



Marc Elrich
County Executive



Darren M. Popkin
Sheriff

Office of the Sheriff **Domestic Violence Coordinating Council**

Thursday, July 8, 2021

5:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Via Microsoft Teams due to the COVID-19 Crisis

Minutes

Attendees: Debbie Feinstein, Chair (Montgomery County Office of the State's Attorney); Tom Manion, Vice Chair (Montgomery County Office of the Sheriff); Spencer Cantrell (Jewish Coalition Against Domestic Abuse); Nicole Drew (Montgomery County Commission for Women); The Honorable Karen Ferretti (District Court for Montgomery County); The Honorable Sidney Katz (Montgomery County Council); The Honorable Rebecca Smondrowski (Montgomery County Public School – Board of Education); Maura Lynch (Community Member); Amy Palumbo (Community Member); Mindy Thiel (Community Member); Vikhyana Gonzalez (Student Member); Smita Varia, Staff (Montgomery County Office of the Sheriff);

Absent: Ingrid Gonzalez (Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services – Parole and Probation); Dorne Hill (Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services); Tina Michaels (Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation); The Honorable Karla Smith (Circuit Court for Montgomery County); Assistant Chief Ron Smith (Montgomery County Department of Police); Michelle Maxberry (Community Member); Ronald Whalen (Community Member);

Guests: Gerald McFarland (Montgomery County Police Department); Rebecca Baldwin (Community Member); Alia El Radi and Jenica Kramer (House of Ruth); Colleen Bokman (Trauma Services – Department of Health and Human Services); Vita Larkin (Community Member, Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America); Shin Young Park (Korean Community Center); Assistant Chief Dinesh Patil (Montgomery County Police Department);

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Guidelines for the Virtual Meeting

Due to the COVID-19 health crisis, the meeting was conducted virtually using Microsoft Teams. Debbie Feinstein reviewed guidelines for participants. She asked everyone to mute microphones when not speaking. Debbie Feinstein asked the participants to use the chat function if they would like to speak and to use the raise hand function. She also requested that participants should identify themselves each time they speak.

III. Approval of May Minutes

The May 13, 2021 DVCC meeting minutes were reviewed. Councilmember Sidney Katz proposed a motion to approve the minutes without revision. The motion was seconded by Spencer Cantrell and passed.

IV. Announcements

Tom Manion reminded everyone about the attendance policy. There are six meetings of the full DVCC each year, and members are only permitted to miss two. If you are a voting member and join late, please make sure to let Smita Varia know that you are present either through the chat or via email.

Debbie Feinstein announced that the Family Violence Prevention Campaign received a National Association of Counties Award for Civic Education and Public Information.

V. Member Openings

There are currently 5 DVCC member openings, with 2 of them being renewable terms. Spencer Cantrell and Mindy Thiel will be applying to renew their terms. The other 3 openings are for a representative from a Non-Profit Organization, a Public Member and a High School Student Member. Please send the announcement to your networks. The deadline to apply is July 21st.

Smita Varia asked the members for volunteers to be on the interview panels. Amy Palumbo, Tom Manion, Maura Lynch, Nicole Drew, Spencer Cantrell, and Debbie Feinstein volunteered to assist with the interviews.

VI. Committee Reports

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

Tina Michaels was absent, and Smita Varia reported on her behalf. The Offender Program and Policy Committee met in June. The Abuser Intervention Program is now operating again. The Committee also discussed ways to engage the offender population in the Detention Center with the Abuser Intervention Program either through a virtual program and in-person. Pre-Trial Services and Parole and Probation are now doing physical check ins but on a limited basis.

B. Legislative and Policy Planning Committee – *Spencer Cantrell, Chair*

Spencer Cantrell reported that there are no new updates with the Committee because the Maryland General Assembly is in between sessions. However, she did meet with the Policy Director at the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence to see how the DVCC can collaborate with them. Tom Manion, who also Chairs the Partnership for Safer Maryland, would like to also collaborate.

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

Tom Manion reported on a few initiatives the Victim Services Committee is working on. Ngozi Obineme and Maura Lynch are working with Suburban Hospital on a program for FJC clients who also face addiction issues.

Ngozi Obineme and the Legal Services Coordinators from DVS Legal Services, JCADA and House of Ruth Maryland continue to work on an FJC Volunteer Court Advocate program and are planning the training program for the advocates.

The Safe Start Summer Camp will be done virtually, similar to last year. Children are also sent packages of art supplies, games, workshops, Legos, and other materials that relate to the current week's activities. This initiative is supported by the Town of Chevy Chase.

Lastly, the Safe Keep Program which enables pets to be kept safe at Montgomery County Animal Services while a victim stays at the Shelter and works on securing other housing has been updated. The Montgomery County Animal Services Division was

formally under the Montgomery County Police Department but has now become its own agency.

D. Education and Outreach Committee - *Debbie Feinstein, Chair*

Debbie Feinstein reported on the current Education and Outreach Committee initiatives. This year the committee is planning events and activities for October's Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Possible activities include an art installation, bus banner ads, social media advertising, two workshops on strangulation and bystander intervention, and a survivor panel. The committee is currently looking for sponsors to help fund the costs of some of the activities.

Debbie Feinstein also reminded everyone to continue letting Smita Varia know of places to distribute the Family Violence Prevention Campaign Awareness Cards.

Lastly, Debbie Feinstein and Smita Varia are going to be meeting with Montgomery County Public Schools in August to continue the conversation on how to promote the in class Expect Respect presentations and the Programs for Athletes in all of the schools.

VII. Adjournment

Debbie Feinstein, Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:54 pm.

The next DVCC meeting will be on September 9, 2021, 5pm-7pm



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