

Iowa NAHT Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Monday, May 8, 2017

2:30 pm - 4:00 pm Conference Call

Present on call: George Belitsos (Chair), Jan Beran, Liz Cox, Teresa Davidson, Joy Fopma, Brynne Howard, Jennie Kerger, Stephen O'Meara, Shirlee Reding, Bernadette Rixner, Alissa Stoehr, Maggie Tinsman, Suzanne Wright

Excused: Cathy O'Keeffe, Erin Schneider, Taylor Houston

Absent: Sr Shirley Fineran

Guests: Mahder Serekberhan (Proxy for Houston), Norio Umezu (Minority Coalition Project Director, Monsoon United Asian Women of Iowa), Celine Villongco (Human Trafficking Coordinator, Iowa Attorney General's Office), Amy Lohmyer (Human Trafficking Specialist, NIAD Crisis Intervention Services (CIS) headquartered in Mason City), Rachel Sporer (President, ISU Student Network Against Human Trafficking), Cein Moran (Treasurer, ISU Student Network Against Human Trafficking)

Taking minutes: Margaret Epplin

Call to Order and Roll Call. Welcome new Board members (Suzanne Wright) and guests

The meeting was called to order by Chair Belitsos who welcomed the 5 guests. Belitsos explained that new Board member Wright will be late joining the meeting as there were two recent human trafficking arrests in Dubuque. Wright works for Set Free and law enforcement in Dubuque engaged Set Free to work with the victims of human trafficking.

Review today's agenda There were no changes to the agenda.

Tinsman reported that Cathy O'Keeffe of Braking Traffik received an award from the FBI in Washington, DC this past weekend. Tinsman, along with O'Keeffe's family, attended the huge reception in DC. Four or five of the awardees were involved with human trafficking. Beran asked if the *Quad Cities Times* gave any coverage. Tinsman will ask Cathy and see that this is done. Beran asked that something be sent to *The Des Moines Register*, too. Belitsos and Beran said that the press release should come from Family Resources. Belitsos further explained that there was a press release when the award was first announced and presented in Iowa prior to the DC event. A picture from the Iowa event is posted on the NAHT website, and Belitsos included the announcement in the blog. Belitsos asked that Tinsman ask O'Keeffe to send him information and pictures from the DC event so that he can post on the NAHT website and blog.

Progress report on formation of crime victim and human trafficking minority population coalition. Update on town hall meetings (Norio Umezu, Networking Project Coordinator, Monsoon)

Belitsos introduced Umezu who gave a six-month report on the Networking Project which is working to build a coalition of minorities. Instead of town hall meetings, the Networking Project has decided to build the minority coalition by reaching out to agencies who work with communities of color, LGBTQ, and deaf/hard of hearing communities. The Project has conducted over 40 interviews with agencies outside the Des Moines area and, in June, will publish a research brief based on these interviews to identify needs and resources of the organizational leaders. Belitsos requested a copy of the research brief, and Norio will send him one. Online copies will be available at the end of June.

The Networking Project will expand interviews from Des Moines to Iowa City, Davenport and Cedar Rapids. Belitsos emphasized that there are NAHT Board members in the Iowa City, Davenport, and Cedar Rapids areas, and they might want to partner with Umezu and will do all they can to help the Networking Project have success reaching minority populations. The NAHT Board approved Belitsos to send the NAHT Board contact list to Umezu so he can contact us directly.

Through the interviews, the Networking Project learned that agencies want more trainings to give victims of violence the skills they need to find peace. If community partners desire a training, the Networking Project finds a date and presenter. A training in Des Moines is scheduled for May 11 from 10 to 3 p.m. Umezu will send the link to Belitsos. Umezu said that the Networking Project will set up trainings for organizations who are working with human trafficking.

The Networking Project will hold an Open House on Wednesday, June 28, from 5 to 8 p.m., at the Des Moines office, 855 42nd St. At this event, the research brief will be presented, and staff will describe work that has been done this past year and will invite partners for next year. Belitsos will distribute flyers and post on the NAHT website.

Progress report on the series of 2.5 day intensive training “Multi-Disciplinary. Response to Trafficking” Impact of 26% funding cut to Victim Services (Celine Villongco, Human Trafficking Coordinator, Iowa Attorney General’s Office)

Villongco reported that Human Trafficking Office has completed 9 *Train the Trainer* events with 3 left. 17 different law enforcement agencies, and 34 advocates from 17 victim service agencies have attended, but so far, not many from judicial agencies. It is beneficial to have law enforcement and agencies network at trainings. The Iowa Law Enforcement Academy will present the trainings again next year to new officers and staff of victim service agencies, or those who could not attend the first round.

Tinsman asked how the training through the Attorney General’s Office differs from the training offered by the Department of Public Safety (DPS). Villongco explained that, since DPS offers their training for law enforcement only and the Attorney General’s Office’s training is open to other agencies working with human trafficking, the curriculum used by each is different. Tinsman asked how law enforcement would know which training to choose. Villongco explained that initially, detectives could attend either training.

Cox asked whether the AG Department has considered a more systematic approach to provide victim-centered and victim-led trainings which include trauma informed practices. Villongco explained that the Crime Victims Assistance Office is a separate division and works with grantees to make sure they are trauma informed trained.

Belitsos asked Villongco the effect of the huge 26% cut in funding for victim services for 2018 by the Iowa legislature. Villongco answered that the 26% cut is a large hit and there has been misunderstanding about where they can prop up Iowa agencies with federal funds. Though the full impact of the cut is not known, there are ongoing conversations among staff and local community-based programs about how to soften the blow. Domestic abuse and sexual assault will lose a significant amount of funding. Belitsos noted that Villongco’s position is federally funded so the 26% cut should not affect her position and her fight against human trafficking. Villongco added that labor and sex trafficking victims from special categories (e.g., persons of color, rural victims, youth, mental health services, etc.) are funded through different pots, including some federal funding streams. Umezu’s work and NIAD are federally funded, along with the other human trafficking service providers. Federal money should be available until September, so these funding streams are safe until then.

April 17 Executive Committee meeting report and approval of Consent Agenda:

- Motion to approve April 10 meeting minutes of the NAHT Board of Directors.
- Motion to approve the treasurer's report showing a checking account balance of \$4,030.00 and savings account balance of \$1,781.31.
- Motion to elect Liz Cox as secretary and a member of the Executive Committee.
- Motion to approve a second printing of 500 Network brochures for a cost of \$331.70.
- Motion to cancel June and August Board meeting due to summer vacations. There will be a July 10 Board meeting. The Executive Committee will continue to meet monthly over the summer. Board members will be welcome to join Executive Committee calls.
- Motion to invite Luis CdeBaca to become an honorary NAHT board member.
- Motion to authorize the Chair to sign a second year consulting agreement with Tana Tesdall at \$27/hour to serve as Technology Consultant to the Network.
- Motion to request progress reports from (1) NIAD on direct services to North Central Iowa survivors, (2) Monsoon United Asian Women of Iowa, and (3) Chair of the ISU Student NAHT.
- Motion to endorse the new training and Technical Assistance language in the federal reauthorization of the Human Trafficking Act.

Tinsman noted that, in the April 10 minutes, the School Administrators of Iowa SAI were omitted from the Update on Erin's Law Study Bill. The sentence should read, “Tinsman said that it was a mistake not to include *SAI (School Administrators of Iowa)*, ISEA, and ISBA in the proposed Erin’s Law work group....”

Committee motion to accept the Consent Agenda, with the amendment to add SAI. **Motion carried.**

Progress report Crisis Intervention Services (CIS), NIAD Center for Human Development headquartered in Mason City (Nicole Hamilton, Homicide and other Violent Crimes Program Supervisor)

Amy Lohmyer, Human Trafficking Specialist for NIAD, spoke on behalf of Nicole Hamilton who was unable to attend. NIAD is headquartered in Mason City and serves 15 counties of North Central Iowa for sex and labor trafficking. Lohmyer gave an overview of trafficking services which began July 1, 2016, under a grant from the Attorney General's Office. NIAD has two human trafficking specialists who split the service area in half north to south.

These specialists provide trafficking victims free and confidential services 24 hours a day. They have a crisis phone line and, unlike most other agencies, the specialist goes directly to the victim. They accompany victims to legal and medical meetings. Support groups and emergency housing at a hotel or shelter are available. NIAD provides community education, which has included the hotel/motel awareness training provided through the Anti Human Trafficking Coalition in Omaha. Lohmyer has completed *Train the Trainer*. The human trafficking specialists have seen an increase in numbers due to improvement in identification. They would like to better network with other agencies to effectively identify human trafficking victims and to refer survivors to resources. The goal is to have a collaborative community-coordinated response to human trafficking.

Tinsman asked how many victims of human trafficking they have served. Lohmyer personally has worked with 5 or 6; Hamilton has the agency statistics.

Tinsman asked for a description of the hotel/motel awareness training. Lohmyer explained that the training informs hotel/motel staff what human trafficking signs to look for and how to keep themselves safe. Tinsman said Davenport tried to do this through a Rotary grant and got great push-back and resistance from the hotels.

O'Meara helped write the hotel/motel awareness training curriculum as part of the Omaha Coalition on Human Trafficking Hotel/Motel Project Committee. After the Omaha project received pushback from their pilot project, for which they consulted Braking Traffik, they decided to develop protocol for educating the hotels/motels before providing the training. This has made the project very successful. They have trained employees in 90 hotels/motels and they are trying to expand statewide in NE and also in Western IA and South Dakota.

When several Board members expressed interest in talking to O'Meara further, O'Meara proposed a separate conference call. Tinsman, Rixner, Davidson, Reding, Sporer, Lohmyer, and Belitsos would like to be on the call. Belitsos will set up a date and time for the conference call and inform and invite the entire NAHT Board. Iowa is behind on training hotel/motel workers, especially in Des Moines.

Belitsos reported that the Ames anti human trafficking project received a Rotary grant and provided 8 trainings to hotels/motels in Ames. Belitsos said that recently the Ames Gateway Hotel identified suspicious activity and called police, who discovered that the registered names were made up and that the hotel bill was paid in cash. Teresa Downing designed the Ames curriculum. Each hotel which completed the training received a plaque to display in their lobby.

Rixner asked if there is a specific training that should be used to bring other cities up to speed. O'Meara will discuss this during the hotel/motel conference call.

Update on 2017 Iowa legislative session (all)

- **Update on Erin's Law Study Bill. Request to the Lt. Governor for an Executive Order. (Cox, Tinsman, and Belitsos)**

Cox reported that this has been a roller coaster legislative session. Rep Heartsill sponsored Erin's Law, which passed the subcommittee and judiciary committee. Cox attended the subcommittee meeting where a majority present were in support of the law. Iowa Association of School Boards tried to derail the bill by forcefully saying that this law, tied to Every Student Succeeds Act, was an unfunded mandate for schools. The House leadership replaced the language that students "shall" receive training to "may" which neutered the entire bill. Heartsill worked to get an alternative study bill through the legislature. This would create a Work Group which would require that 12 agency reps be present at two meetings and come up with recommendations for the 2018 legislative session.

Even though Erin's Law Study Bill passed the House unanimously, changes were made by Senate Chair of Committee on Education, who added groups related to education. The Senate leadership did not bring forth the bill, and the bill subsequently died in second funnel. Tinsman was successful in getting the Work Group bill attached to the Iowa DPH budget, but the Iowa Association of School Boards continued to resist, and the bill was removed from the appropriation.

Tinsman reported that last week Prevention Child Abuse had a conference in Des Moines that was attended by the Executive Director of the Iowa Association of School Boards. Belitsos and Tinsman met with the Executive Director for 30 minutes at a conference reception. They informed her that they have asked Lt Gov Reynolds to consider creating a Work Group on her own through executive order or the executive branch and that Reynolds said she would talk to leadership and get back to Belitsos. Belitsos and Tinsman asked the IASB Executive Director to give Reynolds a call, and she agreed as long as her group is included in the Work Group. Cox has sent a personal note thanking the Executive Director of IASB for coming to the Prevention Child Abuse conference reception. Cox asked Tinsman and Belitsos to also send thank you emails. Belitsos will send a thank you to the Executive Director of IASB along with a picture of Belitsos, Tinsman, and the Director.

Cox reminded the NAHT Board that June/July is the time to meet with legislators and thank them for all their work, especially Heartsill. Cox also asked Board members to send notes to their House representative, thanking them for voting for Erin's Law and informing them that the Network and other proponents will try again next year. Cox also relayed that Sinclair is Heartsill's Senator and no one was more heartbroken than Heartsill himself when the bill died in the Senate. Tinsman will send a note to Senator Sinclair.

Belitsos thanked Cox and Tinsman for their advocacy for Erin's Law and their extensive efforts to get this bill passed.

- Update on adding survivors of sex trafficking to the Rape Shield Law. Proposed rule change by Supreme Court, conversation with David Boyd. (Tinsman) No progress to report.
- Update on \$300,000 state appropriation to continue funding the DPS Office to Combat Human Trafficking (Belitsos) This funding for the DPS Office to Combat Human Trafficking was not continued despite efforts by the Network to educate legislators on the importance of this state support.
- Major 26% cut to state appropriations for Victim Services and Domestic Abuse providers (Rixner) This was discussed earlier in today's meeting.
- Discuss Federal Reauthorization of U.S.C. 42 and 22 and request Senator Grassley to add language for technical assistance and funding for educating teachers, parents, and students about the warning signs of grooming, trafficking, and how to respond. (Rixner and Cox) Rixner gave feedback from the Executive Committee to Grassley's staff. Grassley and Ernst's offices are both supporters of human trafficking legislation and have included the NAHT Board as consultants when they study proposed bills on human trafficking. Senator Ernst's rep asked what they can do to help. Cox relayed that Senator Sinclair opposes Erin's Law, and, since Ernst knows Sinclair, Cox asked that Ernst talk to Sinclair.

Progress report from ISU Student Network Against Human Trafficking (Rachel Sporer, Club President)

Sporer and Moran were on the conference call. Sporer complimented Moran as an effective ISU Club member and treasurer who will be missed next year as he has graduated this spring. Moran has volunteered to serve on the NAHT Evaluation and Research Committee. He has a background in data management.

Diana Baltimore is the new advisor for the ISU Student Network Against Human Trafficking Club. During Human Trafficking Awareness month, the ISU club held a supplies collection campaign and collected two SUVs full. These items were donated to human trafficking service centers. They plan to repeat the drive in January 2018 or fall 2018. Towards the end of the 2016-17 school year, the club sponsored a talk by the Executive Director of Breaking Free of St. Paul, MN. She is a survivor of trafficking, and she currently works with victims in St Paul who are getting out of the life. There was a good turnout, and the ISU student club is considering having her return as a speaker in the fall.

The ISU student NAHT club came up with goals for the next semester. Belitsos also attended this meeting to discuss collaboration. Sporer will send the goals to Belitsos. Since the most highly involved members will be seniors next year, the ISU club has a goal to recruit younger members. The club will have a table at Destination Iowa State to reach freshmen, as well as a booth at Club Fest to recruit new members. The club will sponsor human trafficking lectures and panels. The student club holds biweekly meetings and the first meeting is August 23, during the first week of the new school year. Sporer would like Belitsos or another NAHT member to attend the August meeting and talk about what is being done to combat human trafficking statewide so the ISU club can get ideas for action and collaboration.

Sporer has emailed the ISU student body president about presenting information about the ISU club to the Board of Regents. They will ask the Regents to declare January 2018 as Human Trafficking and Anti-Slavery Awareness Month on all 3 campuses.

The ISU club would also like to hang up informational flyers in hotels/motels and truck stops to remind staff of signs of human trafficking. Stoehr has material and will work with the ISU student group to get the information to them. Belitsos asked if this group would be willing to work with other universities to help them start their own clubs, and Sporer reported that this is one of their goals for next year. Belitsos asked Sporer to send him information for a NAHT blog post describing the ISU student anti-trafficking education activities in an effort to get other campuses to form their own groups.

Committee and Conference Reports

- Outcome of April 24 Des Moines training Freedom in Action Human Trafficking Conference (Fopma and Reding) Reding reported that the seminar was very successful and the speakers did an outstanding job. 125 attended with 30 on a waiting list for the training. Belitsos praised the Des Moines conference and will write up the outcome for a Network blog post.
- Outcome of April 25th meeting of the Research, Evaluation and Best Practice Standards Committee (Mahder and Reding) All NAHT Board members received the minutes. Reding is continuing to identify anti-trafficking groups statewide to interview for the project, and asked members to refer groups to them. Reding has contacted O'Meara for contacts in the southern Iowa area. Belitsos suggested the committee contact the programs listed in the resource section of the NAHT website.
- Status of the Legislative Advisory Council (O'Keefe and Cox) No progress to report.
- Other Recent human trafficking arrests in Dubuque Wright said there is no new information that she can share about the two human trafficking arrests at the two massage parlors in Dubuque, except that there are more arrests to come. Wright met with one victim face-to-face on Tuesday after she was arrested. Wright expressed that the networking and trainings of stakeholders is helping to improve services for victims of human trafficking. Wright expects to talk to more victims later.

Upcoming Meeting Reminder (See 2017 Meeting Dates, attached)

Next Executive Committee meeting is Tuesday, May 30, 2:30-4:00 (conference call date change due to Memorial Day). Belitsos reported the agenda will be sent to everyone on the NAHT Board and that all are welcome to participate.

Next Board of Directors meeting is Monday, July 10, 2:30-4:00. (The June 12 Board meeting is cancelled.) Belitsos has invited someone to give an update on labor trafficking in Iowa at the July Board meeting. Wright will give an update on Dubuque human trafficking arrests. Belitsos will be in touch on the hotel/motel training conference call.

Meeting adjourned at 4:07