

**MINUTES FOR THE
BELLINGHAM-WHATCOM COUNTY COMMISSION
AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

**RETREAT
April 24, 2007**

Members Attending: Cynthia Bauleke, Regina Delahunt, Bill Elfo, Sheri Emerson, Cindy Enger, Nikki Finkbonner, Joan Hoisington, Rebecca Johnson, Chi Na Kim, Michael Knapp, Dave McEachran, Shannon Meyer, Candy Petersen, Karen Summers, Bruce Van Glubt

Members Absent: Anna Carey, Randall Carroll, Burton Dickerson, Jon Komorowski, Steve Oliver, Todd Reutlinger, Linda Storck

Guests: Kathy Washatka, Washatka Group
David Webster, Webster, Caballero & Associates
Janice Holt, Executive Director Womenscare Shelter
Karen Burke, Executive Director, DVSAS
Joy Monjure, Education Coordinator, Environmental Resources, City of Bellingham
Byron Manering, Executive Director Brigid Collins Family Support Center

Staff Attending: Sue Parrott, Domestic Violence Commission Director
Joyce Gertler, Domestic Violence Commission Program Coordinator
Linda Ward, Administrative Secretary

Regina Delahunt, Chair, called the April Retreat and Business Meeting of the Bellingham-Whatcom County Commission Against Domestic Violence to order at 8:10 a.m., Tuesday, April 24, 2007 at St Luke's Community Health Center, 3333 Squalicum Parkway, Bellingham, WA.

1. Welcome

Regina Introduced the individuals who have been recommended for appointment to the Commission by the Executive Committee:

Byron Manering, Executive Director Brigid Collins Family Support Center
Janice Holt, Executive Director, Womenscare Shelter
Joy Monjure, Education Coordinator, Environmental Resources, City of Bellingham
Karen Burke, Executive Director, Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Services

Michael Knapp, Police Chief, City of Ferndale, was selected by the Whatcom County Sheriff and Police Chiefs, to serve as their representative on the Commission.

2. Public Comment

None

3. Consent Agenda

MOTION: #07-04 Rebecca Johnson made the motion to approve the January 23, 2007 Commission Meeting Minutes. Cynthia Bauleke seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

4. Committee Reports/Motions

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Resignations

Regina reported that there have been numerous changes in the membership of the Commission due to the resignations of Kathleen Marshall, Cheri Kilty, Michele Boudreau, Kathy Washatka, and Mike Haslip. The Commission has also been notified that Burton Dickerson will be moving out of the area and will need to resign his position on the Commission.

Committee Chairs

The committees have been restructured with the resignations. Sheri Emerson will chair the Education-Outreach Committee; Randy Carroll agreed to chair the Law and Justice Committee and Candy Petersen will chair the Victim and Children Support Committee. The new Strategic Planning Committee will be chaired by Rebecca Johnson.

Annual Report

Regina presented the 2006 Annual Report. Multiple copies were made available to Commission members.

2007 Work Plan and 2007 Key Activities

Regina stated that committees have put together their 2007 goals based on a work plan that is primarily status quo, due to the upcoming strategic planning process. She stated that Sue has prepared a handout titled 2007 Key Activities that is available electronically for members to use when discussing the Commission's work.

Strategic Planning Committee

Regina introduced the Strategic Planning Committee members: Rebecca Johnson, Chair, Cynthia Bauleke, Regina Delahunt, Sheri Emerson, and Kathy Washatka. The Commission has decided to take an in-depth look at the plan and all interested Commission members were invited to join the Strategic Planning Committee.

Nomination of 2007-2008 Officers

The Executive Committee recommended the following slate of officers:

Chair: Regina Delahunt
Vice-Chair: Cynthia Bauleke
Secretary: Todd Reutlinger
Treasurer: Rebecca Johnson
Immediate Past Chair: Randal Carroll (no vote required)

Regina asked for other nominations from the floor. None were made.

MOTION: #07-05 Sheri Emerson made the motion to accept the slate of officers as presented. Cindy Enger seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

STAFF REPORT:

May 4th Bellingham Workshop on Family Justice Centers with Casey Gwinn

Sue reported that the Commission is a co-sponsor of the workshop and there is no fee for Commission members to attend.

June 12th Commission meeting guest: Larry McKnight

Sue stated that Larry McKnight, DV Liaison, Washington State Attorney General's Office, has been invited to the June 12th Commission meeting. He will talk about his work and his interest in data collection and concerns around DV. There will be time for dialogue and those interested can join him for lunch after the meeting.

June 25-27th OVW Conference for recipients of GTEA awards

Sue reported that the first national conference for recipients of the Grants to Encourage Arrest Awards sponsored by Office on Violence Against Women will be held June 25-27th in St. Paul MN. She stated that she (as a representative of the Commission) has been asked to present a workshop on "Creating an Effective CCR in a Rural Community." The Commission still has technical assistance funds from the GTEA grant if anyone is interested in attending the conference.

Annual Commission presentations to City and County Councils:

Monday, June 4th, 7:00 pm, Bellingham City Council

Tuesday, June 5th, 11 am, Whatcom County Council Finance Committee

Interested Commission members are welcome to attend the presentations.

5. Overview of Safety Audit Report

Sue provided an overview of the Domestic Violence Safety and Accountability Audit, and the recent report titled "*Findings and Recommendations for Prosecution and Probation Responses*". The ten member audit team worked on the audit six months, although the entire process took one year. The audit team had to have background checks and sign MOU's to participate in the audit. The team members were asked to complete individual assignments which included reviewing case files, interviewing and observing practioners, and looking for gaps in the systems. The team was challenged to think about victim's needs for safety and how institutional processing worked to ensure victim safety.

Focus groups held prior to the audit indicated that victims wanted more communication with prosecutors. The audit team identified 13 gaps in the systems. Due to time restraints Sue was not able to discuss the findings.

The audited agencies will be asked to complete progress reports three times a year.

6. Exercise and Discussion on Draft Guiding Principles

Nikki Finkbonner and Chi Na Kim, representing the Victim and Children Support Committee, lead Commission members in an exercise and discussion on a draft set of Guiding Principles. The members were divided into small groups to review a scenario and explore and examine the application of the Guiding Principles to the work of practitioners. The groups reported their discussions back to the full Commission.

The Commission members were asked to consider whether these Guiding Principles should be adopted by the Commission, and to strategize what it would mean to "operationalize" the principles. The members noted the following:

1 and # 2 could contradict each other

5 Culture/ethnicity should be acknowledged and respected, however, as the principle is worded culture/ethnicity could be used as a defense

8 What about the father's relationship with the children?

7. Strategic Planning

Kathy Washatka gave an overview of the Commission's Comprehensive Plan, which was developed soon after the Commission's inception, and the Strategic Plan, which was completed in 2004. The Comprehensive Plan was developed with community input from the DV Task Force and others in the field. The Strategic Plan was developed with less community input. The Commission has completed most of the Strategic Plan and feels that it is time to go back to the community for input on how the Commission can best serve Whatcom County.

Commission members reviewed the five strategic goals in the 2004-2007 Strategic Plan and agreed that the goals were still timely with the addition of guiding principles to goal #5. David Webster asked each committee to list the activities that they would like to make sure stay on the "radar" for the upcoming planning process. The committees listed the following:

Law and Justice Committee

- Safety Audits
- Benchmark Report

Victim and Children Support Committee

- Focus Groups (service providers, victims)
- Safety Audit Recommendation Follow-up
- DV School Policies
- WSCADV Fatality Review Report

Education-Outreach Committee (The committee noted that many of these are annual activities)

- Annual Report
- City/County Council Presentations
- DV Presentation for Commission Meetings
- Community Presentations
- DV Awareness Month
- Promote Safety Audit Recommendations

The purposes of a strategic plan were discussed:

Plan Purposes

- Organizational continuity
- New stakeholder decision making and inclusion
- Good governance/risk management
- Lens for assessing "new" (things change quickly)
- PR and funding
- Closure, celebrating successes
- Encompass community input

David divided the members into small groups to review a page of sample parameters that could be used in selecting Commission goals. He challenged the groups to decide on 8-10 parameters they thought could be used as guidelines.

When the groups reassembled David challenged the groups to think about which format would work best for the Commission: Exclusionary (if missing some parameters cannot do project); Inclusive (must meet all of parameters); Percentile Guidance (a percentage of the parameters must be met). The members voted that they would prefer to use the Percentile

Guidance in setting parameters for projects. The groups suggested the following Exclusionary weights:

- Fiscally responsible
- Measure of financial feasibility
- Be consistent with Commission's Guiding Principles
- Fit within the 6 general tasks assigned to the Commission by the city/county ordinance
- Be executable with existing staffing pattern
- No direct services unless no one else will do it.

Inclusion weight included:

- Establish outcome measures that are clear
- Engages Commission members in projects

The groups recommended the follow parameters (* more than one group voted)

1. Be consistent with the Commission's Guiding Principles *
2. Fit within the six general tasks assigned to the Commission in its creation by city/county ordinance *
3. Be fully paid for before inauguration (modification was suggested)
7. Result in publishable data and/or report *
8. Have citywide (county-wide, regional, nation-wide, etc.) impact *
9. Reach underserved populations (e.g. by culture, race, age, sexual orientation, rural, homeless, non-English speakers, differently abled, etc. (combine with 10)*)
10. Transcend economic class in both reach and impact (combine with 9) *
13. Be executable within our existing staffing pattern and abilities of Commission members *
14. Not add more than temporary staff positions that end once the strategy is executed (modification was suggested)
15. Balance prevention with intervention strategies (e.g. also focus on conditions that lead or contribute to DV)
16. Leverage systemic or policy change *
17. Leverage systemic change in a new sector
21. Not constitute direct service to domestic violence victims
22. Be identified as a priority by DV survivors and/or service providers
24. Strengthen the work of collaborative providers *
26. Produce "digestible" (understandable) outputs for the general public's education
27. Result in quantifiable community change within X months/years.
33. Always have a component that addresses perpetrators
35. Be adaptable for children and teens or have a child/teen parallel component

David then had Commission members list the stakeholders they would like involved in the strategic planning process

The list included:

- EMT / volunteer fire department
- Family/resource positions in schools
- Clergy
- Prosecutors
- Police
- Public health
- Community health clinics
- Public health nurses
- Kendall Watch

- RTL

The geographical area of the stakeholders should include:

- East side
- Rural
- Pt Roberts
- Tribal

The demographic stakeholder include:

- Foster parents
- 1st generation immigrants (key leaders, avg. citizens, service providers)
- Senior centers
- Faith communities
- Homeless
- Youth
- University and colleges – higher ed
- GLBT

David stated that his next step is to meet with the Strategic Planning Committee to finalize which parameters will best suit the Commission's needs.

8. Next Commission Meeting

Tuesday, June 12th, 10:00 a.m. until Noon

St. Luke's Community Health Education Center