

VVAN 1st Quarter Business Meeting

February 21, 2020 in Richmond, VA

Meeting Location: VDSS Central Regional Office

Minutes submitted by Sharron Saunders

Members in attendance: Cristi Lawton-VVAN Executive Director; Robin Bostic-VVAN President (King & Queen V/WAP); Lindsay Cassada-VVAN 1st Vice President (Chesterfield DV Resource Center); Mary Anne Freshwater- VVAN 2nd Vice President (Appomattox V/WP); Mindy Stell-VVAN Treasurer (Dinwiddie V/WAP); Jon Zug-VVAN Board Member at Large (Albemarle Circuit Court County Clerk's Office); Laurie Crawford-VVAN Board Member at Large (VDSS); Joyce Walsh (Halifax County V/WAP) via phone; Sharron Saunders-VVAN Secretary (City of Richmond V/WS); Sharon Reed (Washington County V/WAP); Michael Schaefer (Roanoke HSG); Mary Booker (City of Lynchburg V/WAP); Amber Leake (DOC Victim Services Unit)

Call to Order: Robin Bostic (King & Queen V/WAP)

The meeting was called to order at approximately 1:03 pm.

All members in attendance introduced themselves and identified their program locality jurisdiction.

Announcements: No announcements.

Secretary's Report-Approval of Minutes: Submitted by Mary Anne Freshwater (Appomattox V/WP)

*Jon Zug made a motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes; second motion received; no discussion; all voted in favor; no opposition; the motion to accept the secretary's report passed and the report were adopted by the board.

The minutes will be provided on the VVAN website once the website project is complete.

Treasurer's Report: Submitted by Mindy Stell (Dinwiddie V/WAP)

Treasurer's balance as of January 31, 2020 balance = \$140,119.05

Grant Account balance as of January 31, 2020 = \$29,938.32 (multiple grants included in balance)

*Jon Zug made a motion to approve the treasurer's report; second motion received; no discussion; all voted in favor; the motion to accept the treasurer's report passed; the report was adopted by the board.

Executive Director's Report: Cristi Lawton

Cristi e-mailed out the Executive Directors Report in advance on February 19, 2020.

Crisis Response Teams

Crisis Response Teams- VVAN is still waiting for revised policy and procedure protocols from DCJS based on lessons learned from the VA Beach crisis. To request a regional CRT contact Julia Fuller with DCJS for her review and approval.

We have an ongoing CRT response to assist Cumberland County with a double homicide. Currently, there is no Victim/Witness Assistance program available in Cumberland County. Neighboring

Victim/Witness directors have been helping out along with two CRT volunteers. Cumberland County anticipates hiring a new V/WAP director soon.

A CRT was requested and scheduled in the City of Richmond to respond to a nursing homicide in January.

The next Basic CRT Training has been scheduled for April to take place in Dublin, VA. Once you have received Basic CRT training you are expected to serve on a CRT Response Team and to attend quarterly trainings to keep your skills fresh.

Victim Assist Helpline / Human Trafficking Infoline

To promote Human Trafficking Awareness month a billboard was posted in the City of Richmond along with Facebook ad campaigns to promote the Infoline. We are still working on the website to feature the resource and chat capabilities.

Homicide Survivor Support Groups

We have existing Homicide Support Groups (HSG) in the following areas: Albemarle/ Charlottesville, Alexandria, Amelia, Fairfax, Franklin County, Henrico County, Hopewell, Loudoun, Newport News, and Rockingham County.

New HSGs are set to begin in the following areas: Appomattox County, City of Roanoke, Washington County, City of Chesapeake, and Fauquier County.

The Teenage Spanish speaking HSG has been placed on hold due to a lack of registrations.

The HSGs are requesting to meet more than once a month and for longer than one hour. We are working on provisions to achieve their requests.

We have scheduled another training in May with HSG expert Connie Sandon in the Richmond area. Contact Dina Blythe (the VVAN HSG Coordinator) for questions regarding the training or general interest in HSGs. The HSGs have been well received throughout the state. Information regarding the various HSGs can be found on the VVAN website for specific e-mails or phone numbers.

Legal Services Program

Funding from the one-time DCJS VOCA Grant Initiative allowed VVAN to hire a victim services attorney in January. Her name is Sarika Reuben. Sarika is currently setting up the program infrastructure necessary for a nonprofit to offer legal service. The program is scheduled to be launched tentatively in the spring. She's currently drafting information on the following topics: policies and procedures, malpractice insurance, and software capabilities.

Her availability will be focused on a limited area assisting V/W Assistant Programs, allied partners and victims. As the program grows with capability and capacity her services will spread outwards. She is one attorney hired to service the entire state of Virginia with a part-time coordinator.

Training and Technical Assistance (OVC Grant)

The next Basic Intensive Advocacy Training with the Action Alliance has been scheduled to occur February 24-25, 2020 in Hampton. This training is full with a waiting list. Another training has been planned for September in Wytheville.

The statewide training needs assessments survey closed February 14, 2020. At last count, 40% of the V/W Assistance Programs had responded. The results will be analyzed to help improve and coordinate training opportunities with Action Alliance and DCJS.

A V/W Assistance Program Director's Forum has been scheduled for March 24 – 25, 2020 at the Hotel Roanoke. The directors will have a chance to network and learn best practices from each other. VVAN is offering 60 guaranteed lodging scholarships slots at the Hotel Roanoke to all who register and pay by March 4th; 40 directors have registered so far. Representatives from DCJS will attend on the second day to answer questions.

Additional 2020 trainings include: Basic Intensive Advocacy Training, a Basic Victim Assistance Academy, an Advanced Victim Assistance Academy, and HSG training. VVAN will partner with DCJS and VVF for more CRT trainings.

Improving Criminal Justice Response Grant (ICJR)

We received the official documentation from DCJS this week concerning the Improving Criminal Justice Response Grant (ICJR). This is a new grant in which VVAN is partnering with five other agencies. VVAN's part of the grant involves coordinating trainings around sexual assault response teams (SART), Lethality Assessment Protocols (LAP), and the provision of legal services for survivors of domestic and sexual violence. We will hire a part-time coordinator to assist DCJS and the Action Alliance with various types of trainings and initiatives regarding LAP. Interviews will occur next week.

Internal Operations

As required by our VOCA and OVC grants we are planning our first full audit this year. We are seeking quote proposals. We are tracking budget to actuals for all grants and developing spending plans where needed.

Roanoke HSG volunteer Michael Shaefer successfully obtained a \$1,000 grant to the Network for the HSG.

VVAN has submitted several VVF applications for funding to cover the cost of food at our events.

We were awarded an unrestricted grant funding from the Queen of VA Entertainment in the amount of \$2,500.

Marketing

The VVAN website is behind schedule but we are planning for a spring launch.

Our Network brochures are almost complete and we hope to launch our E-Newsletter this spring.

Membership

Out of 113 V/W Programs 53 have renewed their membership in addition to some local allied partners. Our goal is at least a 75% renewal rate. Letter reminding members to renew will be mailed out soon. The membership increased based on the services VVAN is providing and the level of activities. New member benefits are available such as, training discounts. The new VVAN website will list all members with a link to the member's program page.

Strategic Planning Retreat

The retreat has been scheduled for May 7- 8, 2020 to focus on the best way to obtain member feedback.

*Jon Zug made a motion to adopt Cristi's Executive Director Report; second motion received; no discussion; all voted in favor; no opposition; the motion to accept the report was passed and adopted by the board.

Committee Reports:

Finance Committee: No report made. Mindy Stell is the only person on this committee. New members and fund raising ideas are needed. Notify Cristi if you would like to join this committee.

Legislative Committee Report: Robin Bostic (King & Queen V/WAP)

There were many bills addressed during this year's General Assembly session. Robin provided information on the following three Senate Bills during this meeting:

1. SB 624 The geriatric prisoner's release bill presented to reduce the age from 60 and 65 to 50 and 55. This a governors initiative bill that has passed through the senate so far.

Bill Summary: Conditional release of geriatric prisoners. Allows any person serving a sentence imposed upon a conviction for a felony offense, other than a Class 1 felony, who (i) is 55 years of age or older and has served at least 15 years of the sentence imposed or (ii) is 50 years of age or older and has served at least 20 years of the sentence imposed, to petition the Parole Board for conditional release.

2. SB 493 The inmate conditional release bill for those terminally ill. This a governors initiative bill.

Bill Summary: Conditional release of geriatric, terminally ill, or permanently physically disabled prisoners. Provides that any person serving a sentence imposed upon a conviction for a felony offense, other than a Class 1 felony, who is terminally ill or permanently physically disabled is eligible for consideration by the Parole Board for conditional release. The bill also provides that any person serving such sentence (i) who is 65 years of age or older and has served at least five years of the sentence imposed or (ii) who is 60 years of age or older and has served at least 10 years of the sentenced imposed is eligible for consideration by the Parole Board for conditional release without the need to petition the Parole Board.

3. SB 489 or HB 660 Judge can defer or dismiss a criminal case.

Bill summary: Authority to defer and dismiss a criminal case. Provides that a trial court presiding in a criminal case may, after any plea or trial, with or without a determination, finding, or pronouncement of guilt, and notwithstanding the entry of a conviction order, upon consideration of the facts and circumstances of the case, upon its own motion with the consent of the defendant, or with the agreement of the defendant and the Commonwealth, defer proceedings, defer entry of a conviction order, if none, or defer entry of a final order, and continue the case for final disposition, on such reasonable terms and conditions as may be agreed upon by the parties and placed on the record, or if there is no agreement, as may be imposed by the court. The bill provides that final disposition may include (i) conviction of the original charge, (ii) conviction of an alternative charge, or (iii) dismissal of the proceedings.

Victim's Rights Committee: Kyanna Perkins (OAG) and Judy Holl (Alexandria V/WAP)

The next committee meeting will take place in March, 2020. Kyanna and Judy met with Cristi and Sarika to discuss their assistance to the legal advocacy program. This committee has two new members.

Program Committee: Lindsay Cassada (Chesterfield DV Resource Center)

The annual program conference will take place on November 18-20, 2020 in VA Beach at the Hilton Hotel. The plenary speaker has been secured. Several other speakers have been identified for the pre-conference and closing. A meeting has been set to identify workshop speakers. The next meeting has been scheduled for March 2, 2020 at the VVAN office. A RFP will be submitted. Amber Leake expressed an interest in speaking at the conference.

VA Victims Fund Committee

Next meeting will take place on March 4, 2020 at the VVF office.

OLD BUSINESS: No old business to report.

NEW BUSINESS: No new business to report.

Program Announcement:

Kyanna announced that today is the deadline date to submit names to the 2020 OAG's Unsung Hero Award program held during NCVRW.

Other NCVRW Activities Announced:

Mary Booker and Mary Anne Freshwater are members of local DV Coalition who annually supports supply drive by visiting area Walmart stores to seek supplies for DV shelters.

Lindsay Cassada announced a plan to provide a government and community bedsheet drive in April to honor Sexual Assault Awareness month. The new bedsheet drive involves the donation of brand new bedsheets in neutral colors and in five different sizes to replace the sheets collected by the forensic unit for investigational study. The five different sized new sheets will be available on scene in the law enforcement officer's forensic unit vehicle. The officer will leave a set of new sheets behind for the sexual assault victim to find after returning from a forensic exam. The new sheets will be tagged with a label providing information about the member of the community donation and free counseling resources. Lindsay waiting for approval from the Chesterfield County Administrator.

*Jon Zug made a motion to adjourn the business meeting; second and third motion received; no discussion; all voted in favor; the motion to adjourn the meeting passed; no opposition; meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting Schedule Dates and Time:

FY20 - 2nd Quarter Board Members Meeting on May 21, 2020 at 10:30am

Location: County Office Building at 5th Street in Charlottesville, VA

FY20 – 2nd Quarter Business Meeting on May 21, 2020 at 2pm

Location: County Office Building at 5th Street in Charlottesville, VA

FY20 - 3rd Quarter Board Member's Meeting

Location: Richmond-VDSS Central Office on October 23, 2020 at 10am; in the Hanover Room);

FY20 – 3rd Quarter Business Meeting to be held during the November VVAN Conference