

Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking and Slavery (NAHT)
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Monday, December 17th, 2018, 2:30 to 4:00 PM
Conference Call

Present: George Belitsos (Chair), Katie Kyker, Stephen Patrick O’Meara, Ruth Buckels, Alyse Hardin, Taylor Houston, Mike Tupper, Suzanne Wright, Elizabeth Quinn, Maggie Tinsman, Jan Beran (Treasurer), Shirlee Reding, Paul Fitzgerald, Teresa Davidson, Roxanne Riesberg, Liz Cox (Vice Chair)

Excused Absence: Jenny Krieger, Sister Fineran, Angela Davis

Absent: Joy Fopma

Taking Minutes: Chantzler Brooks (Technology Consultant)

Call to Order and Roll Call; Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 PM by Chair Belitsos. Roll Call was taken. Chair Belitsos asked new board member Roxanne Riesberg to introduce herself to the board at this time. She represents the Department of Human Services and oversees policy for child abuse reporting and assessment, which includes sex trafficking.

Review Today’s Agenda (All)

The Agenda was reviewed and no additions or changes were made.

Executive Committee Meeting Report and Approval of Consent Agenda

- Motion to approve minutes of November 19th meeting of Board of Directors.
- Motion to approve the Treasurer’s Report – as of December 1, \$105.01 in savings and \$833 in checking. A deposit of \$1741 in the checking account will soon be completed by PayPal. Facebook matching of donations on #GivingTuesday is unclear at this time.
- Motion to elect Jonathan Causey (Attorney), Tish L. Young (Chains Interrupted), and Stephanie Simbric (IA Law Enforcement Academy) to serve on Board of Directors.
- Motion to approve Jan Beran, Teresa Davidson, and Stephen O’Meara as emeritus board members.
- Motion to approve Joy Fopma, Vanessa McNeal, Teresa Davidson, Stephen O’Meara, and Chief David Lorenzen for an Outstanding Anti-Human Trafficking Service Award.

Executive Committee **motion to approve** Consent Agenda. Seconded by Tinsman. **Motion carried** unanimously. Chair Belitsos noted that the terms are ending today for Beran, Davidson, and O’Meara, and he thanked them for their volunteer leadership. Each has been a great asset and will be missed.

Progress Report from Legislative Advocacy Committee & Plans for January 17th Day on the Hill (Davis and Tinsman)

Tinsman requested that all board members arrive early (between 8:30 and 9:00 AM) on January 17th. Talking points will be sent to board members beforehand and copies will also be available the day of. Information will be provided on which legislators to talk to. Board members should ask their respective representatives and senators to support the mandatory reporting bill and other improvements in anti-trafficking law.

Tinsman stated that all board members received an example proclamation from Chair Belitsos on Sunday, December 16th for use in cities and counties. Tinsman requested that all board members contact their local governments to request that they adopt the proclamation.

The display table will be on the main floor opposite the cafeteria. The governor's proclamation will be at eleven. Chair Belitsos stated that the governor will also present the five service awards. The board meeting may be moved to noon to allow everyone time to eat lunch. The tentative room for the board meeting is State Capitol Building Room 116. Chair Belitsos stated that the room cannot be confirmed until January.

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

Houston stated that the committee had not convened since the previous board meeting. The committee is currently looking into several different sources for data on trafficking arrests and prosecution. The committee may be able to apply for additional grant money for its research.

Houston stated that the committee is waiting till January to send out letters to state agencies requesting information due to the holidays.

Houston travelled to Des Moines to meet with Carly Ross and discuss the \$550,000 three year grant to fight refugee and immigrant trafficking. Ross had not heard back yet from the Department of Justice. Ross is travelling to DC this month.

Houston stated that the committee will try to focus more on labor trafficking due to the Network's 2019 focus on labor trafficking.

Houston stated that Tinsman previously asked about trafficking laws in California. Tinsman reported that she had found six laws passed and signed by the governor.

Presentation on Teens Against Human Trafficking (Buckels)

Belitsos Introduced Buckels and mentioned that Teens Against Human Trafficking are cosponsors with the Network for the January 17th Day on the Hill. One of the TAHT youth will speak at the proclamation signing.

Buckels reported that her TAHT statewide program has educated several thousand students, teachers, and parents since July. TAHT is receiving many phone calls back from schools that have set up trafficking prevention policies. Schools are interested in what information needs to be gathered to present a case to child protective services.

Buckels stated that as TAHT has educated and discussed sex trafficking with students a number of them have come forward with reports they are currently being or have been abused/trafficked. This totaled to 435 children and most have been reported to DHS for investigation.

Buckels stated that the tactics utilized by traffickers have changed considerably in the past decade. Social media in particular has changed how victims are found, groomed, and exploited. She described the changes, and several board members commented on how valuable this information is to them.

Beran asked Buckels if there is an avenue to reach homeschooled children with this information in light of the lack of DHS or school oversight of them. Buckels responded that it is difficult to educate these children without more government oversight. AMP has included this on their 2019 legislative priorities.

Chair Belitsos asked Tinsman whether her committee has discussed legislation related to homeschooled children. Tinsman responded that they had not.

Buckels reported that school policies in regard to clubs are making it difficult for TAHT to implement school-based clubs that engage the youth. A lack of funding for TAHT clubs is also the primary issue.

Reding stated that the Train the Trainers manual may need to be updated to account for the evolving nature of grooming and trafficking.

Buckels stated that traffickers are now also posing as “sugar daddies/mommies” to lure in college students and that this is a growing issue. Buckels was asked to list some of the schools TAHT has educated, and Buckels read a long list of schools located in 49 or Iowa’s 99 counties.

Update on Network Rescue Sticker Project (Belitsos and Houston)

Chair Belitsos stated that he received considerable Board feedback on the stickers’ design and implemented changes. One notable change is that the word “rescue” was removed from the stickers as victims do not like the word.

2500 stickers are being produced. Houston’s college student group will help to distribute them in January. Chair Belitsos stated that the Network will be asking regional groups and coalitions around the state how many they would like and where they plan to place them. All will be asked to get permissions to secure the stickers.

Houston stated that the youth group will be having a few meetings before January 17th and that the students could pick up their stickers at the Day on the Hill. Several will be attending. In Our Backyard will be putting up their Freedom Stickers in convenience stores and the NAHT will cover transport centers, court houses, clinics, etc.

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

Fopma was not present, and therefore there was no reporting.

Presentation on Hospital Employee Human Trafficking Training and Awareness (Davidson)

Chair Belitsos asked Davidson to give a description of her new training position and also thanked her for her groundbreaking work.

Davidson stated that Mercy Medical Center created the anti-trafficking training position and that it currently functions on a part-time basis. Davidson is required to find her own funding, so she has to charge the people who receive her training. 22 hospitals across Iowa have requested training. Davidson is planning on doing more training in April.

Davidson stated that it can be risky to train medical professionals if they do not take the training seriously or do not implement it properly, as improper implementation can have serious consequences for the victims. Davidson emphasized that practitioners need to separate their patients from the traffickers before any questions can be asked.

Reding asked how much the training cost. Davidson responded that the training is \$30 a person and that the hospital is considering developing a module that could be sold to other hospitals for a flat rate.

Reports from Hotel/Motel Training Projects in Central Iowa, Western Iowa, Eastern Iowa, Cedar Rapids, Waterloo, and Iowa City (Reding, Davidson, O'Meara, and Rixner)

O'Meara stated that all initial Train the Trainers three-hour sessions have been completed. These took place in four regions of the state. The program from the Nebraska Coalition on Human Trafficking has continued to expand into parts of South Dakota and Florida. Hospitality locations that received the training over a year ago need to be contacted about renewal. The only parts of the state that still need to be trained are South and North central Iowa.

Wright stated that each of the newly trained Dubuque trainers has been given their three hotel assignments. There are 15 hotels signed up so far.

Cox stated that they were working with a group out of Toledo to research how traffickers use social media. Cox recommended inviting Representative Hartsill to join the Network's board.

Updates on Efforts to Adopt City Massage Ordinances

Several Board members gave updates from their committees.

- Newton (passed)
- Marshalltown (introduced but on hold)
- Altoona (passed)
- Clive (passed)
- West Des Moines (passed)

- Urbandale (passed)
- Pleasant Hill (passed)
- Sioux City (on hold)
- Cedar Rapids (passed according to Davidson)
- Marlon (passed)
- Iowa City (passed)
- Coralville (passed)
- Ames (council hearing scheduled for April 2019)
- Boone (passed)

Davidson described the successful process utilized by the Cedar Rapids city council. She stated that she runs a survivor support group in Cedar Rapids. The clients in the group were enthusiastic to speak with police and city council members on the issue and had a big part in changing their attitudes.

Several members requested a copy of the Cedar Rapids ordinance. Chair Belitsos stated that he would distribute it by email.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:03 PM by Chair Belitsos.

Next Board meeting on Thursday, January 17th, 12:00-1:30 PM at the State Capitol Building