

VICTIM SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

April 25, 2019

Attendance: Liz Briganty Vidal, Ronald Cohen, Cinder Cooper Barnes, Kecia Lopes, April Marrone, Anita Pinto, Kathryn Pontzer, Sally Reid, Leah Schwartz, Reem Sharaf, and Robin Stimson.

Members Absent: Sorell Schwartz and Steven Whitehorn.

Members via Conference call: Alana Ward.

Ex-Officio Members Present: Ellen Alexander.

Ex-Officio Members Absent: Teresa Bennett, Rebecca Marcolini and Michael Subin.

Support Staff: Nadja Cabello, Maria Carzon and Rafiah Prince.

I. Additions to Agenda

- Volunteers needed to interview candidates.

II. Approval of Minutes

- The March 28, 2019 minutes were approved.

III. Executive Sub-Committee Update April Marrone, Robin Stimson and Kathryn Pontzer.

Part 1

- Robin and Kathryn met with Linda McMillen, Senior Legislative Analyst on April 2, 2019 to discuss the Board's three priorities and Annual Report.
- Ms. McMillen gave a contact to whom the board can inquire about transitional County housing. She reported that the County is focusing more on permanent housing than transitional housing.
- Nadja explained that many domestic violence victims do not qualify for permanent housing because they don't have a job or good credit. Transitional housing is subsidized by the County and domestic violence victims can get job training and work on fixing their credit.
- Many times, family members have Section 8 and are not allowed to have family members stay with them.
- Ms. McMillen wanted to know, if the VA positions were frozen or cut.
- Nadja clarified that these positions were cut.

Part 2

- Robin attended the Inter Agency Coalition meeting, they talked about housing, they got an email that ICH is moving forward with some of the Board's priority for funding housing for domestic violence victims. They submitted a proposal with our updated priorities, and we are waiting for approval.
- On April 1, 2019 April met with Council Member Sidney Katz and on April 4, 2019 April met with Council Member Gabe Albornoz and he offered to come to our board meeting in May to discuss housing issues.

Part 3

- On April 8th Kathryn and April testified at the budget hearings.
- At the hearings, the supervised visitation center is asking for more funds to increase their hours of business from 28 to 38 hours.

Part 4

- The County Council asked follow up questions about the Board priorities and Nadja answered questions for Dr. Crowel, Chief of BHCS.

IV. Legislative Sub-Committee Update Robin Stimson

- Robin arranged for the Maryland Crime Victim's Resource Center, Director, Russell Butler to present to the Board in June. The Maryland Crime Victims Resource Center is advocating for the Crime Victim's Compensation Fund to increase the award amount.

- Ellen said Richard Hoffman is the attorney for Maryland Research, who is suing. It could take up to 2 years to have a hearing with CICB.
- CICB states they are not the last payer and they are penalizing victims for receiving VASAP compensation fund.
- CICB also does not want to compensate any victims that could be compensated by Worker's Compensation.
- Robin reported Senate Bill 767 establishes uniform testing criteria for sexual assault evidence kits.
- Senate Bill 657 is to establish a pilot program to provide Prophylaxis and full course of treatment to victims of sexual assault.
- Senate Bill 734 would enable State prosecutors to hold accountable those who profit off forced labor.

V. Directory Sub-Committee Update April Marrone

- April presented the draft of the Directory to the Board members.
- Nadja said we have a VASAP email that gets checked by a therapist.
Action item: Cinder will send a final draft when done and will send it to April and Anita for their approval.

VI. Social Media/Public Affairs Sub-Committee Updates Sally Reid

- Liz suggests posting clips from the Council testimony and be more open to other postings about crime, as well as posting on how to get support and or to help.
- Rafiah will post the Volunteer Recognition Ceremony photos. It was suggested that the Board should go to those events that VASAP is attending.
- Rafiah suggested attending the Take Back the Night event. Nadja said there are different communities and the Board can do a Facebook story.
- Liz wants clarification on fundraising, what the guidelines are.
Action item: Rafiah will send the Board the Bylaws.
- Nadja said 10% of the Crime Victims Compensation Fund can be used for public outreach and education. The County gives a match of 2 to 1 in the Crime Victims Compensation fund for donations received.
Action item: Liz will fix the emblem on the Facebook page. The logo needs to mention HHS.

VII. Board Attendance Nadja Cabello

- Nadja has asked all members to arrive on time to the Board meetings. The Board meets only 10 times a year.
- Members need to be committed to attending meetings and subcommittee meetings to participate and vote.

VIII. Annual Report Update April Marrone

- It needs to be corrected by July.
- April needs the format of members bios as: name, date of appointment to the board, reasons for joining the board and head shots of members.
Action item: Bios and head shots are due to April as soon as possible.

IX. Volunteer Recognition Event Nadja Cabello

- The event went very well. Thank you for Board members and April who came to the event.

Adjournment 9 PM
Next Meeting: May 23, 2019
6:30 – 8:30 PM