

VICTIM SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD MEETING (VSAB)

January 26, 2023

Attendance: Wendy Ayala, Neda Bolourian, Larry Center, Brian Koosed, Kathryn Pontzer, Juanita Rogers Leah Schwartz, and Heather Thompson.

Members Absent: Ashley N. Mack, and Reem Sharaf, David Young

Ex-Officio Members: Ellen Alexander and Dolores Briceno.

Ex-Officio Members Absent:

Support Staff: Dr. Rafiah Prince and Maria Solis (Vicky)

Guest: Nazeefa Hossain

I. Additions to Agenda

No additions to Agenda

II. Roll Call & Virtual Meeting Procedures – Neda Bolourian

- The rules for a virtual Board meeting are as follows:

The chair will call the roll to establish a quorum.

Members need to identify themselves when they are talking.

Members may be asked to identify anyone who is present with them during the call.

The public may be asked to mute the call on their end to avoid interruptions.

The public may be muted by the chair.

Public bodies might wish to consider including any ground rules in the meeting notice.

III. Approval of Minutes from December 1, 2022, meeting.

The Minutes were approved.

IV. Annual Statewide Memorial Service for Crime Victims and Families – Dolores Briceno

- Dolores Briceno announced the event Montgomery County hosting the Annual Victim Memorial Service Sunday on April 23rd. The event starts at 3 pm.
- The Annual Victim Memorial Service is Funded by the Governor's office.
- The agenda of the event contains a speech from the States Attorney's office, poems, and photos.
- Tributes for the victims whose crimes were committed in Montgomery County.
- Live music for the event.
- Heather Thompson shared that she has participated in the past can be very emotional.
- Dr. Rafiah Prince suggested providing the information of the event to Trauma services clients.

V. Restorative Justice Presentation – Heather Thompson

- Presentation on Restorative Justice.
- Facilitators strive for restorative healing within the community.
- Safe space for people to be vulnerable and for victims to express their feelings.
- Restorative practices are not therapists, but they validate feelings, and listen attentively.
- Videos have been shared on how restorative justice empowers victims.
- Three examples of restorative practices: Restorative Inquiry/individual support, victim offender dialogue, and restorative circles.
- The Governor's office of crime prevention established a Bill regarding the Restorative Justice.

VI. Executive Subcommittee update - Kathryn, Neda, Brian

- Brian Koosed suggested to contact other committees and partners for collaboration.
- Victim Compensation Fund increase from \$2,500 to \$5,000.
- Meeting with Council member Andrew Friedson went well. Housing priorities were discussed

- Council member Andrew Friedson acknowledged the need an increase in funding for Bridge Housing.
- Analysis of data regarding Victim's cases.
- Board Members were recognized for attending meetings with Council Members.
- Council Member Dawn Luedtke expressed interest in housing priorities.
- Board Members will be reaching out to schedule meetings with Council Members Sidney Katz and Will Jawando.
- Board members awaiting to hear from Marc Erlich's office to set up a meeting.
- Board Members will be joining the meetings with council members Gabe Albornoz, Laurie-Anne Sayles, and Marilyn Balcombe

VII. Legislative Subcommittee Update– Kathryn, Neda, Rafiah Prince.

- Introducing Bills to both Senate and to the House Appropriation Committee.
- Propose a Bill that mandates a level of funding in the future for victim advocacy funding.
- The Bill will require to help support crime victim programs and guarantee funding.
- Dr. Prince will consult with Leslie Frey if the Bill would be accepted.
- The Bill to repeal spousal defense for sexual crime was submitted to the house hearing and introduced to senate but no hearing has been yet schedule.
- The Bill of child sex abuse was introduced to senate.
- Bill criminal procedure addresses states attorney decided not to prosecute that house introduced hearing Feb 2 letter will go in.
- Sex Child trafficking victims of child's introduced in the house February 9th.
- The Maryland State Police Guns Bill HB3 was introduced to senate and to the House Judiciary Committee. Letter was sent to Leslie.
- Human trafficking Bill has not yet been introduced

VIII. Updated Brochures and Other Materials for VASAP/APP/VSAB

- N/A

IX. Public Affairs/Events Subcommittee updates – Leah

- February is the Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month.
- Share information on in-person events with Board members to become more involved.
- Montgomery County Public Schools events Narcan training on abuse of drugs, and mental health awareness for teens.
- Social Event on March 16 at 6:30 for Drinks/Appetizers.
- Brian Koosed will provide options for venue; a doodle poll will be sent by administrative staff.
- Centralizing posts in social media.

X. Announcements/Comments/New Business

- No other questions. No comments

Adjournment 8:30 PM

Next Meeting:

February 23, 2023, 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM