

NAHT November 14, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes

Present: John Chesser, George Belitsos, Maggie Tinsman, Deanna Jensen, Lyna Debner, Thomas Barr, Bernadette Rixner, Shirley Fineran, Mike Tupper and Linda Harell

Excused Absence: Stephanie Olson

Absent: Jessica Hagin

Guests: Elizabeth Phan (Technology Consultant), Gretchen Brown-Waech (Attorney General's Office), Chelsea Hoyer (Advocacy Strategies)

I. Call to order and attendance; start recording.

The meeting was called to order at 2:34 p.m. by Chesser, NAHT chair.

II. Consent Agenda October 10th minutes, Treasurer reports (Chesser):

Chesser asked if there was any discussion or any amendments to the October 10th Board meeting minutes or the treasurer's report. Belitsos reported that there was a drop in donations but that the \$10,000 anonymous donor check is shown in the CD. There was a major expense of \$10,000 paid to Advocacy Strategies. Belitsos reported that he has moved \$20,000 out of savings into an 8-month CD with an interest rate of 5.25% which will yield between \$700 to \$800 on the maturity date of 06/02/2024. This is now showing up as a new section in the treasurer's report.

There was no further discussion and Chesser moved to approve both the meeting minutes and the treasurer's report. Tinsman seconded the motion. **Both the minutes and the treasurer's report were approved unanimously.**

III. Review and approval of revised 2023 expense budget (expenses only - income is not reflected in the document)

Belitsos reported that there was a \$10,000 move in expenses out of the Administrative Assistant to cover the \$10,000 payment to Advocacy Strategies. Belitsos moved to approve the revised 2023 expense budget. Tupper seconded the motion. **The 2023 expense budget was approved unanimously.**

IV. Education/Advocacy and Interim Study Committee update (John, Maggie, Threase, Chelsea). Vote to formalize our representative to the interim study committee, Teresa Davidson. Our suggestion for survivors is to serve on the committee. October 30th meeting with AG Brenna Bird. Interim study committee preparation. Efforts to arrange a meeting with Gov. Reynolds. Rumors about potential legislation related to human trafficking.

Tinsman moved to approve Teresa Davison to be the NAHT representative of the Interim Study Committee. Fineran seconded the motion to appoint **Teresa Davison as the NAHT representative at the Interim Study Committee was approved unanimously.** Chesser will recommend Brown-Waech to serve as the representative survivor to the study committee.

Chesser and Tinsman met with Advocacy Strategies and wrote a revised 2024 legislative agenda. Belitsos proposed to hold a formal vote to rescind last month's legislative agenda and

Chesser agreed to adopt the new one. Tinsman described the change and the reason for moving the funding request from victim services and instead moving the appropriation for trafficking survivor services.

Belitsos brought up that there is no state funding for child and adolescent trafficking prevention/education or for "internet safety". He proposed a portion of the \$5M also be utilized for prevention/education. Fineran stated that she has provided in-school training. Belitsos commended Fineran for volunteering to train but what is needed is to provide prevention services statewide. Tinsman believes that Belitsos's suggestion should be considered for the following year 2025. Rixner states that a lot of prevention education happens with training in internet safety.

Tinsman motioned to rescind that legislative agenda as approved at the October 10th Board meeting and to approve the following legislative priorities:

2024 Legislative Priorities

Allocate Funding to Combat Human Trafficking

NAHT requests an allocation of \$5M in Justice System Appropriations for Human Trafficking Victim Services. Currently, Iowa does not allocate any state funding to support victims of human trafficking.

Implement Recommendations of Human Trafficking Interim Study

NAHT supports the implementation of appropriate safe harbor implementation recommendations made by the **2023 Human Trafficking Interim Study Committee**.

NAHT Policy Statements on Other Issues

NAHT supports

- the enactment of an expungement process of criminal records of survivors of human trafficking who were compelled or forced to commit illegal acts. This would include vacatur legislation to reverse the actual adjudication or finding of guilt.
- adopting legislation requiring schools to provide child sex abuse awareness and prevention for students, parents, and school employees as requested by Prevent Child Abuse Iowa.
- adopting legislation to require safe filter technology to prevent cell phones and tablets from accessing or displaying material that is harmful to minors.

Hearing no further discussion, the motion to rescind October 10th and adopt today's revised legislative priorities was passed unanimously.

Belitsos suggested that the revised 2024 Legislative Agenda be shared with the NAHT Legislative Advocacy Committee as soon as possible.

V. Iowa International Center requested for an NAHT representative to meet in Des Moines with the International Visitor Leadership program delegation sponsored by the U.S. State Department on December 4-5, 2023. (John)

Chesser asked if anyone is willing to speak about the NAHT in Des Moines to the International Visitor Leadership program they will be hosted by the US State Department. Chesser asked Belitsos would like to make the presentation, however, he would not be available that day. Belitsos mentioned that it is important to have a NAHT representative to discuss what NAHT does and the role of volunteer citizen involvement in the fight to end trafficking. Several years ago the NAHT did provide speakers. There are distinguished visitors from 14 different countries who are here to learn from us.

Chesser mentioned there may not be anyone who could do it from the study committee. Tinsman asked if there is anyone on the board that could do it but Chesser mentioned that not everyone lives in Des Moines. Chesser also mentioned that this is not the highest priority as this is more of a favor for the State Department and wouldn't be considered to create an advantage for NAHT. Chesser also mentioned that they are not interested in a virtual Zoom presentation. Belitsos suggested that we should at least send the state department our brochures and other NAHT documents.

VI. Giving Tuesday (November 28) and fundraising email (Jensen)

Jensen, Fundraising Committee Chair, reported that it should be considered that COSBOX or TechSoup should be utilized to help with NAHT donations. She also noted other businesses that provide these programs to help with donations. Nationally there has been a 10.5% decrease in donations because of donation fatigue, and that has been prevalent.

Jensen stated that she plans to request that supporters donate to the NAHT on Giving Tuesday. She plans to send out a Giving Tuesday fundraising request to past donors. She has attended a training session about Giving Tuesday and has learned what other non-profits do to take advantage of this international nonprofit giving day,

Belisos also noted that the NAHT has actively participated in Giving Tuesday for the past five years. The NAHT was able to reach its goal last year and raised \$2,500. He also believes that this gives the board motivation to make a once-annual gift. The size does not matter but what is important is that 100% of the board members participate. We have reached our 100% board participation in the past 5 years.

VII. NAHT board member nominations (John, George)

Chesser reported that we have four vacancies on the Board due to resignations in the last few months. Tinsman brought up the name of Melody Stone as a good candidate, Belitsos had suggested three candidates at the last Executive Committee meeting including Melody Stone, Teresa Davidson, and Kim Hilby. He had also proposed Sargent Liz Quinn but withdrew the name since she informed him that she was too busy to serve at this time. Chesser will consider these suggestions and make contact before the next meeting.

VIII. Plans for January 11th Proclamation Signing and award presentation. Request to endorse January 1st as a day of prayer for survivors. Quilt fundraiser for survivors (George).

Belitsos requested board endorsement of the North and Central Iowa Anti-Trafficking coalition initiative to call for a Day of Prayer for survivors and victims of traffickers. He noted that the NAHT Board endorsed this Day of Prayer last year. There were some questions about the January 11th date and Lyna Debner will clarify the date and report back soon.

Lyna discussed the coalition's request to put up the underground RR quilt during the January 11th proclamation fundraiser. The question was revised as to state-building rules about

fundraising on state property. Chesser offered to look into this question. This topic will be moved to the December Board Meeting Agenda.

There was no time to review plans for the January 11th State Capital NAHT event.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:03 pm