

**Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking and Slavery (NAHT)  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, January 17, 2018, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Face-to-Face Board meeting and no conference call  
Iowa State Capitol, Senate Room 116**

- Present:** George Belitsos (Chair), Liz Cox (Vice Chair), Sr Shirley Fineran, Joy Fopma, Taylor Houston, Brynne Howard, Jennie Kerger, Liz Quinn (Fitzgerald Proxy), Shirlee Reding, Bernadette Rixner, Erin Schneider, Maggie Tinsman (Secretary), Suzanne Wright
- Excused:** Jan Beran (Treasurer), Teresa Davidson, Stephen O'Meara, Alissa Stoehr
- Guests:** Alyce Egan, Braking Traffik; David Lorenzen, Chief, MVE IA DOT Truckers Against Trafficking; Roxanne Ryan, Commissioner, Department of Public Safety Office to Combat Human Trafficking; Celine Villongco, Human Trafficking Coordinator, Office of the Iowa Attorney General Crime Victim Assistance Division
- In audience:** Del and Georgia Bluhm (Rotary), Kathryn Bly, Brenda Brown, Sara Brown (YSS TAHT), Elizabeth Carman (Beza Threads), Sandy Chandonia, Priscilla Colon, Patricia Conlan, Megan Cox, Lauren Gildersleeve (Garden Gate Ranch), Yolanda Harden (YSS TAHT), Pat Harmeyer (IA DOT), Chuck Hurley (Family Leader), Lynn Keller (Newton Says No to Human Trafficking), Amber Lawrence (YSS TAHT), Brenda Long, Paula McClintic, Cherice McNair, Vanessa McNeal, Lauryn Muzny (Children's Justice IA Courts), Linda Pierce (Newton Says No to Human Trafficking), Kelly Saul (Braking Traffik), Kevin Schneider (Polk Co), Shannon Schott (YSS TAHT), Steffani Simbric (IA LE Academy), Emily Whitehead, Kevin Winker (IA DPS),

**Taking Minutes:** Margaret Epplin

**Call to Order and Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Belitsos. Roll call was taken. Guests and Board members introduced themselves.

**Review today's agenda. Any changes? (all)**

There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

Wright announced that their upcoming event in Dubuque, I Am Still Here, is sold out. Villongco is speaking at event.

**Review outcome of today's Governor's proclamation signing. Outstanding Anti-Trafficking Service Awardees Local City Council & Board of Supervisor Proclamations**

Belitsos noted that this is the second year Iowa has proclaimed January as Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention month and asked for any suggestions for future awards and proclamations. Tinsman felt the proclamation signing was excellent, the honorees were excellent, and the self-introductions while waiting for the Governor were very helpful. There were nearly 100 in attendance.

Rixner noted that award nominations should be done earlier so that the full NAHT Board may approve the award rather than just the Executive Committee. Belitsos noted that it is difficult to get on the Governor's schedule more than 2 weeks ahead. Belitsos hopes that the proclamation signing will be held in the Capitol Rotunda next year and hopes the event is even larger next year. The Board expressed appreciation that the Governor spent 45 minutes with the proclamation signing and award presentations.

Board members and audience members reported on local proclamation signings in their areas as follows:

- Tinsman: Bettendorf, Davenport, Scott County Board of Supervisors, Rock Island City Council
- Wright: City of Dubuque, Dubuque County Supervisors
- Reding: Mayor of Des Moines signed proclamation which Reding was instructed to pick up at the Mayor's office

Rixner: Monona County, Woodbury County, Sioux City, Union County SD, Dakota County NE, Plymouth County, LeMars

Quinn: City of Ames, Story County Board of Supervisors

Saul (Guest, Braking Traffik): Clinton

Egan (Guest, Braking Traffik): DeWitt County

Keller (Guest, Newton Says No to Human Trafficking) reported that Newton passed the third reading of massage business ordinance, and the mayor will also sign a proclamation. Newton used the Johnston ordinance as a guide. Belitsos said Polaris has released a quiz about the identification of human trafficking. One question points out that nationwide over 9,000 illicit massage businesses are involved in sex trafficking and prostitution.

Belitsos requested that everyone take sample proclamations for signing to cities, counties, university student government leaders, etc. Rixner suggested that the proclamation also be taken to Native American tribal leaders.

### **Progress report from the Attorney General's Division of Victim Services (Villongco)**

Villongco introduced herself and explained that the Division of Victim Services provides services and assistance to victims of all violent crimes, including human trafficking. The Division administers human trafficking programs that directly benefit victims of crime, including those that assist victims with the financial burden resulting from injuries of crime, that assist local crime victim service programs, and that assist the criminal justice system in holding offenders responsible for the effects of their crimes.

Villongco reported that registration is now open for the Iowa Human Trafficking Summit (<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/iowa-statewide-human-trafficking-summit-registration-41253562516>). This Summit is sponsored by the Iowa Attorney General's Crime Victim Assistance Division and the Iowa Department of Public Safety Office to Combat Human Trafficking. The Summit will be held April 18 and 19 at the Prairie Meadows Events Center. The cost is \$30 and a limited number of scholarships are available; contact Villongco.

CEUs will be offered for social workers and nurses, and CLEs for prosecutors and attorneys.

The Summit will have workshop sessions for victim advocates, law enforcement, medical professionals, and prosecutors.

A human trafficking survivor from DC will speak in the opening session.

The victim services track will include a panel on LGBTQ survivors, sessions on collaboration with law enforcement without exploitation, how victim services agencies can serve survivors while protecting their dignity, and survivors speaking about their personal experiences.

The prosecutors track will include training by the Division of Human Trafficking on interviewing survivors without coercion. The medical track will include a session by a team from Massachusetts General Hospital trained to identify human trafficking victims.

The Summit is attempting to promote cooperation between victim services, law enforcement, and health care, and to create a continuum of care in the community.

Rixner noted that smaller communities with few law enforcement personnel are often unable to send a member of law enforcement to the Summit for a full day and asked if any outreach is available to them rather than going to the Summit. Villongco said that, if asked, she will personally go out and train law enforcement in smaller communities on identification of human trafficking, survivor services, building a case against perpetrators, etc.

Tinsman asked about the human trafficking needs assessment recently released by the Attorney General's Office. Villongco explained that the agency which compiled the needs assessment spoke to service providers, police, and victims to find out if Iowa is providing services to meet victim needs. Belitsos reported that the report is 180 pages long. Belitsos felt that the section which reported on interviews with 16 survivors was invaluable. Belitsos has posted a link to the entire report on the NAHT website and his human trafficking blog post.

Wright encouraged all to read the whole report. The charts are wonderful. The report contains very compelling information that will be very useful in future trainings.

Houston has been scanning the report for more detail on where the needs assessors got the data. Villongco said that the exact location in Iowa is not specified, only a general area. Houston asked what action steps the state will take. Villongco said that she is tailoring her trainings to reach the areas that have the largest gaps in services which were exposed by the needs assessment. Villongco reiterated that she is available to provide human trafficking trainings to any small groups, including law enforcement departments.

Belitsos reported that the NAHT legislative agenda includes advocating for restoration of funding for the Victim Services Division of the Iowa Attorney General's Office which was cut 26% or about \$1.7 million. Tinsman asked Villongco for the exact amount of the cut in funding, and Villongco will send Tinsman the exact amount.

**Progress report from Department of Public Safety Office to Combat Human Trafficking (Commissioner Ryan)**

DPS Commissioner Ryan reported that it is good to hear the information shared by anti-human trafficking advocates at today's NAHT Board meeting. Ryan expressed appreciation that non-governmental agencies such as NAHT are raising public awareness of human trafficking and are supporting victim services which are essential to the successful investigations of human trafficking by state agencies. Legal investigations require victims to be on board and willing to testify. These investigations are very complex and sometimes take one to two years to complete a case. Non-governmental agencies working with these victims help victims stay on board to complete the case.

Ryan noted that long-term housing is one of the biggest issues for victims who are working with state investigators as they build a case. Sometimes the victim does not want to remain in their own area and needs housing in another part of Iowa to feel safe. Ryan also noted that some areas of the state have lots of survivor resources while others have very limited resources.

Ryan reported that DPS has had a good response to training opportunities for law enforcement. Some trainings for DCI agents have included cutting edge methods of interviewing trauma victims and interrogating perpetrators who can be skilled liars. The more DPS learns about how traffickers operate, the more effective DPS can be in investigating trafficking cases.

DPS is reaching out to service providers to identify how law enforcement can support survivors as they go through the legal process. Ryan encourages local non-profit agencies to broaden the awareness of trafficking and to target places in the community where trafficking takes place such as hotels and massage businesses.

Ryan reported that DPS is also focusing on labor trafficking. Ryan reported that there are some open cases of labor and human trafficking that have not yet been reported in the media.

Ryan reported the good news that, in October 2017, Marc Krickbaum, was sworn in as the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Iowa. Krickbaum oversees about 50 employees, including 20 attorneys, whose jurisdiction covers 47 counties in Iowa, including Polk, Johnson, Scott and Story. Krickbaum had previously worked in the southern district on drug trafficking and human trafficking. After a one-year stint in Chicago, he has fortunately returned to Iowa with a promotion to US attorney with much experience, including human trafficking.

Ryan noted that a federal response is more effective for minors as there are more resources at the federal level to pursue minors who are being trafficked. Krickbaum is very effective working with state and local law enforcement officials.

Ryan reported that local agencies often contact the Iowa DCI for complex cases. Even though the state DCI doesn't have original jurisdiction, they go out to help with the local investigations. Because Iowa homicides were up in 2017, DCI is struggling to find the resources to provide as much human trafficking assistance as possible.

Ryan noted that in the next 10 years, about 40% of law enforcement officers will retire. DPS is encouraging more people to choose careers in law enforcement. The younger members of law enforcement have lots of energy and are anxious to learn. They are very tech savvy, which is helpful in human trafficking cases.

Belitsos asked if DPS is replacing the human trafficking analyst. Ryan said that DPS is not able to hire for that position now. However, the previous human trafficking analyst helped other analysts get a better understanding of human trafficking, and now they are better able to cover the human trafficking cases.

Belitsos reported that the NAHT legislative agenda includes advocating for restoration of \$300,000 to fund the Office to Combat Human Trafficking. Belitsos asked if our advocacy for the restoration of these Office to Combat Trafficking funds is adequate and welcome. Ryan stated that \$200,000 would be enough but the office would make good use of a larger amount.

Fineran asked if there were trainings on how to build a case against families who are trafficking. Fineran knows of a case where the youth was trafficked by parents and would not give a statement about the parents. Ryan said techniques of interrogation are not significantly different when interviewing the youth or parents. The victims will not give meaningful information if they do not feel safe. They don't know whom to trust nor where to go. Non-governmental services for these child victims are essential and services in Iowa are inadequate.

Tinsman questioned if other states have had successful prosecutions without victim testimony. The answer was no.

### **Plans for April 18 & 19 Human Trafficking Summit**

This was covered in Villongco's report earlier in the meeting.

### **Presentation by DOT and Truckers Against Trafficking (MVE Chief Lorenzen)**

Lorenzen is the Chief of Motor Vehicle Enforcement with the Iowa DOT and has spent 40 years in law enforcement. He is on the national board of Truckers Against Trafficking and serves on a National Safety Transportation panel which reviews grants for anti-trafficking efforts.

Lorenzen reported that there are 3.5 million truck drivers traversing our nation. Truckers against Trafficking is educating these truckers to become resources against human trafficking. When Iowa licenses a trucker, Iowa distributes information on identifying human trafficking and gives the trucker a Truckers Against Trafficking card with Hotline contact information. Iowa Truckers Against Trafficking posts human trafficking materials in all rest areas. Iowa has been a leader and 35 states use Iowa's model when developing their Truckers Against Trafficking projects.

The Iowa Truckers Against Trafficking organization has a Freedom Trailer with a pictorial display of human trafficking. Iowa Truckers Against Trafficking brought this trailer to the Walcott Truck Stop during several of their events. Last year, the Freedom Trailer was staffed by Truckers Against Trafficking during Heroes Day at the Iowa State Fair and over 1,600 people visited. In 2018, the Freedom Truck will be staffed the first two days of the Iowa state fair.

The Iowa Truckers Against Trafficking chapter has hosted 3 trainings in Des Moines area and 1 in the tri-state area (IA NE SD) to inform truckers on identification of human trafficking. Survivors share their experiences at these trainings. Survivor speakers have included Britney from Story County, Iowa, and Beth from the Well House in Alabama.

Trucking companies in Iowa are cooperating with Truckers Against Trafficking to train their drivers. Lorenzen shared an example of a truck driver, trained in identifying trafficking, who recognized and reported trafficking in a truck stop in Clive, Iowa.

Truck stops/plazas also distribute Trucker Against Trafficking materials. 17 Iowa travel plazas, including Flying J plazas, have hosted Truckers Against Trafficking events to train drivers and trucking plaza employees on identification and reporting of human trafficking. Truckers Against Trafficking program is now working with the bus and motor coach industry to inform drivers about human trafficking and train them on reporting.

Iowa Truckers Against Trafficking received a grant to work with Villongco's office on human trafficking initiatives. This grant initiative includes using all types of social media—internet, Snapchat, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc.—to reach victims of human trafficking and ask “Are you safe?” These outlets provide victims with links to victim services and also include messages from survivors. One of these powerful emotional messages comes from a survivor in Alabama who had been trafficked in every state in the US.

Belitsos thanked Lorenzen and stated how proud he was of Iowa Truckers Against Trafficking and their role in educating truckers, and that the Iowa program is used as a model in 35 states.

Rixner asked if there is a way to find out where and when Truckers Against Trafficking are in holding events so that NAHT Board members can promote the events. Lorenzen stated that Belitsos had requested this information several months ago, and Lorenzen will send it soon.

**Discuss priorities for 2018 legislative session and report from the Legislative Advocacy Committee. Afternoon visits with legislators (Cox and Tinsman)**

Tinsman read each of the eight NAHT legislative priorities and asked all present to talk to legislators this afternoon about NAHT legislative priorities, with the exception of #2. #2 asks for a change in the Rape Shield Law, and Tinsman will ask the Supreme Court to include human trafficking in the Rape Shield Law later in the year.

Tinsman reported the NAHT Board supports an expansion of Erin's Law to include prevention and education for teachers. An expansion of Erin's Law, HF 161, introduced by Heartsill, passed the House and is still alive in the Iowa Senate. 31 states have now passed Erin's Law, including 5 in the past year.

**Brief updates from direct service providers (Human Trafficking VOCA grantees)**

Audience members introduced themselves. Names of these guests are listed at the beginning of these minutes. Two of the survivor support agencies gave brief updates.

**Executive Committee meeting report and approval of Consent Agenda**

- Motion to approve December 11 meeting minutes of the NAHT Board of Directors
- Motion to approve expenditure of up to \$500 for a Network display scroll
- Motion to re-send solicitation letter to the NAHT Board requesting an annual donation
- Motion to nominate the following for NAHT Outstanding Anti-Trafficking Service Awards:
  - Kim Reynolds - Governor and honorary member NAHT Board
  - Teens Against Human Trafficking
  - Hotels/Motels completing H.T. Employee training
  - Kellie Markey, founder and director of Dorothy's House
  - Mike Ferjak - New chair of Central Iowa Service NAHT
  - Greg Heartsill- Iowa state legislator
- Motion to approve the Treasurer's report. As of December 28, the NAHT recorded \$1,782.06 in the savings account and \$2,468.17 in the checking account.

The Executive Committee **made a committee motion** to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion **carried unanimously**.

Rixner noted that the full NAHT Board should vote on the award winners prior to giving out the award. Belitsos agreed and said that he would develop a nomination form that could be filled out any time in the year.

**Update from Research, Evaluation and Best Practice Standards committee (Houston, Reding, and Stoehr)**

Houston reported on his research. All interviews have been conducted. The data is now being coded and the research team is looking for themes. Analysis should be completed before the Spring Semester begins January 29. The report should be completed and distributed in the next month or two.

Houston reported that the AG's recently released human trafficking needs assessment does not duplicate his research. He had more specific qualitative findings and talked to specific people who are providing services for survivors. The AG report was based mostly on interviews with survivors to identify gaps in survivor needs. Houston will be able to use the AG's report to help with his research.

Stoehr will also begin to do research at Iowa State University, primarily with victims of human trafficking.

Houston reported that this subcommittee meeting will hold a meeting soon to talk about new ideas.

### **Update from Human Trafficking Provider Collaboration (Davidson, Fopma, Fineran, and Wright)**

Fopma shared that this collaboration will hold its quarterly meeting on January 23 at 9 a.m. at the Ultimate Journey headquarters in Des Moines. All victim service providers are invited to these meetings; please RSVP. The objective of the collaboration is to be resources for each other on trauma informed care, strength-based approach, and self-care. The Collaboration has a Facebook page to share information about trainings.

### **Other**

Chuck Hurley, a guest and Vice President and Chief Counsel of Family Leader, spoke up. He said that the proclamation signing with the governor, including the awards ceremony, was the best human trafficking event he has ever seen. Hurley asked all present to be persistent and take the anti-human trafficking message and NAHT legislative priorities to legislators this afternoon. Hurley shared that, in his opinion, the time is right in the legislature to make progress on anti-human trafficking legislation.

Rixner asked how to get in touch with legislators this afternoon. Belitsos explained that anyone wanting to speak with a legislator, while the legislator is in session, fills out a request at the door to the Iowa House or Senate requesting time with a specific legislator. The request is taken to the legislator who then comes out of the chamber to talk with the requesting citizen.

Lauryn Muzny a guest, expressed desire to join the NAHT Board of Directors. Belitsos said that this will be placed on the NAHT Executive Committee Agenda after she receives permission from her Children's Justice supervisor to serve on the NAHT Board. Muzny has moved to Iowa from California where she worked as a Trafficking Victim Advocate.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

The next NAHT Executive Committee meeting will be a conference call on Monday, January 29, 2:30-4:00.

The next NAHT Board of Directors meeting will be a conference call on Monday, February 19, 2:30-4:00.