



STATE OF WISCONSIN

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DOMESTIC ABUSE

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GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DOMESTIC ABUSE

MEETING MINUTES

February 14, 2024

9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Meeting was held virtually

Approved April 10, 2024

Council Members Present: Shannon Barry, Sue Sippel, Sue Perry, Dr. Abdul Shour, Milly Gonzales, Rep. Pat Snyder, Rosalind McClain, Alena Taylor, Cyrena Martin, Janan Najeeb, Virginia Gittens Escudero

Council Members Absent: Rep. Sue Conley, Sen. Melissa Agard

Guests Present: Julie Fisher, Kelsey Mullins, Michelle Rawlings, Alexandra Stanley, Teresa Nienow, Victoria (Sen. James Office), Sen. Andre Jacque, Sam Hope, Jenna Gormal, Marianne Hirsch, Jennifer McBain, Elizabeth Lucas, Courtney Olson

DCF/Governor's Council Staff Present: Stacey Cicero

Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions

Perry called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. Members were welcomed and members provided introductions.

Recognition of Outgoing Council Members

Sippel thanked outgoing Council Members, Melissa Baldauff and Sen. Andre Jacque, for their service on the Council.

Approval of October 3, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Sippel moved to approve the minutes from the October 3, 2023 meeting and Gonzales seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meeting scheduled for December 6, 2023 was cancelled.

Call for Motion

Rep. Snyder noted that it appears in recent years, much Council business has been conducted without the benefit of full transparency and in violation of the Open Meetings Law. Therefore, I request support for a motion that the Council undertake a formal review to determine all policies, grants, and other public decisions that were made during violations of the Open Meetings Law. Therefore, I move that the Council should vote to begin a process to find what was done in violation of the Open Meetings Law and being working on remedies. Second by Gonzales. Motion carried.

Sippel noted that the Council met believing the meetings were properly noticed. DCF staff noted that the public notices were submitted as instructed during training. New staff took over the Council in April 2022. The process at DCF also changed during this time and sometimes the notices posted and sometimes they didn't. The process has been reviewed and adjusted to ensure Council and Committee meetings are properly posted and verified.

Discussion included clarification from Sippel that the Long Range Plan was not a product of the Council, and was not voted on or approved by the Council. Sippel also noted that the committees of the Council do not keep minutes and do not vote on items. No committee can take any action on its own. All committee reports are documented during reports to the Council.

Presentation

Teresa Nienow, Director of Grant Programs & Training, State of Wisconsin Department of Justice, Office of Crime Victim Services (OCVS) provided an update on Victim of Crime Act (VOCA) funding levels and the competitive grant application that will be released soon.

Lobbying Update from End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin (End Abuse)

Jenna Gormal, Public Policy Director for End Abuse, provided a lobbying update.

Access Committee Report

Gonzales reported that the committee continues to work on the update to the anti-oppression manual.

Legislative and Policy Committee Report

Taylor reported the workgroup focusing on the updating the Batterer's Treatment Standards has stalled a bit and are establishing how to continue moving forward. The Alma Center has a PhD student that may be able to assist with the project. Olson reported the workgroup focusing on the Fatality Review Initiative is watching to see if Assembly Bill 188 passes. This Bill established fatality review commissions under one umbrella. Domestic violence may be included in this. If the Bill passes, the workgroup will begin to look for funding. Mullins approached the committee to work on updating the Guardian Ad Litem Handbook. It was last updated in 2017. A workgroup will form, Mullins will lead the group.

Budget, Finance and Sustainability Committee Report

Sippel reported the committee continues to work on a policy brief developed by Dr. Abdul Shour. Input has been obtained from committee members. The brief will be brought before the full council at the April meeting. Committee discussed the 2023 domestic abuse surcharges that each county imposes at the time of sentencing. The amount collected was about \$100,000 less than previous years. The committee will be monitoring the surcharge. The committee continued to discuss the updates to the fair minimum standards. American Indians Against Abuse (AIAA) and Black and Brown Womyn Power Coalition (BBWPC) are working to provide information from underrepresented populations. The committee also spent time discussing the impending VOCA budget cuts and how programs can work together.

Committee Structure and Organization

Perry reminded Council members to join a committee of their choosing. All committees should review their goals and objectives and make updates. Updated goals and objectives will be reviewed at the April meeting.

Presentation

Jennifer McBain, Policy Analyst for the Bureau of Safety and Well-Being, provided a presentation on the Domestic Violence Handbook for CPS Professionals. The handbook may be viewed at [dvhandbook.pdf \(wisconsin.gov\)](https://www.wisconsin.gov/dvhandbook.pdf)

DCF Domestic Abuse Grant Program Update

Stacey Cicero, Domestic Abuse Program Coordinator reported:

- The position for the DV/SA Program Coordinator has been filled.
- DCF collaborated with BBWPC to hold stakeholder meetings to discuss programmatic needs surrounding two contracts: the Domestic Abuse Services for Immigrant, Refugee, and Former Refugee and the Domestic Abuse Services for Traditionally Underrepresented Populations. DCF reviewed these contracts to see if they could be combined. BBWPC facilitated three stakeholder meetings to gain an understanding of the needs of underrepresented populations and provided DCF a report with the findings. After reviewing the report and engaging the Bureau of Refugee Programs, DCF decided to keep the two

contracts separate. The new, competitive RFP will be released this summer for both contracts with a start date of January 1, 2025.

- Currently DCF staff are working on the federal annual program reports and application. We will be putting together a report on 2023 programmatic efforts and will make this available to the Council when it is complete.
- DCF is working on creating a webpage that will house all the council information and documents, including agendas and minutes

Open Forum for Council Members

Call for Motion: Sippel moved to have the April Council and Committee meetings at DAIS, Madison. Second by Barry. Motion carried. Rep. Snyder not present for the vote. Discussion included zoom capabilities and the need for further discussion at the April meeting to determine future meeting locations.

Discussion regarding the current Council policies and procedures. Sippel noted that the policies need to be reviewed. Perry asked for volunteers to begin updating the Council policies. Sippel, Barry and Rawlings volunteered.

Discussion regarding the Council's role in grant approvals. Sippel clarified that the Council is informed of new Requests for Proposals (RFP) as they become available. Members of the Council participate on the evaluation team to determine awards. Once the awards are made, the Council is informed of the results and may review procurement materials. *(The role of the council in DCF procurements was established at the October 26, 2016 Council meeting)*

Public Comments

None

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn made by Taylor, second by Najeeb. Motion carried. Rep. Snyder not present for the vote. Meeting adjourned at 11:26 a.m.