

VICTIM SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

April 25, 2024

Attendance: Shanquenetta Anderson, Wendy Ayala, Neda Balourian, Brian Koosed, Kathryn Pontzer, Leah Schwartz, Heather Thompson, Jasmin Whitfield.

Members Absent: Larry Center, Alan Schulman.

Ex-Office Members Absent: Ellen Alexander,

Support Staff: Dana Bell and Carla Bradley.

I. Additions to Agenda

No additions to Agenda.

II. Roll Call & Virtual Meeting Procedures– Neda Bolourian

The rules for a virtual Board meeting are as follows:

- The chair will call the roll to establish a quorum.
- Members need to identify themselves when they are talking.
- Members may be asked to identify anyone who is present with them during the call.
- The public may be asked to mute the call on their end to avoid interruptions.
- The public may be muted by the chair.
- Public bodies might wish to consider including any ground rules in the meeting notice.

III. Approval of Minutes from March 28 Meeting – Neda

- The March 28 Minutes were approved.
- Dana Bell is replacing Linda for the time being while she is on medical leave.

IV. Executive Subcommittee Update (15 Minutes) – Brian

- Brian and Kathryn gave updates about the conversation with Christine Hong (Chief, of Services to End and Prevent Homelessness), about bridge housing.
- There is the possibility of having three houses in the Wheaton area, designated as a bridge housing for Domestic Violence victims.
- In 2022, there was a grant awarded for domestic violence bonus project; this could be used for helping with bridge housing for domestic violence.

a. Update on County Executive Follow Ups – Brian

- The board plans to establish stronger relationships with County Council members and the County Executive Office.

b. Update on CJCC or other Meetings– Kathryn, Neda, others

- There won't be a CJCC meeting this month, next meeting is scheduled for May.

V. Legislative Subcommittee Update– Kathryn

- The board received in updates on six bills that passed out of nine introduced in December.
- There is a bill that establishes certain certification requirements for any organization that operates a domestic violence program.

VI. Vacancies and New Chair Elections (15 Minutes) – Brian and Neda

- Brian shared a link with the vacancies for the VSAB board.
- The deadline to apply for a position on the Victim Serves Advisory Board (VSAB) is May 6th.
- There are currently nine vacancies available in VSAB.

- There is no requirement that they have a certain job or certain background to apply for the VSAB.
- The VSAB will hold an election for the new co-chair in June.

VII. Ideas for Guest Speakers and Other Issues to Cover at Future Meetings

- The board is seeking guest speakers to participate in the VSAB meetings.
- The board member suggests that guess speakers should have some relevance to what the VSAB does.
- Speakers should possess the necessary qualifications to speak on topics that are relevant to the VSAB.

VIII. Annual Report – Update on Timing/Survey– Brian/Neda

- The board normally does a survey of service providers.
- The board reviewed the survey questionnaire and made several changes.

IX. Public Affairs/Events Subcommittee updates (15 Minutes) – Leah

- April is Crime Victims Awareness month, Sexual Assault Awareness month and Child Abuse Prevention month.
- April 24th was Denim Day, people around the world wore jeans to support survivors and raise awareness about sexual violence.
- April 30th Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence is sponsoring a Strangulation topic Training Session.
- May is the Mental Health Awareness month.

I. Announcements/Comments/New Business (1 Minute)

- Shan shared great news that the Wheaton Art and Culture Center discussed a facility with 320 units of affordable housing and up to 39 townhouses.

Next Meeting:

May 23, 2024, 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM (IN PERSON)