

Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence

Libbie Mill Library Meeting Room, 2100 Libbie East Street, Henrico VA

Monday, July 22, 2019

10:30am – 12:30pm

FINAL MINUTES

Members Present

Kathy Anderson, Empowerhouse

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

The Honorable Barbara Favola, Senate of Virginia

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

Nancy Fowler, Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS)

Autumn Jones, Arlington County Victim Witness Program

Melissa McMenemy, Office of the Attorney General (OAG)

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

Members Absent

Heather Board, Virginia Department of Health

Kristen Howard, Virginia State Crime Commission

The Honorable Roxann Robinson, Virginia House of Delegates

Warren Rodgers, Southside Survivor Response Center

Mindy Stell, Virginia Victim Assistance Network

Welcome & Remarks

- Chair Senator Barbara Favola called meeting to order at 10:36am with a quorum present.
- Teresa Berry made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 26, 2019 meeting with one corrections: there is no “h” in Teresa Berry’s name. Melissa McMenemy seconded the motion. The minutes were adopted as amended by unanimous vote.

Committee Member Appointments

- Tom Fitzpatrick reported that of the six current committee members who are up for reappointment, five seek reappointment. Those five are Kathy Anderson, Teresa Berry, Autumn Jones, Warren Rodgers, and Mindy Stell. These names were sent to the Governor’s Office for consideration of reappointment. If reappointed, their terms will be four years each. Member Chana Ramsey did not seek reappointment.

State Sexual and Domestic Violence Prevention Plan Update

- Kristina Vadas provided an update, as Heather Board with the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) was unable to attend. The State Sexual and Domestic Violence Prevention Plan is at a final draft stage and it is undergoing edits and review at VDH. VDSS and DCJS will then review the plan. The Plan may be available for presentation to the committee at the next meeting.

Virginia's Lethality Assessment Program (LAP)

- Shannon Freeman, Director of Programs & Community Outreach at the Office of the Attorney General (OAG), presented on LAP. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation, a list of localities that have adopted LAP, and a LAP Screening Tool were distributed to members.
- Ms. Freeman reported the following about LAP:
 - The OAG, Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), and the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance (VSDVAA) partnered to bring the Maryland LAP model to Virginia. In 2015, the partnership launched training to localities across the state.
 - LAP is an evidence-based lethality assessment, and it is determined to be a promising practice by the U.S. Department of Justice.
 - LAP is a collaboration between law enforcement and local domestic violence services programs.
 - LAP is a tool to identify victims who are at the greatest risk of homicide and then encourage them to get victim assistance.
 - The LAP screening questions have been developed, vetted, tested, and validated. There are eleven questions on the screen. Members were asked not to distribute the screening questions because training by the partnership should be provided before the screen and protocol are adopted.
 - The screen is initiated in all intimate partner violence investigations. An arrest is not mandatory to initiate the screen. The screen is not for other types of family violence.
 - According to the LAP protocol, when victims are determined by the screen to be in high danger, the law enforcement officer connects the victim with assistance through a domestic violence hotline.
 - If the assessment determines the victim is not in high danger, the officer may use their discretion and still initiate a call to the domestic violence hotline.
 - After the hotline call, the domestic violence program will follow up with the victim for additional services.
- Ms. Freeman provided the following information about LAP implementation:
 - Local LAP teams must at least include a law enforcement agency and a domestic violence program. Other community providers may also be part of a team.
 - The OAG LAP coordinator provides technical assistance to communities wanting to implement LAP.
 - The screen is not validated to be used as an investigative tool, a tool for obtaining protective orders, or a tool for bond hearings.

- Decisions regarding body cameras, LAP use with minor (underage) victims, how victim assistance follow-up will occur, and involvement of the Commonwealth’s Attorney’s Office must be made at the local team level.
- The statewide LAP team provides a “train the trainer” course to build training capacity. The team also provides on-going technical assistance, data collection, refresher training, and statewide quarterly LAP coordinator meetings.
- LAP annual data is available on the DCJS website.
- The OAG website has LAP technical assistance documents for communities considering LAP implementation.

Unfinished Business:

1. Crime Commission Needs Assessment Survey

- Kristina Vadas provided an update from Kristen Howard, Virginia State Crime Commission. The Crime Commission is not yet ready to release the Needs Assessment Survey. The draft survey includes questions about the Sexual and Domestic Violence Professional Standards, which are not yet completed. The standards are anticipated to be completed and released in the fall, after which the survey can be distributed.

2. Batterer Intervention Programs in Virginia

- No report at this time.

3. Misdemeanor Simple Assault & Sexual Battery

- Autumn Jones explained that many victim/witness programs provide victim assistance in misdemeanor cases and in cases pled to misdemeanor charges, although it is not required under Virginia’s Crime Victim and Witness Rights Act; however, this may not be the case for all victim/witness programs throughout Virginia.
- A suggestion was made that DCJS survey victim/witness programs to determine which provide assistance to victims in misdemeanor cases. An update on the feasibility of this will be provided at the next meeting.

4. Elections for Chair and Vice-Chair

- Tom Fitzpatrick reported that the ad hoc Nomination Committee nominated Teresa Berry for Committee Chair and Autumn Jones for Committee Vice-Chair. Mr. Fitzpatrick made a motion to elect these two members as Chair and Vice-Chair. Kathy Anderson seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

New Business:

Strategic Funding for Sexual & Domestic Violence Agencies

- Kristi VanAudenhove informed the Committee that VSDVAA is gathering information to further pursue funding for prevention efforts and to continue funding for sexual and domestic violence intervention services. Ms. VanAudenhove will provide an update at the next meeting.

Public Comment

- Senator Favola invited public comment.
- Delegate Mark Levine reported that he will file four bills relevant to this Committee during the next legislative session. He requested that the Committee further discuss these proposed bills at the next meeting.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 10, 2019, 10:30am-12:30pm (location to be determined)