

**FAMILY VIOLENCE COORDINATING COUNCIL**  
**March 28, 2007**  
**ROOM 14, GOVERNMENTAL CENTER**  
**5:00 P.M.**

<b>MEETING MINUTES</b>
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Council in Attendance: Judge Karen Abrams, Tim Cameron, Rona Harding, Lanny Lancaster, Laura Joyce, Kathleen O'Brien, Ella May Russell, Elizabeth Schaeffer. Julie Fouché attended on behalf of Jim Tanavage and Andree Wells attended on behalf of Maureen Johnson.

Absent: John Helldorfer, Sue Sabo, Judge John Slade, Brian Cedar, Kathleen Lyon, Jim Tanavage.

Recorder: Kathy Arnold

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Kathleen O'Brien at 5:01 p.m.

Introduction of Guest Speaker:

Kathy O'Brien introduced Mr. David Sergeant from the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence.

Mr. Sergeant is a retired Police Officer and has eleven years experience with the Domestic Violence Network. He presented information on domestic violence statistics as well as the review process. The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence currently has ten (10) Counties/Cities participating in the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team and by the end of 2007 he expects the total participation to be at twenty-one (21) teams. Mr. Sergeant feels Fatality Review Teams can work hand-in-hand with Coordinating Councils. He personally attends participating Fatality Review team meetings providing guidance and support. The Maryland Domestic Violence Fatality Review Council provides a quarterly newsletter to participants with relevant issues, changes, and recommendations.

County's with a low percentage of DV cases often include near fatalities in the review process and Mr. Sergeant suggested St. Mary's consider doing this too.

Mr. Sergeant suggested the FVCC also consider Lethality Assessment Training for law enforcement officers. He can provide this training to the Supervisors along with a training video, and then Supervisors provide the Lethality Assessment training and video to other staff.

Mr. Sergeant stated the Calvert County has been a member of the Maryland Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team since 2004 and the Calvert team holds regular quarterly meetings.

Kathy O'Brien advised Mr. Sergeant that Sheriff Tim Cameron and Ella May Russell are ready to get things started in St. Mary's County.

Review/Approval of Minutes:

Kathy O'Brien requested Council approval of the February 28, 2007 Meeting Minutes. Council voted and meeting minutes duly approved.

Review/Discussion:

- Kathy reported that the Coordinated Community Response Committee will meet again on Wednesday April 4, 2007.
- Laura Joyce is awaiting a response from her Grant request to purchase camera/s for Law Enforcement.
- To date, the Case Review Team has held five (5) meetings and reviewed seventeen (17) cases. Laura Joyce and Julie Fouché are concerned that Court ordered DV cases, with unsupervised probation, may not actually be following through on the order to attend Counseling. Confidentiality prevents service providers from discussing these cases and/or attendance in counseling. Kathy O'Brien stated that the Clerk's Office is faxing the counseling orders to Walden now and a release of information is being signed while the individual is still in the courtroom. Discussion continued on the laws involving DV charges, summonses, and supervised or unsupervised probation.
- Public Awareness - Kathy indicated that April is Sexual Assault Prevention Month and the Month of the Child. Kathy plans to advertise DV information on the County STS Buses.
- Tracking System – post-poned until the next meeting. However Kathy requested that Council members provide input on what information would be appropriate to include. Kathy asked me to have Sue Sabo to send a sample of IT's proposed format to all Council members.
- Rev. Rona Harding knows a DV survivor that is interested in filling vacant Council seat. The individual requests confidentiality and will speak to the council on her experiences however she does not want to speak publicly. Kathy O'Brien will ask the County to send her a Council application.
- Leah's House –Council discussion on the recent news articles about Leah's House. Council discussed how to proceed on the issues of Leah's House and possibly inviting her to a FVCC meeting in the future to explain her program and plans.
- Kathy O'Brien asked Council members to refrain from speaking out individually on behalf of the Council.
- Andree Wells reported on Maureen Johnson's condition and progress. Andree shared a letter with the Council that Maureen's daughter wrote about her experience with DV.

Plans/Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 25, 2007 at 5:00 p.m. in Room 14 at the Governmental Center.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Kathy Arnold, Recording Secretary