

**MINUTES FOR THE
BELLINGHAM-WHATCOM COUNTY COMMISSION
AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
September 15, 2009**

Members Attending: Karen Burke, Anna Carey, Regina Delahunt, Sheri Emerson, Rebecca Johnson, Jon Komorowski, Bryon Manering, Dave McEachran, Shannon Meyer, Bruce Van Glubt

Members Absent: Sheila Brillson, Bill Elfo, Cindy Enger, Nikki Finkbonner, Kristen Hammer, Joan Hoisington, Mike Knapp, Joy Monjure, Kathy Ramsay, Todd Ramsay, Becky Skaggs, Linda Storck, Karen Summers, Gary Tomsic

Guests: Michelle Jefferson, Office Manager, Lummi Victims of Crime
Mark Pursley, Gun Violence Prevention Coordinator, City of Seattle

Staff Attending: Andrea Cary-Grant, Director
Sue Parrott, Program Supervisor

Rebecca Johnson, Chair, called the September meeting of the Bellingham-Whatcom County Commission Against Domestic Violence to order at 10:10 a.m. Tuesday, September 15, 2009 at St Luke's Community Health Center, 3333 Squalicum Parkway, Bellingham, WA.

1. Welcome

Rebecca commented on the lack of quorum and stated that Executive Committee has been discussing this issue and may look into the definition of quorum in the By-Laws. Introductions were made.

2. Presentation by Michelle Jefferson on Lummi Victims of Crime (LVOC)

Michelle reviewed the services provided by Lummi Victims of Crime. LVOC serves any type of crime victim (domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse, stalking, homicide). Service recipients must be a member of the Lummi Tribe, a Native American that resides in Whatcom County, or the crime must have occurred on the Lummi Reservation. LVOC offers a 24 hour help line. They also provide a 16 bed shelter that is available to Native American domestic violence victims from any state. Exceptions are made for sexual assault victims who need a safe place to stay. Due to housing shortages, many victims have needed to stay at the shelter longer than 30 days.

LVOC offers a full range of services including crisis intervention, referrals, accompaniment to court hearings, transportation, emergency assistance, traditional healing, contracted counseling services, and support groups (Teen Girls, Women's Sexual Assault). LVOC recently lost its civil legal program but is hoping to secure new funding to continue that important service. Over 200 clients are served each year, with the primary issue as domestic violence.

Michelle discussed the challenges of working on domestic violence and sexual assault issues on Lummi Reservation. She stated that the problem continues to be serious, but that more people are reaching out for services. Consequently, she believes that the numbers served at LVOC will continue to increase. She discussed some of the ways LVOC hopes to continue education and outreach to the community. LVOC is holding a conference on October 21-23 and all are welcome.

3. Introduction of Mark Pursley, Gun Violence Prevention Coordinator, City of Seattle

Mark introduced himself and stated that the scope of his work is to address gun violence on a statewide level, and not just with the City of Seattle. He stated that he has not found many communities that recognize the relationship between gun violence and domestic violence. He wanted to attend this meeting to learn more about the Commission and the work in this community in addressing guns and domestic violence.

4. Executive Committee Report: Rebecca Johnson

Rebecca reminded members that October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. She informed the Commission that annual presentations will be made to the cities and the county during the month of October. She asked if any Commission members could assist in the Lynden, Blaine and Sumas presentations. She re-iterated that the Executive Committee has been discussing attendance issues and the lack of quorum at meetings.

5. Education Outreach/Victim and Children Services Committee Report: Sheri Emerson

Sheri reviewed the work of the committee in the development of Domestic Violence Workplace policies, procedures and guidelines. These materials are now available as a template on the Commission's website. The committee has plans for distributing this material to employers throughout Whatcom County, as well as for giving presentations. Two people who assisted the Commission in the development of these policies and guidelines are Vicki Curtis, Human Resource Director at Interfaith Community Health Center and Lorna McGowan-Smith, Human Resource Senior Analyst with the City of Bellingham. They have been nominated to receive this year's Domestic Violence Outstanding Achievement Award.

Sheri informed Commission members that they will be receiving an email with sample letters to the editor on Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The committee is asking that Commission members send letters to the editor of local newspapers using one of the sample letters during the month of October.

6. Law and Justice Committee Report: Shannon Meyer

Shannon announced that the Benchmark Report (2002-2007) has been posted on line. The committee is currently collecting data for the 2003- 2008 report. The committee has added two items to its work plan. One is to revisit the standard domestic violence risk assessment protocol used by all law enforcement agencies in Whatcom County. The other is to develop best practice protocols for firearms in the Civil Protection Order process. The Commission

has sent many local professionals to national trainings using Grants to Encourage Arrest funds. The Commission has not yet heard if it has been awarded another GTEA.

7. GTEA Update: Sue Parrott

Sue encouraged members to review a statistical report on services provided by the Domestic Violence Specialist in the Commission packet. Sue stated that the sixth and final Small Cities Educational Forum will be held on October 15th. It will feature the WA State Fatality Review with a special focus on immigrant victims. The Northwest Justice Project will provide training for law enforcement on U-Visas and VAWA Petitions. Sue is currently compiling a mini-"benchmark report" for each of the small cities for the years 2005- 2008. Sue reviewed the highlights of the national conference that 8 people from Whatcom County attended in St. Paul, MN in June. She distributed information on an upcoming webinar on DV Court and emphasized the many training opportunities that have been made available to Whatcom County through the Grants to Encourage Arrest Award.

Karen Burke noted that through the work of the Domestic Violence Specialist, DVSAS has secured funding to place a part time advocate in the small cities, with a focus on Ferndale. The DVS now is able to directly introduce domestic violence crime victims to a community based advocate.

8. Directors Report: Andrea Cary-Grant

Andrea highlighted and reviewed the upcoming events for Domestic Violence Awareness Month. She noted that all the promotional material is on the Commission's web site. She encouraged members to take and distribute materials. The DV Month Vigil will be held at 6 pm on Thursday, October 1st. The Kulshan Chorus will open the vigil. Andrea also mentioned the Chemical Dependency Forum scheduled for October 5th. This is an outcome of the Domestic Violence, Chemical Dependency and Mental Health Summit that was sponsored last October by the Commission. Commission members were also encouraged to attend the October 15th WA State Domestic Violence Fatality Review presentation, which will be held for a general audience in the morning.

Andrea discussed her presentation on the Domestic Violence Workplace policies with the Society for Human Resource Managers. She stated that the Commission is coordinating attendance at a webinar on the role of Perpetrator Treatment Programs in a Coordinated Community Response. Treatment providers and advocates will be listening to two webinars together, followed by a discussion.

9. Adjourn 11:13 a.m.

**Next Meeting Tuesday, November 17, 2009, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
 St. Luke's Community Health Education Center**