



Marc Elrich
County Executive



Darren M. Popkin
Sheriff

Office of the Sheriff
Domestic Violence Coordinating Council
Thursday, January 9, 2020
5:00 PM – 7:00 PM
Family Justice Center 5th Floor Conference Room
600 Jefferson Plaza, Suite 500, Rockville, Maryland 20852

Minutes

Members: Debbie Feinstein, Chair (Montgomery County Office of the State's Attorney); Tom Manion, Vice Chair (Montgomery County Office of the Sheriff); Teresa Bennett (Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services); Spencer Cantrell (Jewish Coalition Against Domestic Abuse); Nicole Drew (Montgomery County Commission for Women); Laurie Duker (Court Watch Montgomery); Ingrid Gonzalez (Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services – Parole and Probation); The Honorable Sidney Katz, (Montgomery County Council); The Honorable Karla Smith (Circuit Court for Montgomery County); Eshigo Okasili (Community Member); Amy Palumbo (Community Member); Ronald Whalen (Community Member); Smita Varia, Staff (Montgomery County Office of the Sheriff);

Absent: The Honorable Karen Ferretti (District Court for Montgomery County); Chief Marcus Jones (Montgomery County Department of Police); Tina Michaels (Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation – Pre-trial Services); The Honorable Rebecca Smondrowski (Montgomery County Public School – Board of Education); Lilah Katz (Student Member); Izola Shaw (Community Member); Mindy Thiel (Community Member);

Guests: Reggie Blankson (Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation – Pre-trial Services); Lisa Mandel Trupp (Office of Montgomery County Councilmember Sidney Katz); Lt. Gerald McFarland (Montgomery County Department of Police); Lauren Brown (Member of the Public); Shinyoung Park (Korean Community Service Center); Elaine Arndt (Moms Demand Action for Sense in America); Aliah El-Radi (House of Ruth)

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Approval of November Minutes

The November 14, 2019 DVCC meeting minutes were reviewed. Councilmember Katz proposed a motion to approve the minutes without revision. The motion was seconded by Karla Smith and passed.

III. Announcements

Debbie Feinstein announced that RespectFest is on March 29th from 1:00 – 4:00 at the Wheaton Community Recreation Center.

Nicole Drew announced that the Women's Legislative Briefing is on Sunday, January 26th at the Universities of Shady Grove. Tina Michaels and a Client Assistant from the Family Justice Center will have a resource table to publicize RespectFest and the services at the Family Justice Center.

Elaine Arndt from Moms Demand Action announced that they are having a service meeting on January 18th Grace Episcopal Church in Silver Spring.

Debbie Feinstein also announced that Assistant Chief Ronald Smith will be taking the member seat for Chief Marcus Jones. In addition, for the Special Victims Investigation Division, Captain Willie Parker-Loan and Lt. Brian Tanzi have left, and Captain Amy Daum and Lt. Jerry McFarland have come on board.

Debbie Feinstein explained the process for members of the public wanting to speak during the meeting. If a member of the public wants to speak, they should write down their comment or question and then pass it to Debbie who will read it out loud.

IV. Guest Speaker: *Jessica Volz DNP, CRNP, FNE A/P, FNP-BC, SANE-A, SANE-P, Clinical Nurse Manager, Forensic Medical Unit at Adventist Healthcare Shady Grove Medical Center*

After Jessica Volz's presentation, Debbie Feinstein talked about the work that State's Attorney's Office, the Montgomery County Police Department and the Sheriff's Office are doing with the Forensic Medical Unit at Adventist Healthcare Shady Grove Medical Center to advance the way Montgomery County is addressing cases involving non-fatal strangulation. In December, they held a 3-hour training twice to over 150 attendees on strangulation, the medical response, police and prosecution response and resources for the victims.

The group is also working on a revision to the Domestic Violence Supplement, which is a form that police officers are mandated to fill out when they respond to a domestic violence call. The form will include specific information relevant to strangulation, so that when patrol officers respond to a call, they will be prompted to check for signs of strangulation. They will also encourage the victims to seek medical attention immediately.

This group is also hoping to hold targeted trainings on nonfatal strangulation with the Emergency Call Center and Fire and Rescue Services.

V. Committee Reports

A. Legislative and Policy Planning Committee – TBD, Chair

Smita passed around the draft of the Criminal Law - SB 212/ HB 233- Strangulation-First degree assault. Under current law, suffocation and strangulation is classified as assault in the second degree. This bill would reclassify strangulation as assault in the first degree. This nuance better recognizes the danger of strangulation, where studies have found that prior non-fatal strangulation is associated with a six-fold increase in the chances of attempted homicide and a seven-fold increase in the chances of completed

homicide. Lisa Mandel Trupp is going to see if there are any possible sponsors from Montgomery County. Debbie asked the Council members if their organizations would write a letter of support and send it to her in the next week. Teresa Bennett has a meeting with the Legislative Liaison for the Department of Health and Human Services and she is going to raise support for this bill. The County Council will also ask that this bill come before the Council to support it. Laurie Duker will work with other members to create educational packets to distribute to Congressional members.

The Council voted to support this legislation and a quorum of votes was met.

Spencer Cantrell attended the Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW) conference in November. She created a summary of laws that pertain to domestic violence and distributed it to the group.

The former Chair of the Legislative Committee was Chief Marcus Jones. Because he will no longer be attending the meetings, the members voted to elect Spencer Cantrell the new chair of the Legislative Policy Planning Committee.

B. Offender Program and Policy Committee – *Tina Michaels, Chair*

Reggie Blankson from Pre-Trial Services gave an update for Tina Michaels. Pre-Trial Services has been trying to send copies of protective orders to Judges to review before bond hearings. He said that they are making sure the case managers assigned to the assessment unit, bond unit and the jails have copies of the protective orders while they are testifying.

Laurie Duker also said that she is checking with the administrative offices of the court to explore ways to let Judges see final protective orders during criminal trials and when setting bond conditions and probation conditions, without having to make legislative changes.

C. Victim Services Committee update - *Tom Manion, Chair*

Tom Manion gave a summary of the initiatives by the Victim Services Committee. Regarding legal services, there are not enough pro bono attorneys for protective order cases. The committee is going to hold a training for attorneys on domestic violence and representing clients for protective order cases. The training is currently scheduled for February. Once that training is set up, Tom will inform the Council members to promote the training.

The committee has finalized the program to shelter pets while clients of the FJC are temporarily housed. A memorandum of understanding has been signed by Police Chief Jones and Sheriff Popkin. There is going to be a joint training between FJC staff and staff within the police department to talk about the link between animal abuse and domestic violence.

The Victim Services Committee has also started a new initiative to expand services at the FJC to address substance abuse issues. The committee wants to create a direct connection between domestic violence services and substance abuse services, given the frequency with which the FJC Client Assistants see domestic violence victims who are addicted to substances either as a way to self-medicate for the trauma that they're experiencing, or whether their addiction is being either perpetuated or used as a tool by their abuser to manipulate and further control and abuse them. The committee is at the early stages of reaching out to substance abuse agencies and to explore how to expand

partnerships. Teresa Bennett talked about the substance abuse services that the Department of Health and Human Services oversees. They have an ACCESS program that offers telephone and walk in assessments. The Avery Road Treatment Center offers rehabilitation and intermediate care. Avery House is a place for women in recovery with children.

Lastly, Tom Manion said that planning for Safe Start summer camps is underway. This was an initiative that was started last year that went incredibly well. They were able to provide free camp to 28 children through Bar-T with a clinical therapeutic component to it via the Safe Start program for children who witnessed domestic violence. This year, they are hoping to offer the camp to more children as well as have it available at more Bar-T camp sites.

D. Education and Outreach Committee - Debbie Feinstein, Chair

Debbie announced that RespectFest is on March 29th from 1:00 – 4:00pm at the Wheaton Community Recreation Center. The Student Advisory Council is making a video about RespectFest and the video contest to be shown on morning announcements at local schools, and they are posting on social media.

The committee is working on distributing the 16 Language Card to different House of Worship. Lastly, Expect Respect, the dating violence prevention presentations in high schools is going well. If anyone is interested in being a facilitator, please notify Smita Varia.

VI. Adjournment

Debbie Feinstein, Chair, adjourned the meeting at 7:09 pm.

The next DVCC meeting will be on March 12, 2020, 5pm-7pm at the Family Justice Center



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