

**MINUTES FOR THE
BELLINGHAM-WHATCOM COUNTY COMMISSION
AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
June 17, 2008**

- Members Attending:** Cynthia Bauleke, Anna Carey, Regina Delahunt, Sheri Emerson, Cindy Enger, Kirsten Hammer, Rebecca Johnson, Jon Komorowski, Byron Manering, Shannon Meyer, Joy Monjure, Candy Petersen
- Members Absent:** Karen Burke, Dennis Carlson, Bill Elfo, Nikki Finkbonner, Joan Hoisington, Mike Knapp, Dave McEachran, Todd Ramsay, Linda Storck, Karen Summers, Gary Tomsic, Bruce Van Glubt
- Guests:** Kathy Ramsay, DSHS Children's Administrator
- Staff Attending:** Andrea Cary-Grant, Sue Parrott, Linda Ward

Cynthia Bauleke, Chair, called the June Meeting of the Bellingham-Whatcom County Commission Against Domestic Violence to order at 10:10 a.m., Tuesday, June 17, 2008 at St Luke's Community Health Center, 3333 Squalicum Parkway, Bellingham, WA.

1. Welcome

Cindy welcomed all to the June Quarterly Meeting.

2. Public Comment

None

3. Why Are We Here?

Cindy asked the Commission members if they would like to share anything that was happening in their workplace. Candy Petersen expressed concern that some of the women seeking DSHS assistance are being forced into the Work First program before they are ready. Some of the women need time to ensure their safety and physical needs are met prior to obtaining a job. Candy encouraged Commission members to phone the DCFS administrative office to express their concerns.

Cindy encouraged Commission members to be thinking of things they would like to share at future Commission meetings.

4. Consent Agenda

Due the lack of a quorum the April 29th Commission Meeting minutes could not be presented for approval.

5. Training

Topic: Faith: Bridge or Barrier
Presenter: Rabbi Cindy Enger

Rabbi Enger shared that her background included working with the FaithTrust Institute, established in 1977 by Marie Fortune, as the first Jewish staff person. She stated that religious arenas are never neutral, which could be helpful or harmful and each religion has its own roadblocks. However, much has been done in the past 30 years to break down some of the barriers. Rabbi Enger emphasized referrals to DV advocates, by religious leaders, should be central.

Rabbi Enger gave Commission members a handout "Responding to Domestic Violence: Guidelines for Pastors, Rabbis, Imams, Priests and Other Religious Leaders". She then divided the members into groups of three to discuss the subject. When the group reconvened Rabbi Enger stated that the goals are:

- 1) Safety for the woman and children
- 2) Accountability for the abuser
- 3) Restoration of individuals and if possible, relationships OR mornring the loss of the relationship.

She noted that the goals need to be accomplished in order, too often goal three is placed first.

Rabbi Enger commented that at times there is a distrust of the larger community and religious societies like to handle problems "in house". A religious leader can help on his/her own, but it is often not enough. There is a time that experienced advocates should be contacted for help. Religious leaders could give sermons on DV, giving members of the congregations an opportunity to seek help. There is a lot of advice written in religious text that can be interpreted to help in safety and accountability. It is a challenge to draw from traditions and move forward. In conclusion, Rabbi Enger read a poem she wrote entitled "You're Not Alone".

6. Committee Reports/Motions

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Rebecca Johnson gave the report.

Rebecca reported that the Executive Committee is getting familiar with the new director and officers. The committee has been talking about the strategic plan, how to engage members at Commission meetings and reviewing committee calendars. Andrea has presented the committee with a draft 2009 budget. Andrea and Cindy have meet with the county executive and will meet with the mayor later in the month.

VICTIM & CHILDREN SUPPORT COMMITTEE

Candy Petersen gave the report.

Candy reported that the committee didn't meet in May and will not meet again until September. The committee is still working on the school district procedures, as well as overseeing plans for a summit of mental health, chemical dependency and service providers. Candy announced that she is retiring from her position at DSHS and the committee will need a new chair when it reconvenes in September.

LAW & JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Shannon Meyer gave the report.

Shannon reported that the committee is currently collecting data for the benchmark report, which should be published in October to coincide with DV Awareness Month. The committee will continue to oversee the GTEA grant, as needed. The committee will also follow up on best practices with the firearm protocol.

EDUCATION – OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Sheri Emerson gave the report.

Sheri reported that she and Andrea made a short presentation to SHRM on May 14th explaining some of the work the Commission is doing on DV in the workplace. Five SHRM members expressed interest in working with the Commission on developing best practices for workplace violence. She asked Commission member to identify their workplace policies.

The committee is compiling topics for Commission meeting trainings. The September meeting topic is on workplace policies. The November meeting training topic is to be determined.

FJC AD HOC COMMITTEE

Shannon Meyer gave the report.

Shannon reported that the committee has decided to meet the third Thursday each month. Shannon encouraged interested members to join the committee. The first task of the committee will be to survey victims and service providers to determine available services and if other services are needed.

7. GTEA Update

Sue Parrott reported that the small cities are very grateful for work the DV Specialist has accomplished. Caryl Dunavan, DV Specialist, meets weekly with Sue. She reported that she has spent a considerable portion of her time supporting victims through the handling of no contact orders and rescission requests. Interpretation services have been used on several occasions.

Sue stated that they will be conducting three educational forums this year for criminal justice system personnel in the small cities. The first one scheduled is on stalking. As part of the grant, Sue and Caryl will meet with service providers to determine how to improve victims linkages with DV services.

8. Director's Report

Andrea Cary-Grant gave the director's report.

- The Commission has signed a MOU with Ferndale for financial support.
- The ordinance change will be introduced at the July 7th county council meeting.
- An organization in Washington DC has called the Commission office requesting information on our work with the Meridian School District policy, citing that in their research, we are the only city in the country to be doing such ground-breaking work.
- Andrea and Cindy Bauleke met with Pete Kremen to give him a Commission update. Pete stated that there is not as much county funding available as previously anticipated. The county will need to make some budget cuts, however, the Commission funding is a county priority.
- Andrea and Cindy will be meeting with Mayor Pike next week.
- The county council presentation is scheduled for July 8th and the city council presentation is scheduled for July 14th.

9. Adjourn 11:45 p.m.

**Next Meeting Tuesday, September 23, 2008, 10:00 a.m. until Noon
 St. Luke's Community Health Education Center**