

VICTIM SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

February 22, 2024

Attendance: Wendy Ayala, Neda Bolourian, Brian Koosed, Kathryn Pontzer, Alan Schulman, Leah Schwartz, Heather Thompson, Jasmin Whitfield.

Members Absent: Larry Center.

Ex-Officio Members Absent: Ellen Alexander.

Support Staff: Linda Lochner 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 January 25, 2023, meeting.

- The January Minutes were approved.

IV. Executive Subcommittee Update– Brian

a. Update on County Council Meetings – Brian, Kathryn, Leah, Wendy

- Dolores- there are some County Council members who are interested in particular in bridge housing and they're open to continue talking about it.
- Council members are also recruiting full time staff members for Trauma Services.
- Leah said that it will be great to interact more with those Council members who are particularly involved in monitoring VSAB priorities.

b. Update on County Executive Meeting – Brian, Kathryn

- Brian said that the meeting that they had with Executive Marc Elrich addressed the issue of bridge housing for victims of intimate partner violence after they leave BAK.
- Christine Hong (Chief, Services to End and Prevent Homelessness) is trying to figure out a solution to the problem of the county is spending money on hotels for IDV.
- Kathryn said Fanny Gonzalez was requiring her staff to come up with a summary of bridge housing issues.
- Leah stated that it is important to provide follow-up and maintain communications with Council members and executive subcommittee liaisons.
- Brian said the only County Council members who had trouble meeting with board members were Andrew Friedson, Evan Glass and Will Jawando.

c. Update on CJCC or Other Meetings – Kathryn, Neda, others

- Kathryn no update on CJCC.
- Next full Commission meeting is March 27,24

V. Legislative Subcommittee Update– Kathryn

- Brian stated that he spoke with Leslie Frey who said that 2015 regulations govern County board activities.

- (I do not understand this bullet at all, so I am guessing here.) These regulations ban County boards from engaging in direct state or federal lobbying.
- There are some changes in the County Executive's policy on how board advocate.
- The VSAB board members can continue to advocate as individuals, but not on behalf of the VSAB.
- Kathryn said that in a future meeting, she would like to discuss a better way to advocate on behalf the board.
- Katherine discussed the methods of supporting bills individually rather than as a board, using the board's letterhead in a standard one-page format. She said she would share examples.

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

- Brian discussed the annual report and how for the survey of service providers.
- Wendy volunteered to summarize the board's goals and help reach out to the service providers and introduce the board to them.

VII. Membership/Vacancies and Updating Website– Brian

- Reem's and David's position are still vacant and available.
- Brian discussed filling positions when terms are over and asked the board to help with membership vacancies.

VIII. Public Affairs/Events Subcommittee Updates– Leah

- They typically ask board members if they are interested in attending these public affairs events, where they set up a table on behalf of Trauma Services or VSAB.
- Leah offered to create a spreadsheet with dates and link for those public affairs events.
- Wendy asked board members to share information on any public events about and to provide a link with information via email.
- Leah spoke about the social media and how it brings awareness to public services and spreads the word.
- Leah commented on eleven new followers and emphasized the importance of liking and following.
- Leah said that the next month will have fewer events but urged board members to continue to support VASAP on social media by posting pictures of events attended.
- Community member Tondalayo introduced herself as a guest; she said that she was interested in the work the VSAB does and that she also is a volunteer for Trauma Services.
- Tondalayo spoke of the Hight school festival that is sponsored by the Domestic Violence Coordinator Council at Wheaton Rec Center.

IX. Announcements/Comments/New Business

- Kathryn's term is up later this year.
- Brian asked for suggestions on guest speakers.
- Next meeting will be in person at the Piccard location.

Next Meeting:

March 28, 2024, 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM **[IN PERSON?]**