

## **VICTIM SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD MEETING (VSAB)**

May 27, 2021

**Attendance:** Neda Bolourian, Amos Hicks III, Jill Pargamount, Kathryn Pontzer, Juanita Rogers, Leah Schwartz, Reem Sharaf and David Young.

**Members Absent:** Quintaria Brunson, Larry Center, Brian Koosed, Jessica J. Leslie, and Robin Stimson,

**Ex-Officio Members:** Ellen Alexander and Dolores Briceno

**Support Staff:** Dr. Rafiah Prince and Maria V. Solis

### **I. Additions to Agenda**

- No addition to the agenda.

### **II. Virtual Meeting Procedures – Juanita Rogers**

- 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**

- The April 22, 2020 minutes were approved.

### **IV. Welcome Dr. Raymond Crowel, Director, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services- Juanita Rogers/Kathryn Pontzer**

- Dr. Raymond Crowel shared that he took over as the Director of The Department of Health and Human Services two years ago and that he has serviced many entities as a therapist, director etc.
- The Board shared that priorities are to increase staffing for sexual assault and domestic violence programs.
- Dr. Raymond Crowel thanked all the board members for their services.
- Juanita Rogers shared that there is a possible electronic record that can work for the department (More information to come).
- 91% increase in trauma services which is a great impact on staff.
- Resources are being evaluate it to determine which record keeping is the best for the department.
- Bridge housing has been an issue and there are changes to be made.
- Properties for housing were shut down due to lead and there have not been stablished resources for housing.
- Dr. Crowel shared that he is pleased that the Board, the Victim Assistance and Sexual Assault Program (VASAP) and the Abused Persons Program (APP) are there to help victims.
- Initiation of recovery and start re building services to help the community is one the Board's goals.

- Bridge housing, critical support and transitional housing are some of the Board's priorities.
- September is when the budget cycle starts.
- There has been an increase in the budget which might help to solve the needs of victim individuals.
- Creating a mobile system outreach crisis center is a great tool to help victims.

#### **V. Executive Subcommittee updates – Juanita Rogers/Kathryn Pontzer**

- There were two speakers in the May meeting with Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee (CJCC) Sean O'Donnell (NNLM Liaison) and, Kathleen Dumais (House of delegates).
- There will be new bills in the next session.
- Juanita Rogers had a meeting with the Maryland correlation for sexual assault (MCASA) in which several electronic databases and platforms were discussed that could potentially work for the department.
- There is going to be a consequent call to determine the platform that will work the best for the department.
- Staff members will be meeting to see what kind of system works for victim's confidentiality.
- Upcoming Panel meeting updates were shared by Dr. Rafiah.
- In the panel meeting each representative will have a minute to share and then a panel will ask questions.
- Upcoming panel meeting will probably be in September.  
**ACTION ITEM:** Dr. Rafiah is working on the list of the names that will participate in the panel/meeting to share their thoughts to be able to better assist victims.

#### **VI. Legislative Subcommittee updates– Kathryn Pontzer**

- Bill-421-gun ghost legislation passed April the 6.

#### **VII. Public Affairs/Events Subcommittee updates– Leah Schwartz**

- The subcommittee has done a tremendous job with the posts.
- Posts show the community what the board does and how the Board supports victims.
- June is National Safety Month.

#### **VIII. Update on Upcoming Annual Report - Jessica Leslie (not present)**

#### **IX. Board Member spotlight Leah Schwartz**

- The Board members will share some insights.
- Sharing insights is important, so the Board is aware about what is happening in the community.
- The Board's mission and vision relate to the job done at the Victim Assistance and Sexual Assault Program (VASAP).

#### **X. Announcements/Comments/New Business**

- Dr. Rafiah shared some of her personal and professional experiences.
- Dr. Rafiah supervised child abuse programs and worked with offending and non-offending parents while living in Florida.

- Dr. Rafiah Supervises victim advocates, therapists, therapy fairs, co-chair sexual assault response team, and participate in the Board (VSAB) etc. for Montgomery County Trauma Services.
- Dr. Rafiah's mission is to help victims.
- There has been a significant increase in caseloads for therapists.
- Capturing clients for therapists have been a challenge.
- Can the board work with the media
- Dr. Rafiah explained they likely can not, since they are under the County Executive's Office and there are procedures.

**ACTION ITEM:** Dr. Rafiah will find out if the board can approach the media and will report back.

Adjournment 8:30 PM

Next Meeting:

June 24, 2021, 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM