

Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking and Slavery (NAHT)
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 19, 2018, 2:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Conference Call 641-715-3650 Code: 874004#

Present: George Belitsos (Chair), Jan Beran (Treasurer), Patricia Conlan proxy for Wright, Liz Cox (Vice Chair) leaving at 3, Alyse Egan joining at 3, Taylor Houston, Jennie Kerger, Stephen O'Meara, Bernadette Rixner, Maggie Tinsman (Secretary)

Excused: Sr Shirley Fineran, Paul Fitzgerald, Joy Fopma, Brynne Howard (resigned), Shirlee Reding, Suzanne Wright

Absent: Teresa Davidson, Erin Schneider, Alissa Stoehr

Guest: Katrina Carter, University of Iowa School of Social Work graduate student and employee of IA Dept of Corrections

Taking Minutes: Margaret Eplin

Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Chair Belitsos. Roll call was taken. Alyse Egan, a new Board member and new supervisor of Braking Traffik, will join the meeting at 3 and will introduce herself at that time.

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

Tinsman would like to add discussion about federal human trafficking legislation. This item will be added to the Legislative Advisory Council report.

Belitsos reported that Pat Harmeyer, Iowa DOT and Truckers Against Trafficking, was scheduled to be a guest speaker but is in the hospital and will not be on the call today.

Katrina Carter introduced herself. Carter has worked with the IA Dept of Corrections for over 18 years and is currently also a full-time student in the University of Iowa School of Social Work. Two classes Carter has taken at the University of Iowa sparked her interest in learning as much as she can about human trafficking. Belitsos thanked her for attending.

Executive Committee meeting report and approval of Consent Agenda:

- Motion to approve February 19 meeting minutes of the NAHT Board of Directors
Tinsman noted that the last name of Senator Rita Hart, was incorrectly spelled "Heart" on page 2, item g, of the February minutes.
- Motion to approve the treasurer's report. As of March 4, NAHT recorded \$1,782.00 in the savings account and \$1,234.40 in checking.

Tinsman **made a motion, seconded** by Cox, to approve the February 19 NAHT Consent Agenda. **Motion carried.**

Beran alerted the Board that the checking account is now down to \$319 with \$1,782 in savings. Belitsos explained that there is a need for fundraising, but the Fundraising Committee doesn't have a Chair. Belitsos encouraged Board members to donate, either online through PayPal or by check which can be sent to Belitsos or Beran.

Report of the Legislative Advisory Council and the Legislative Advocacy Committee. Review top three legislative priorities: (1) Restoration of state funding for the Office to Combat Human trafficking, (2)

Creation of a workgroup to examine Mandatory Reporter Training, (3) legislation to expand and improve anti-trafficking laws, and status of bills endorsed by the NAHT (Cox and Tinsman)

- Update on SF2300 for a study group on Mandatory Reporter Training improvements including the addition of sex trafficking.

Last week, Belitsos sent out 2 calls-for-action for advocates to contact legislators to support SF 2300 and SF 2371.

Belitsos thanked Cox and Tinsman for their work advocating for the legislative priorities of NAHT and thanked all members for their calls and emails to legislators. Cox, Tinsman, and Butler have been a tag-team all week, making calls, sending emails, and doing anything possible to advance the bill to create a workgroup to examine Mandatory Reporter Training. This bill has been named Senate Study Bill 3127 (SSB 3127) and House Study Bill 665 (HSB 665). The bill passed through the Senate with unanimous support, but stalled in the House and did not make it through the second funnel. However, Cox didn't know why Fry didn't bring the bill forward in the House. Heartsill's clerk messaged Cox earlier in the day that the bill would not come forward, as all the time and emphasis was on advancing the heartbeat bill (to prohibit abortion after detection of a fetal heartbeat).

Cox explained that she worked hard to advance the reform of mandatory reporting to see where there was support for passage and was disappointed that the bill did not make it through the second funnel. However, there is still hope for the bill as Representative Heaton has offered to attach the bill to the appropriations bill.

Cox has a good working relationship with Representative Hagenow, Leader of the House, whose district overlaps with the West Des Moines School District. Cox spoke with him and reminded him about a previous conversation about the Ombudsman report which showed that, due to the starvation deaths of two students, improvement was needed with Mandatory Reporter Training. Cox suggested that this would be a good time to make a change to Mandatory Reporter Training, and Hagenow agreed that a work group is a benign way to go about this. Hagenow agreed to contact Fry for feedback. Cox will contact Hagenow again this week to learn of the results of Hagenow's conversation with Fry. Cox also noted that all of us need to make sure that Heaton adds this on the Appropriations Bill. Tinsman reported that Heaton had called her, too, and confirmed that he will add this bill to the Appropriations Bill.

- Update on SESTA FOSTA federal legislation act which amends the Communications Decency Act (CDA) to stop human trafficking of children.

Tinsman reported there has been some activity on the federal level to stop human trafficking. The US House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed H.R. 1865, sponsored by Wagner of Missouri. This bill is called "Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act of 2017" (FOSTA) and expresses "the sense of Congress that section 230 of the Communications Act of 1934 was not intended to provide legal protection to websites that unlawfully promote and facilitate prostitution and websites that facilitate traffickers in advertising the sale of unlawful sex acts with sex trafficking victims." The bill allows for increased penalties and fines for using the internet for sex trafficking.

The US Senate is scheduled to take up the bill this week, S 1693 sponsored by Senator Portman of Ohio and called the "Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act of 2017 (SESTA)." The Senate bill specifically states that "communications decency provisions protecting providers from liability for the private blocking or screening of offensive material shall not be construed to impair or limit civil action or criminal prosecution under state or federal criminal or civil laws relating to sex trafficking of children or sex trafficking by force, fraud, or coercion."

O'Meara warned that sometimes there are unintended negative consequences from federal legislation. To avoid negative consequences, law enforcement should also have input as their experience allows them to anticipate results. Examples of unintended negative consequence are that legislation sometimes forces human trafficking to the dark web which is difficult to monitor or domestic companies go out of country to Mexico

or Canada. Iowa Senators Ernst and Grassley should be made aware of the possibility of negative consequences of legislation. Belitsos will talk to Ernst.

Rixner reported that last week, two amendments were introduced which would kill the bill. Rixner will forward the email that explains the amendments to Belitsos; Belitsos will forward to the Board. NAHT Board members were asked to call Iowa Senators Ernst and Grassley to support this bill without the amendments.

- Stop, Observe, Ask, and Respond (SOAR) to Health and Wellness Training pilot program to address human trafficking in the health care system. US House Bill HR 767, sponsored by Representative Cohen of Tennessee.

Belitsos reported that this bill requires training on human trafficking for medical personnel and has passed through the House. It has been received in the Senate and read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

- Update on Iowa SF 2371, (successor to SF 2254) for increased penalties for the trafficking of persons under the age of 18 to a Class B felony.

Belitsos reported that this bill didn't come forward in the Iowa House; however, it passed unanimously in the Iowa Senate. Tinsman again stated that the fetal heartbeat bill was given most of the time in the House. Tinsman also reported Heaton told her that when the Senate sends a bill late in the session to the House, there is no time for discussion and passage. Belitsos reported a brief conversation with Representative Fry when Fry told Belitsos there was no time for the House to learn about the bill and pass it. Cox reported that when Representative Dix recently resigned, Representative Segebart quickly placed priority on passing this anti human trafficking bill in 2019. Tinsman and Cox asked NAHT Board members to contact their own representatives and senators to push for passage in the 2019 session. Rixner asked NAHT Board members to add labor trafficking to the Network 2019 Legislative Agenda.

Beran said she got an email from Representative Nunn telling Beran he shares the NAHT mission to stop human trafficking. Beran said she would email him how disappointed the NAHT Board is that this bill did not advance out of committee.

- Update on appropriations bill to increase DPS for office to Combat Trafficking from \$75,000(Gov. rec) to \$150,000.

Tinsman reported that appropriations bills have yet to be drafted and that the NAHT will continue to urge passage of \$150,000 for DPS.

Report on H.T. training and programming by the IA Department of Transportation and DOT coordination and support of Truckers Against Trafficking (Pat Harmeyer)

Harmeyer was ill and unable to present.

Report of the Research, Evaluation & Best Practice Standards Committee. (Houston and Reding)

Houston reported that he has spent most of March writing up results on his research on those providing effective human trafficking victims services statewide. A rough draft will be submitted the first week in April. Houston will set up a Committee meeting a week after sharing the rough draft with the Committee to get feedback from the Committee. The final report is due mid-April. Houston is presenting the findings of his research at Prevent Child Abuse Conference in April and has a couple of other human trafficking presentations scheduled in April and early May.

Belitsos noted that the next NAHT Board meeting is a face-to-face meeting Wednesday, April 18 (THIS HAS BEEN CHANGED TO THURSDAY, APRIL 19, see below) at the Human Trafficking Summit at Prairie Meadows and asked Houston if he wants to be on the Agenda to present his research results at that meeting. Houston agreed to share the rough draft, the main findings, and recommendations of the victim service providers.

As an aside, Tinsman asked when the agenda for the Summit will be available and if NAHT is making any presentations. Belitsos reported that he talked to Villongco and the agenda is still not available, though 200 people have already registered. Belitsos reported that all the workshops have been arranged but none are by NAHT. NAHT will have a booth or table at the Summit and will have a brochure in the Summit packet. Belitsos asked NAHT Board members bring information to the Summit that can be put out at the NAHT table or booth.

Report of the Survivor Services Collaboration (Fopma, Fineran, Davidson)

Fopma was not present, but a written report was sent to all Board members.

Report from the Central Iowa, Cedar Rapids, Waterloo, and Iowa City Hotel/Motel Employee Training Projects. Startup plans in eastern and western Iowa. (Reding, Davidson, O'Meara)

O'Meara reported that last week's Des Moines training was good. Normally these are 3-hour trainings, but scheduling issues at the Des Moines Plymouth church only allowed for 2.5 hours. At the training, Reding briefly addressed issues that have come up in Des Moines, so that there would be no confusion or misunderstanding about changes to the program. Attendance was down: 35 registered, 23 new trainees showed up. Additionally, 5 more in attendance had completed the first training on hotel/motels and they wanted to get the training again. Some of these second-time attendees agreed to serve as mentors for new trainers which shows continued interest.

O'Meara reported that the Siouxland Coalition in Western Iowa is considering holding a training in the fall. 25 volunteers are needed to make the training meaningful. Rixner confirmed that Siouxland will go forward with a training in the Fall.

O'Meara reported a couple of happenings in Southwest Iowa. The SW Coalition on Human Trafficking has formed a board or steering committee and is holding a public visioning meeting at a hotel. This Coalition has indicated interest in collaboration with NAHT, and they wish to be affiliated with both Iowa and Nebraska Networks.

O'Meara also reported that another group, affiliated with an Omaha group which has affiliation with a successful national group, has identified a location in SW Iowa outside Council Bluffs to bring a well-recognized treatment opportunity for survivors of sex trafficking. This treatment center would serve Omaha and Sioux City.

Alyse Egan introduced herself as a new NAHT Board member. Egan was a survivor advocate before being promoted to supervisor at Braking Traffik. Egan is a strong supporter of stopping human trafficking and is working to move Braking Traffik ahead.

Egan explained that Braking Traffik is now a part of Family Resources. The Braking Traffik website is no longer in use, and Braking Traffik is listed under "Survivor Services" on the Family Resources website. Egan will send Belitsos steps on how to access information on Braking Traffik through the Family Resources website, and Belitsos will forward the information to the entire NAHT Board.

Egan reported on hotel/motel training efforts in Eastern Iowa. Egan said that Braking Traffik will have an Outreach Advocate in attendance at the hotel/motel Franciscan training and will consider participating in the hotel/motel training in Clinton. Invitations to attend the trainings have been extended to all Braking Traffik volunteers. Belitsos has been urging Braking Traffik to join forces with the Franciscan sisters to carry out this training.

O'Meara stated that Muscatine also needs to hold a hotel/motel training. O'Meara reported on the expansion of hotel/motel trainings locally, state, and nationwide.

Belitsos reported that NAHT is giving plaques for display in the lobbies of hotels that have completed training. 30 plaques have been distributed to hotels in the Central Iowa area. Only 5 plaques have been given out in the Cedar Rapids area. Plaques will be prepared for any hotels that complete training of at least half of their employees, although exceptions can be made for large hotels.

Belitsos encouraged members to use the awarding of a plaque as a photo opportunity and a chance to get media coverage about the human trafficking hotel/motel training project. The hotels are also listed on the website unless they opt out of having their hotel name listed.

Belitsos said he submitted information on the Iowa hotel/motel training to Rotary International. Subsequently, this information was included in the Rotary Action Group Newsletter and distributed throughout the world. O'Meara said he views Rotary as THE service club working the most on human trafficking and is currently forming a coalition with his Nebraska regional Rotary to work on human trafficking projects. O'Meara will be holding a conference call with Nebraska Rotary members about possible collaborations on human trafficking.

Tinsman said that she supports Belitsos collaborating with her Iowa Rotary district (6000).

Updates on efforts to adopt city massage ordinances in Newton (passed), Marshalltown (introduced but on hold), Altoona, Sioux City (introduced but on hold), Ames, other cities? (all)

Rixner reported that legitimate massage therapists showed up at the Sioux City City Council meeting in opposition to massage ordinance. The massage therapists objected to the proposed ordinance restricted late night hours and increased required insurance. The therapists also believe that if illicit massage businesses are locally restricted through a massage ordinance, they will simply move to another city or another business that isn't regulated, such reflexology. Rixner emailed the massage therapists in attendance at the City Council meeting and will meet with them soon. Rixner asked if anyone knows how ordinances have been passed in other places.

Belitsos reported that Newton passed its massage ordinance last month.

Belitsos also reported that Polaris published a report with ideas on how to pass a massage ordinance; e.g., work with local massage therapists, research landlords of massage parlors and talk to the landlords. Polaris reports that there are 9,000 massage businesses nationwide that are involved in sex trafficking.

Belitsos asked Kerger if CISON is working on the passing of a massage ordinance in Des Moines. Kerger reported that they are working on educating about human trafficking before trying to pass an ordinance. Belitsos encouraged consulting legitimate massage therapists prior to approaching city councils. We are trying to save their reputation and credibility by stopping the illicit massage parlors who are a front for sex trafficking.

Kerger reported that two legitimate massage therapists attended today's CISON meeting, and that much education needs to be done. When there is a consideration of a massage ordinance, Kerger recommended sending information to the local papers explaining the need for a massage ordinance, emphasizing that there are legitimate therapists, and explaining the differences between legitimate and illegitimate massage therapists.

Belitsos was asked to send the Board the Newton ordinance and any information on how they became the second city to pass such an ordinance.

Other

Patricia Conlan identified herself, stated that she was subbing for Wright, and said she had been on the call. Wright and Conlan will attend the hotel/motel employee training in Clinton this fall 2018.

Belitsos will send out a blog post summary of NAHT legislation activity for 2018.

Adjournment

The next meeting of the NAHT Board will be a face to face meeting on

Thursday, April 19, 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

at the Human Trafficking Summit at Prairie Meadows in Altoona. The date of the next meeting was changed from Wednesday, April 18, 4 to 5:30, by the Executive Committee.

The next Executive Committee Meeting is a conference call on March 26, 2:30-4:00.