

VICTIM SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD MEETING (VSAB)

September 28, 2023

Attendance: Shanquenetta Anderson, Neda Bolourian, Dolores Briceno, Larry Center, Brian Koosed, Kathryn Pontzer, Alan Schulman, Leah Schwartz, David Young.

Members Absent: Wendy Ayala, Reem Sharaf, Heather Thompson, Jasmin Whitfield.

Ex-Officio Members Absent: Ellen Alexander.

Support Staff: Rosalia Scotman, Linda Lochner and Carla Bradley.

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 July 27, 2023, meeting.

- The July 27, 2023 Minutes were approved.
- The Minutes title from July 27, 2023 was rejected, need to be re-named.

IV. Update on 10/11 Testimony to HHS – Brian, Neda, Rose, Linda

- Neda stated that the testimony of DHHS is October 11th.
- Brian Koosed asked to Rose Scotman if she emailed update data to the County Council.
- Brian asked whether the priorities are going to be the same as last year- staffing and bridge housing.
- Last year Trauma Services needed four members hired; Brian asked if that is still current.
- Brian recapped from last year crime victim fund, bridge housing, housing vouchers and transportation arrangements for those who need to transport from the Crisis Center.
- Rose Scotman stated that same issues as last year BAK losing staffing which cuts down on services provided.
- Rose Scotman would like to find additional funding through grants or County to support BAK and to able to provide a transition home to women and men.
- Access to housing has gotten worse and how to fix them - typically takes 18-24 months for a victim to stabilize.
- David asked the need for more full-time Victims' advocates.
- Rose stated a total needed is 10 Victims' Advocates, currently have seven total three full-time and four part-time Victims' advocates.
- Linda informs the board that Victims' advocates are State certified, and some are Nationally certified, for the grant funding they must be bilingual specially in Spanish.
- Brian views board role as helping to get the things needed to service the community.
- Brian stated that the County Council DHHS meeting is October 11, 2023 at the County Council Building in Rockville and that the board will have a two page and two request to summarize priorities and then answer questions.

V. Annual Report 2022-2023: Update and Potential Approval - Kathryn, Rose, Brian, Linda.

- Brian Koosed is working on the annual report; he is waiting for additional information from FY23 and FY22.
- Leah confirming reports to be resent.
- Larry question County deadline for annual report.
- Next meeting will have draft for approval.

VI. Executive Subcommittee Update – Kathryn, Brian, Neda, Larry

- Welcome to the new Board Members Alan and Shanquenetta.
- Brian stated that there are two more meeting before the end of the year, they want to discuss focus on County Council meeting January 2024.
- Neda asked what is needed? Staffing, what the County provided to make the job easier.
- Leah in the next Subcommittee will brainstorm about bringing awareness to the uptick of crime in High School.
- As a board support early intervention and preventive measures.
- With the crime up is there a connection with the services request going up at Trauma Services.
- Larry commented if there is any data to give Council Members.
- Kathryn updated the Board about the meeting:
 - i. Agencies gave 1-to-2-minute update but mainly stated their need for more staffing.
 - ii. Circuit Judge Bonifant was delighted they closed 1350 more cases.
 - iii. District Court Judge Koch stated they are doing good with civil cases.
 - iv. Chief Marcus Jones stated that the increase in crime was a strain on police.
 - v. State Attorney John McCarthy stated some cases are being dropped causing public safety issues.
 - vi. Florence Jewel has a sit at CJCC, she is in the Human Trafficking Committee.
 - vii. Some busses will display the Human Trafficking contact number.
 - viii. 204 Teachers have received training in human trafficking and 500 more teachers will receive training.
- Kathryn asked if anyone wanted to be part of the subcommittee and she will email them the three-page outline

VII. Legislative Subcommittee Update- Kathryn,

- Welcoming new Board Members to Executive Sub-Committee – Jasmine, Shanquenetta
- Briand asked about thoughts on how to streamline the process.
- Requested a separate meeting because they need more time to go into details.
- They discussed better ways to organize and outline a report on what to do and what members on the County Council to target.
- Kathryn asked if anyone wanted to be part of the subcommittee and she will email them the three-page outline.
- They need to focus on groups with the same legislative priorities, Kathryn has a list of potential groups and can target specific members in the appropriation committee.

VIII. Public Affairs/Events Subcommittee updates – Leah

- Leah informed the board that anyone in the legislative and executive subcommittees can also join Public Affairs Subcommittee.
- October is a very busy social media month with mental Health Awareness, Domestic Violence Awareness, and several others.

- Leah wants to know if they can ask to host an event as a VSAB board were can people can be participating, for exp: Yoga classes.
- Leah Also asked if the subcommittee could have a table at the annual Interfaith Domestic Violence Coalition Conference on November 9th in Annapolis and to who would she need to get approval from.

IX. Announcements/Comments/New Business

- Next meeting on 10/26/2023 will be zoom or teams but the last meeting of the year 12/07/2023 hopefully be in person at the Crisis Center on Piccard Drive.
- Rose Scotman stated that the Trauma Services name change is on hold, awaiting Boards name.
- Leah recommended an event for the members like a puppy party at Bark Social in Bethesda.

Adjournment 8:30 PM

Next Meeting:

October 26, 2023, 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM