Alachua County Victim Services & Rape Crisis Center Advisory Board Meeting May 24, 2007.

Meeting called to order by Chair Brent Messer at 5:40 P.M.

In Attendance: Jay Herron, Brent Messer, Randolph Jones, Norma Charles (secretary) Michele Cripe, Cammie Cromie; new members Mikki McDougall, Sheila Dickinson; VS&RCC staff: Sue Ahn, Loretta Golden, Denise Lash, Karon Walker; Absent: LeAnn Egeto, Susan Nelson, Cathie Jessup; Alternate Rosanne Morse.

Minutes from March 22nd meeting read and approved.

Officers Report - None

Staff Report: Discussion regarding funding, possible County budget cuts and how any loss of staff positions may impact the provision of services to victims. Loretta provided a brief update on funding from grant sources: VOCA, FCASV and GPD partnership via VAWA funds. Will keep the Council informed of potential budget cuts related to the VS&RCC. If cut to program budget is severe Advisory Council may be called upon to organize a letter writing campaign and/or speak on behalf of the program at public hearings related to the budget. Cuts may be between 10%-25%.

Male Survivor Group Subcommittee: The group did not meet in April. Members discussed contacting mental health groups to determine if they are working with male survivors who may be interested in a support group. Relevant community contact personnel was give to committee members by Dr. Charles. The subcommittee will meet 5:30 P.M., May 29, 2007; at Community Support Services.

Old Business: The Chair distributed revised copies of the Council's By-Laws. The new draft included revisions and suggestions made at the March 22nd meeting. Everyone was asked to take the revised copy home and makes notes of any needed changes, revisions or suggestions. By-Laws will be discussed at June 28th meeting and if approved will consider for adoption.

New Business: Cammie suggested fund raising possibilities that the Advisory Council could carry out to support the program financially. All were in agreement, fund raising is a good idea but some concern with accepting donations on behalf of a government funded agency. The Chair decided to ask someone from the County's legal department to speak at a future meeting(s) to address the BoCC's rules and regulations regarding Advisory Councils, funding raising and accepting financial donations. This idea was tabled as a long term goal, but members all agreed the need for an in-service from the legal department is still a good idea. The Chair stated he will send an e-mail to the County Attorney's office to see if they will send someone to speak to the Advisory Council. Jay commented he felt the funder raiser should be something really unique.

Loretta reminded members that the Advisory Council Resolution states the Council will do an annual evaluation of the program and services. She further stated that she is looking forward to an objective review of the program, it's staff and services. She felt the Council could ask Stakeholders such as law enforcement, hospitals, other service providers, community agencies, etc to evaluate the program. Loretta suggested to the Chair the formation of a subcommittee to work on the program evaluation might be a good idea. Council members stated they need to know more about the program and inquired about the possibility of a field trip to find out about the program's services, by talking with staff/ interviewing staff or possibly shadowing the advocates on a call. Cammie expressed a particular interest in services provided to sexual assault victims.

Mikki McDougall, Forensic Nurse Examiner and coordinator of AGH/SANE program, offered to provide Council members with a walk through of the hospital procedures for treating sexual assault victims and a visit to the exam room. This can only be done on her day off which is usually a Monday. However, Monday, June 11th is not available for the tour. Council members should e-mail Karon Walker, program supervisor, if they want to visit the office, shadow and/or interview staff . Dr Charles stated one of her friends design program evaluations, she will ask him if he will give the Council a draft to use as a guide in developing the evaluation tool for the ACVS&RCC. Loretta informed members that the program does send an evaluation to clients who use program services. Members asked her to bring copies of the client evaluation form to the next meeting for their review.

Several of the Council members whose terms expires May 2007, inquired about how to renew their terms since they had only served six months and wanted to be considered for another term. The Chair advised them to complete another application on line and submit it as he had done. Loretta informed the five members whose terms expire 5/07 that she did renew their terms in the County's on-line system but members whose terms expire must complete another application.

Brent was thanked for the generous donation of name tags for the Council members.

Dr. Charles asked if it was possible to meet somewhere else, perhaps for dinner, in order for Council members to get to know each other better or maybe have a potluck meeting.

Loretta stated the program does plan to provide refreshments at future meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 6:55 P.M.