

# Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence

## Libbie Mill Library Meeting Room

2100 Libbie Lake East Street

Henrico, VA 23230

Wednesday, December 4, 2019

10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

FINAL APPROVED MINUTES

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### Members Present

Kathy Anderson, Empowerhouse

Teresa Berry, Sexual Assault Response and Awareness (SARA), Inc. – Roanoke

Heather Board, Virginia Department of Health

Nichele Carver, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development

Thomas Fitzpatrick, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS)

Nancy Fowler, Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS)

Kristen Howard, Virginia State Crime Commission

Autumn Jones, Arlington County Victim Witness Program

Melissa McMenemy, Office of the Attorney General (OAG)

The Honorable Roxann Robinson, Virginia House of Delegates

Mindy Stell, Virginia Victim Assistance Network

Kristi VanAudenhove, Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance (VSDVAA)

Toni Zollicoffer, Fairfax County Department of Family Services

### Members Absent

The Honorable Barbara Favola, Senate of Virginia

Warren Rodgers, Southside Survivor Response Center

### Welcome, Introductions, and Remarks

Teresa Berry, Committee Chairperson called the meeting to order at 10:36 a.m. Committee members and guests made introductions. Chair Berry made the following remarks:

- A quorum is present at the meeting.
- The Committee has a new member: Toni Zollicoffer, Director of Domestic and Sexual Violence Services at the Fairfax County Department of Family Services.
- Warren Rodgers is leaving his position as the Director of Southside Survivor Response Center in Martinsville, which will create a vacancy on the Committee.

## **Approval of September 10, 2019 Meeting Minutes**

The following amendments were requested:

- Page 5, first bullet point, mistakenly indicates that Delegate Levine’s sister was murdered by her boyfriend, when actually it was her husband. Also remove “Virginia” in second sentence.
- Page 5, third bullet point, should be split into two separate sentences and read: “...that the SCV has provided optional and mandatory statewide training on trauma to juvenile court judges. On another issue, she added that courts are not free to consider inadmissible evidence, which may result in some frustration parties have when seeking to provide evidence of past behavior.”

Melissa McMenemy made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Autumn Jones, and approved by the Committee unanimously.

## **Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards**

Teresa Berry introduced Courtney Meyer, Professional Standards Coordinator with the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services. Ms. Meyer provided an overview of the Professional Standards for sexual and domestic violence programs. The standards were distributed November 8, 2019. Ms. Meyer conducted two informational webinars, which are recorded and available on the Professional Standards page of the DCJS website. The first step in the accreditation process is for programs to complete an organizational self-assessment to determine whether they are ready to apply for accreditation. After completing the self-assessment, organizations wishing to apply should complete a self-assessment summary form and send it to the Professional Standards Coordinator by Jan 31, 2020. The Professional Standards Committee will randomly select 20 programs who have completed the self-assessment summary to apply for accreditation. The application process will be finalized in January or February of 2020.

## **Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Funding**

Teresa Berry introduced Thomas Fitzpatrick, Division Director for Programs and Services at the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services. Mr. Fitzpatrick explained that VOCA funds have recently been at historic highs but projections are that VOCA funding will likely decrease. The amount of decrease is unknown at this time, and DCJS is awaiting further information from the federal government agencies on projections. VOCA money comes from the National Crime Victims Fund (CVF). The CVF also funds Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) grant programs. The CVF receives deposits from fines and fees of federal criminal cases. In recent years, there has been a significant decrease in money going into the CVF and an increase in financial obligations coming out of the CVF. At the current spending rate, money in the CVF will be depleted within several years. Due to this prediction, DCJS wants to help programs with sustainability planning and building capacity. DCJS will distribute more information on VOCA predictions once received from the federal government. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked Committee members for recommendations for messaging this information and supporting the sexual and

domestic violence field if the funds decrease as expected. The following suggestions were offered by members:

- This Committee can welcome input and have discussions about VOCA funding during the public comment section of the meetings.
- This Committee can host a separate forum(s) to have conversations on planning for the possibilities of what might happen with VOCA funding.
- This Committee can host listening sessions with programs across the state on the issue of VOCA funding.

## **Unfinished Business**

### **1. Crime Commission Needs Assessment Survey**

Teresa Berry introduced Kristen Howard, Executive Director of the Virginia State Crime Commission. Ms. Howard informed the Committee that the Crime Commission sent a draft of the needs assessment survey to the Professional Standards Committee for their input. Ms. Howard asked this Committee for guidance on when the survey should go out and whether it should go out as one large survey or split into two separate surveys: one focused on funding and a second focused on the professional standards. The Committee decided that one survey with questions about both issues would be best, and that it would be best to go out in spring 2020. Ms. Howard suggested they release the survey after the March Committee meeting to allow service providers to become familiar with the professional standards process, and to receive feedback from the Professional Standards Committee and members of this Committee.

### **2. Meeting Schedule for 2020**

Teresa Berry introduced Kristina Vadas, Victims Services Manager at the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services. Prior to this meeting, Ms. Vadas sent a poll to members to help determine the best dates for 2020 meetings. Ms. Vadas reported that she received nine responses and determined the following dates had the most availability for members. The Committee decided to keep these dates and to alternate locations between the Patrick Henry Building on Capitol Square and the Libbie Mill Library in Henrico.

- Wednesday, March 25, 2020 (Libbie Mill)
- Wednesday, June 24, 2020 (Patrick Henry Building)
- Wednesday, September 23, 2020 (Libbie Mill Library)
- Wednesday, December 16, 2020 (Patrick Henry Building)

## **New Business**

### **1. Conflict of Interest Renewal**

Teresa Berry informed the group that Committee members must take a conflict of interest training every four years and must sign a conflict of interest form annually. The training should

be completed by all new members upon appointment. DCJS is alerted when this is due and will alert members as needed.

## **2. Update on Prevention Funding**

Teresa Berry introduced Kristi VanAudenhove, Executive Director of the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance. A prevention working group is creating a proposal for a sexual and domestic violence prevention package. The package will be proposed in the 2020 General Assembly Session, and it will include a budget line item that will create a new prevention program under the Secretary of Health and Human Services. It will also provide funding to the existing prevention programs at the Virginia Department of Health and the Virginia Department of Social Services, Office of Family Violence. The proposed funding would support staffing at these agencies and grants opportunities for programs across the state who wish to pursue sexual and domestic violence prevention efforts. Senator Favola will sponsor this proposal.

## **3. DCJS State Trafficking Response Coordinator**

Teresa Berry introduced Angella Alvernaz, State Trafficking Response Coordinator at the Department of Criminal Justice Services. Ms. Alvernaz explained her position to the Committee, which is to lead the development of a multi-disciplinary systemic response to address adult and juvenile human trafficking in Virginia. Ms. Alvernaz is currently meeting with agencies and localities to determine needs and strengths in human trafficking response. Ms. Alvernaz started in August 2019.

### **Workgroups: Group Meetings & Discussion**

The Committee discussed that the three work groups discussed at the last meeting and identified in the minutes (Youth Services and Violence Prevention, Intersection of Criminal Justice Services and Gaps in Services, and Homicide Reduction) need additional definition and description. The titles of the work groups indicate a very wide range of possible endeavors, some of which may encroach upon current work in the field being done by other groups. Additionally, it was unclear how these possible work groups would be structured, how often they would meet, whether they must be formalized, and how expectations would be defined.

The Committee decided not to pursue the workgroups but rather to tackle issues brought to the Committee, such as the issue of batterer intervention programs, which was brought up earlier in 2019. Other issues the Committee may work on over the next year could include: funding, building capacity, prevention, implementing professional standards, and the Crime Commission survey.

The Committee would like to include the following in the March meeting: a VOCA update; an update on the Professional Standards; discussion of the Crime Commission survey; and discussion on batterer

intervention programs. The Committee would like to have a guest speaker(s) who has expertise in batterer intervention programs, including the status of programs in Virginia and national standards.

### **Public Comment**

Teresa Berry solicited public comment.

1. Paula Fitzgerald, Executive Director of Ayuda, spoke about her agency's services and her concerns regarding not receiving funding from DCJS through the Victims Services Grant Program (VSGP) funding process.
2. Ruth Ann Young from the Virginia Center on Aging spoke about that agency's services. She shared written resources on elder abuse and domestic violence in addition to information about her agency.

### **Closing**

- Next meeting: Wednesday, March 25, 2020, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at the Libbie Mill Library
- Teresa Berry adjourned the meeting at 12:52 p.m.