



Marc Elrich
County Executive



Maxwell C. Uy
Sheriff

Office of the Sheriff
Domestic Violence Coordinating Council
Thursday, November 9, 2023
5:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Mission: To reduce the incidence of domestic violence and creating a safe community for families to live free of abuse.

Minutes

Attendees: Tom Manion, Chair (Montgomery County Office of the Sheriff); Jessica Volz, Vice Chair (Adventist Healthcare); Assistant Chief Nicholas Augustine (Montgomery County Police Department); Debbie Feinstein (Montgomery County Office of the State's Attorney); Dorne Hill (Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services); The Honorable Sidney Katz (Montgomery County Council); Rochelle Perry (Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services – Parole and Probation); Tondalayo Royster (Montgomery County Commission for Women); The Honorable Karla Smith (Circuit Court for Montgomery County); Ben Stevenson (Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation); Amy Palumbo (DVS Legal Services); Michelle Maxberry (Community Member); Maura Lynch (Community Member);

Absent: The Honorable Lynne Harris (Montgomery County Public School – Board of Education); Aanika Arjumand (Student Member) Lavontte Chatmon (Community Member); Kendall Stanley (Community Member); Mindy Thiel (Community Member);

Guests: Smita Varia (Montgomery County Office of the Sheriff); Katryna Hauck (House of Ruth, MD); Sharon Ledner (Chief of Staff for Councilmember Sidney Katz); Katherine Bradley (DC Volunteer Lawyers Project); Lt. David Cohen (Montgomery County Police Department);

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Guidelines for the Virtual Meeting

Tom Manion reviewed guidelines for virtual meeting participation. He asked everyone to mute microphones when not speaking. He asked the participants to use the chat function if they would like to speak and to use the raise hand function. He also requested that participants should identify themselves each time they speak.

III. Approval of July and September Minutes

The July 13, 2023 DVCC meeting minutes were reviewed. Debbie Feinstein proposed a motion to approve the minutes without revision. The motion was seconded by Amy Palumbo and passed. The September 14, 2023 DVCC meeting minutes were reviewed. Maura Lynch proposed a motion to approve the minutes without revision. The motion was seconded by Assistant Chief Nicholas Augustine and passed.

IV. Announcements

Tondalayo Royster announced that the Commission for Women's Annual Women's Legislative Briefing is Sunday, January 28th. Registration is open and the link is <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2024-womens-legislative-briefing-registration-738129564397?aff=oddtcreator>.

Tom Manion and Jessica Volz will be reaching out to all the Committee Chairs to set up meetings in December. They will be discussing outcomes from the 2023 Blueprint and talk about initiatives and commitments for 2024.

V. Committee Reports

A. Legislative and Policy Planning Committee – Maura Lynch, Chair

The committee is looking into the process of getting approval from the Office of Intergovernmental Relations (OIR). The DVCC tried to send in an Advocacy form for approval last year but never heard back from OIR.

B. Victim Services Committee update – Tom Manion, Chair

Tom Manion reported out that the committee is discussing the effects of post separation abuse. They are doing research and gathering information on how best to address this issue.

As follow up from the Court Watch Montgomery Report on the low numbers of legal representation for petitioners in protective order cases, the FJC legal intern is gathering data on why petitioners do not have representation (did they decline, was there no outreach, etc).

When a victim leaves their home to escape the abuse, they can either go through the County shelter system, or stay with friends or family. However, there is a gap for those that do not use the County system because then they do not qualify for further support services down the line. The committee is exploring different housing programs to learn about best practices. They have reached out to DASH in DC and are also open to other suggestions.

Safe Start will be providing camp for the children they work with in partnership with the Department of Recreation.

C. Education and Outreach Committee – Debbie Feinstein, Chair

Debbie Feinstein reported that the committee is working on several initiatives. Information on awareness cards and trainings were included in a newsletter to all medical providers through the County's Medical Officer.

Tondalayo Royster has continued reaching out to apartment complexes to share information about the FJC. She was able to connect with the Germantown Park Homeowners Association, who shared information to over 600 families.

Michelle Maxberry and Lavontte Chatmon have been working on gathering information about the Safe Bars Program. This is a program that trains restaurant staff to recognize the signs of domestic violence and sexual assault.

The awareness cards are being restocked at the recreation centers, libraries, courts, and crisis center. In addition, there is an advertisement on the pharmacy bags at the Harris Teeter in Germantown. Catholic Charities is also holding a large event at several different parishes where they will be sharing domestic violence information and resources.

The Choose Respect Montgomery Initiative continues its programming. Expect Respect will have reached out to over 2,000 students this fall semester with their workshop on teen dating violence. The Choose Respect Video Contest is now open for all middle and high school students to create a 60 video on teen dating violence. All entrants will receive 10 student service-learning hours for entering. RespectFest planning is under way. The in-person festival will be on Sunday, April 7th from 1-4 at the Wheaton Community Recreation Center and Park. The virtual events will be the week before and week after.

D. Offender Program and Policy Committee – Ben Stevenson, Chair

Ben Stevenson reported on the initiatives. They are continuing to explore how to offer the Abuser Intervention Program to those incarcerated. Pre-Trial is returning to have specialized case workers that will only work on cases related to domestic violence. Lastly, the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation is exploring adding more counseling referrals and resources to their programming.

VI. Adjournment

Tom Manion, Chair, adjourned the meeting at 5:33 pm

The next DVCC meeting will be on January 11, 2024, 5pm-7pm



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