
The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Brent Messer at 5:35 P.M.

New member Joyti Parmar introduced to Council and welcomed by members.

Members Present: Brent Messer, Randolph Jones, Joyti Parmar, Roseanne Morse, Shelia Dickison, Norma Charles, Michele Cripe, Mikki McDougall, Jay Herron;

Members Absent: Cammie Cromie, Gopher Neeland

Concerned Citizen: Susan Nelson

Staff present: Karon Walker, Loretta Golden, Ines Rios.

Minutes from the June 28th meeting read and approved. The Council did not meet in July.

**Officers Report**

Brent identified the need for a vice-chair for the Council since LeAnne Egeto was no longer with the Council due to her membership expiring. A brief discussion ensued and Randolph Jones was nominated by Jay Herron to serve as vice-chair. The motion was seconded and all members approved Mr. Jones to serve as vice-chair of the Council.

Brent informed members Ms. Gopher Neeland had regretfully informed him that due to health issues she would have to resign from the Council, he expressed well wishes for her and advised she might want to wait a month or to determine if her health improves and get back with him. She agreed and will get back with him by the next meeting. He heard from Cammie Cromie who is also ill and Susan Nelson, concerned citizen is out of town.

**Staff Report**

Karon Walker discussed the programs albeit hectic, but successful venture August 21 to meet the VOCA grant deadline. The grant was actually driven to Tallahassee by program staff in order to meet the 5:00 P.M. deadline. The grant funds five victim advocate counselors and totals over 180,000.00. Staff also discussed state wide concerns regarding the Rape Crisis Program Trust Fund and the proposal by the DOH to include trust fund money in the department’s spending reduction. Council members were given an opportunity to sign letters asking local delegates and district representatives to oppose the inclusion of Rape Crisis Program Trust Funds in the Department of Health’s spending reductions. All members signed letters as a show of support for the program and services for sexual assault victims. Further discussion took place regarding Alachua County’s budget issues and if the need existed for the Council to lobby or address the BoCC on behalf of the program. Loretta explained there is no proposed elimination of positions in the program for the fiscal year 2007/2008 budget. Loretta discussed how some of the RCPTF money is being used by the program: therapy, adult and teen support groups, SANE nurse training. A lively discussion followed regarding support of the SANE program at AGH and the need for the services in the community. Loretta identified it is imperative that the names of nurses who wish to be trained be given to her as money is available for training and a budget has been developed to cover cost related to registration, travel, meals and hotel. Loretta suggested the Council may want to write a letter to the CEO of Alachua General expressing the need for the SANE program in the community and the support the program has from the community. A draft for the Chair and Council to consider will be written by Mikki and submitted before and/or at the next Council meeting. Loretta also suggested the Council may want to consider developing stationary and letterhead using the BoCC’s approved logo. Brent advised he will look into this option, develop something and send to members for approval/feedback before the September 27th meeting. Roseanne suggested some formats and membership listings for consideration.

**Subcommittee**

Randolph Jones stated the subcommittee recommended the program’s focus to enhance services for male survivors of sexual assault come in the form a of support group. The group would initially be offered as a pilot project to determine interest and the number of males who might
access the service. It was determined the best way to generate members for the group would be to create awareness among local therapist who could refer clients to the group. Council members clarified the group would be supportive and not therapeutic. Interviews with the Gainesville Sun and other local media were discussed as a means of making the community and potential clients aware of the group. Dr. Charles, suggested any advertising target providers that might be able to refer male clients to the group. It was decided program staff will develop a 10 week pilot project for a male support group. Dr. Charles emphasized the importance of screening potential members and having resources available for anyone who does not meet the criteria and/or is inappropriate for the group.

Jay Herron suggested the Council may want to contact or write a letter to Mike Lew, author of Victims No Longer and ask for assistance or information in starting a male support group. It was not determined who will contact Mr. Lew, this responsibility may have been taken on by Loretta. Roseanne suggested contacting FCASV for information on providing services to male victims of sexual violence and the best way to encourage men to come forth and seek services. Joyti Parmar validated the difficulty of coming forth and identifying oneself as a victim of violence. Dr. Charles commended Randolph Jones and Jay Herron for their work on the subcommittee and thanked them for the unique perspectives they bring to the issue of sexual violence. Program staff should have 10 week pilot group model ready by October 25th meeting.

Old Business

Brent will get clarification from Margie Allen regarding Advisory Board Status reports to BoCC.

Loretta emphasized the need for an evaluation of the program by stakeholders and identified this activity is included proclamation establishing the Council. Members decided to form a subcommittee to work on developing an evaluation. Evaluation subcommittee members are: Joyti Parmar, Roseanne Morse, Shelia Dickison, Karon Walker, staff liaison. Some members expressed a desire to visit the AGH Forensic Exam room as they were not able to participate earlier. Mikki advised she schedule a tour and get back with them.

Due to the time items B and D on the agenda were tabled until the next meeting.

Concerned citizen Susan Nelson asked to be on the September agenda as she would like to discuss concerns related to the needs of victims who are taken to the hospital and undergo the forensic exam. Michele Cripe asked for clarification regarding board membership status and if we currently had a vacancy due to the resignation of Cathie Whitney. Brent advised the Council is at full membership. Joyti Parmar mentioned Council meeting time/date conflicts with another obligation and wondered if it is possible for the Council to consider changing it’s meeting time/date. Brent advised the date and time of the meeting had taken everyone’s schedule into consideration when initially discussed to change would create a conflict for even more members. Joyti understood and said she would continue to attend meetings.

Jay Herron mentioned that after feeling like the lone voice for so many years advocating for awareness and services for male victims of sexual assault in the military he feels some has heard him. He has been contacted by the military for an interview and may have an opportunity to give feedback regarding what is lacking in assistance and support services for veterans who have served and/or are currently serving in the military.

Meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 7:20 P.M.