman requested a meeting between Butler and Tinsman and Cox to clarify the future leadership of the Legislative Advisory Council. Right now, Cox continues as co-chair and, if she decides to quit, she might recruit someone from her organization Prevent Child Abuse Iowa or from the Legislative Advisory Council.

Tinsman requested that November minutes be removed from the Consent Agenda. On Page 5, #2, paragraph 3, Tinsman requested that the term “Advisory” be added to “Legislative Council.” Tinsman further requested that her name be removed as a second on the motion as a Committee Motion does not require a second.

There were no objections to the corrected minutes and the **motion to accept** the corrected minutes **carried** unanimously.

The corrected minutes will be posted on the website and Board members requested that the corrected minutes not be emailed to them.

Executive Committee **motion to approve** the Consent Agenda. Motion **carried** unanimously.

**Nomination and election of 2018 slate of officers. Review and approve 2017 strategic plan progress report and 2018 goals**

- Chair - Belitsos
- Vice Chair - Cox
- Secretary - Tinsman
- Treasurer (one more year) - Beran

There were no further nominations.

Executive Committee **made a motion** to approve the 2018 slate of officers. Motion **carried** unanimously.

The 2017-18 Strategic Plan Goals will be placed on the next agenda.

**Massage legislation and efforts to encourage and guide local city councils to adopt regulation of massage business ordinances. Cities that are currently working on an ordinance include: Ames, Des Moines, Clive,**

**Windsor Heights, Ankeny, Cedar Rapids, Fort Dodge, Dubuque, Davenport and Bettendorf. Sioux City, Altoona, and Marshalltown have already held public hearings on their proposal new ordinances.**

Belitsos said tonight the Marshalltown City Council will have the first reading on a massage business ordinance. A massage business ordinance has been presented to the Altoona City Council, and the Council referred the ordinance back to the City Attorney. Rixner reported that the Sioux City City Attorney reviewed the Johnston ordinance and revised it to allow the Sioux City City Clerk to approve or disapprove massage parlor licenses. The first reading passed and the second reading will be a revision by the City Attorney. Guest Holub spoke with the mayor and he agrees with the ordinance and thinks it will pass.

Guest Holub reported that a large contingent from the massage community attended the Sioux City City Council meeting. They were opposed to the massage parlor ordinance because they felt the ordinance labeled them as prostitutes and they didn't want a governmental agency interfering. They have set up a petition on Change.org and have 750 signatures. Some from the massage community did not feel that the ordinance will stop organized crime from running massage parlors where masseuses are being trafficked because they give false names.

Belitsos reported that several Ames organization met with the Police Commander and with the new Ames City Attorney. Newly elected in November, Council Member Martin is in favor of the ordinance. Support of the ordinance was brought up by ISU students at candidate forums prior to the election. Belitsos is currently waiting for the new Ames City Council to be sworn in and he will then take the ordinance proposal back to the Council.

Belitsos asked for any other updates or any additions of cities considering an ordinance. Houston reached out to the Mount Mercy University President for a contact in the Cedar Rapids Police Department to get the ordinance process in Cedar Rapids moving faster. There has been a change in power on the Cedar Rapids City Council, and Houston will keep contacting people. Davidson said she has name of a person who came to hotel/motel training who might be a good contact for Houston. Davidson reported Police Chief Jerman requested a meeting. Davidson also met with newly elected Council Member Todd who represents the district that includes a street walking area. Todd wants to place an emphasis on stopping human trafficking. Davidson and Houston will meet with Todd.

**Progress Reports from the Cedar Rapids & Des Moines Hotel/Motel Project Steering Committees. Outcome of the November 28 new volunteer training in Cedar Rapids. Status of separate MOU & Coalition Hotel/Motel volunteer training for Eastern Iowa, (led by Franciscan sisters of Dubuque) and Western Iowa (led by Siouxland Coalition)? Training Dates?**

Belitsos reported for O'Meara who said that they are making progress in eastern and western Iowa on hotel/motel volunteer trainings. In Eastern Iowa, O'Meara's group anticipates signing an MOU with the Franciscan Sisters. In Western Iowa, the Siouxland Coalition hopes to hold hotel/motel volunteer trainings in March in Sioux City and Clinton.

Tinsman reported that Braking Traffik has their own training and does not intend to sign an MOU with O'Meara. Hopefully, Mansfield will keep the NAHT Board informed of Braking Traffik's trainings.

Davidson reported for the Cedar Rapids hotel/motel project. Davidson reported that, since the first training in September, it has been difficult to get additional volunteers to train hotel/motel staff on identifying human trafficking, mostly because several of the trained volunteers are students, and students are on break. A hotel requested the training, but Davidson has been unable to find available trainers.

Davidson reported that a second hotel/motel volunteer training was held in Cedar Rapids on November 28. 25 were registered, but, due to the flu, only 18 attended. Many very interested and qualified potential volunteer trainers were part of the group of 18 people. In addition, through the group of 18, Davidson now has invitations to do speaking presentations at other organizations. Davidson said that training participants have learned much about trafficking in the local area.

Reding reported for the Central Iowa hotel/motel project. Reding discussed the possibility of adding weekend trainings to train hotel/motel staff who only work on weekends. Reding reported that there have been no Central Iowa weekend trainings so far. Wright stated that weekend trainings might reach more hotel/motel staff. Volunteers willing to train on the weekends will be recruited for the March 8 volunteer training at Plymouth Church.

Davidson reported that hotel/motel staff have reported suspicion of other crimes, such as abortions forced by traffickers, to the volunteer hotel/motel trainers. The volunteers are not trained to help hotel/motel staff identify crimes other than trafficking. Davidson said she is working on a process of whom to call when notified about other crimes. Davidson said the hotel/motel emphasis is identifying trafficking, but volunteers will try to help with reports of other crimes if they can.

Davidson said that she was told if hotel/motel staff call 911 for a human trafficking issue, police will not respond. Rixner felt someone in the police department should have a focus on human trafficking. Belitsos asked if Davidson has spoken with the Police Chief. Davidson reported she has met with the Police Chief twice, and he doesn't say police will not respond, but rather that their hands are tied if the victim will not talk.

Quinn agreed that, when a victim won't talk, the case is complicated and the hands of the police officers are tied. However, police do respond to calls and there have been a lot of law enforcement trainings on how to respond to reports of sex trafficking.

Reding informed that anyone can call and ask for a welfare check, and police have a duty to respond to a request for a welfare check. Davidson said the victim often reports to the responding police that there is nothing wrong. Reding and Villongco suggested that Davidson get advice by contacting Sgt Deskin and the law enforcement academy.

Belitsos agreed with Quinn that, in the last year, there have been great trainings through DPS and the AG's office on identifying human trafficking, and that the NAHT Board should not overlook the progress made in getting cooperation and collaboration from law enforcement. Villongco said if any police officers request a training, a training is provided.

Reding reported that O'Meara will provide the hotel/motel volunteer training on March 8 in Des Moines and that there is a lot of interest in this second training. Belitsos expressed his appreciation to O'Meara for his volunteer training leadership and for the collaboration with the Nebraska Coalition.

Reding also reported that some of the Central Iowa trained volunteers have already completed their three hotels, but, due to the holidays, some are scheduled after the first of the year.

Wright reported that a decision on trainings in the Clinton/Dubuque area will be made in January, and, if the idea is viable, Wright anticipates that the first training will be held in March.

Belitsos reported that, so far, hotel/motel staff from 40 hotels/motels in the Des Moines/Cedar Rapids area have been trained, according to the master list. Belitsos asked that NAHT Board members working with the volunteer trainers keep the list up to date. Some of these hotels will be recognized at the Day on the Hill.

### **Plans for the Governor's signing of a proclamation designating January 2018 as Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention and Awareness Month.**

Belitsos encouraged NAHT Board members to get cities and counties to adopt and sign local proclamations naming January as Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention and Awareness Month. Example proclamations and scripts will be sent out via Belitsos' blog post.

The date of the proclamation signing by the Governor has not been set. Belitsos proposed January 16 or 17 at 10:30 a.m. and will let the NAHT Board know as soon as he is notified. The proclamation date will correspond with the Day on the Hill, as well as the January NAHT Board meeting. The Network will invite Teens Against Human Trafficking to co-sponsor.

Wright reported that Dubuque will sign a proclamation, and that Dubuque County has asked for a sample proclamation. Wright also reported that presentations of the movie "I Am Still Here," are planned for January 7 and 11.

Reding reported that on January 18, Terri Forliti, Executive Director of Breaking Free, along with a local survivor, will speak, from 6:30 to 9 p.m., at Plymouth Church in Des Moines. Belitsos will post this on his blog and on the Network website calendar.

Tinsman said they have tentative dates with the City of Moline on January 9, Scott County Supervisors on January 11, and the City of Bettendorf on January 16 to present proclamations for signing.

Quinn has approached the Story County Board of Supervisors and they have agreed to add a proclamation signing to their agenda. A date has not been set.

Rixner has been in touch with local cities/counties in her area.

### **Report of the Research, Evaluation & Best Practice Standards Committee (Reding & Houston)**

This committee did not meet since the last NAHT Board meeting.

### **Review of legislation (Cox)**

- Change in Legislative Advisory Council leadership

This was discussed earlier in this meeting. Tinsman reiterated that she cannot chair the Legislative Advisory Council without a co-chair. Cox will continue to co-chair until a new leader is recruited. Cox, Belitsos, and Tinsman, will discuss at the next Executive Committee meeting.

- Report from the Legislative Advisory Council. The Network is collaborating on legislative priorities with Prevent Child Abuse Iowa, Teens Against Human Trafficking, the Child and Family Policy Center, AMP and the Coalition for Children and Family Services.

The NAHT Legislative Advisory Council has not met since the last NAHT Board meeting, but members have made a lot of progress.

- Approve 2018 IA NAHT legislative agenda including:

- a. Reforming Mandatory Reporter training and requirements

Cox has had discussions with leaders of Iowa state departments who agree it is a good idea to include the identification of human trafficking in Mandatory Reporter training and certification. This training would reach many as there are 400,000 Iowans who are required to have some type of Mandatory Reporter training. There are about 4,000 providers of Mandatory Reporter trainings, which vary from provider to provider.

Cox reported that she met with Heartsill and with the leader of the Iowa House and neither had objections to the NAHT legislative priorities. Cox said she needs assistance writing a draft of Mandatory Reporter reform which Heartsill can take it to LSA to see if they can draft a bill. Cox also requested assistance drafting legislation for home school registration. Tinsman said that the person who can help with writing legislation is Richard Johnson, Division of Administrative Services 515 281 3894. Tinsman said the drafts of proposed legislation need to be done before the session starts.

- b. Erin's Law/Sexual abuse prevention

Cox reported that, due to several instances of sexual abuse in Iowa schools, one of which settled for millions of dollars, there is an internal work group now formed at the Department of Education focused on sexual abuse identification. Training on sexual abuse identification in schools might happen without new legislation. However, this need for sexual abuse prevention training and education needs to stay on the NAHT legislative agenda for 2018.

- c. Addition of Nebraska Code changes (see Consent Agenda)
- d. Research into child abuse prevention legislation in other states

Nothing new to report other than what was discussed under Erin's Law.

- e. Discuss proposed Human Trafficking Prevention Act.

No research has been done on this act.

Cox reported that home school registration has support including from the School Board Association, and the requirement for registration might happen without legislation.

The next step for the NAHT Legislative Advisory Council is to write one-page talking points for the list of legislative priorities. Cox will send Belitsos the talking points. Belitsos will take the Advisory Group's recommendations and merge them with NAHT Board-identified legislation. He will send out the 2018

Legislative Agenda to the Board and post it on his blog. This all needs to be completed before the Day on the Hill.

**Recent blog posts and next blog post topic**

Belitsos reported several recent blog posts. The Day on the Hill and proclamation signing blog post will be sent out next week.

**Adjournment**

The next Executive Committee meeting will be held Monday, December 18, 2:30 - 4pm (one week early due to Christmas).

The next NAHT Board of Directors meeting will be face-to-face during the Day on the Hill at the State Capitol Building. Date to be announced.