

**STATE OF ALASKA
COUNCIL ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT**

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THIRD QUARTER FY07 MEETING
March 23, 2007**

**Public Safety Building, Room 211
450 Whittier Street, Juneau, Alaska**

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

Chair Janna Stewart called the teleconference meeting of the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault to order at 9:10 a.m. on Friday, March 23, 2007. Five Council members were present at roll call. Deputy Attorney General Rick Svobodny arrived at 9:25 a.m., and Commissioner Monegan joined the meeting at 10:12 a.m.

Council members present: **Janna Stewart**, Public Member; **Richard Svobodny**, Department of Law (and **Cathy Satterfield** sitting in at times); **Kim Williams**, Public Member (at times, by teleconference); **Bill Hogan**, Department of Health & Social Services (DHSS); **Barbara Thompson**, Department of Education; **Commissioner Walt Monegan**, Department of Public Safety

Council members absent: Ann House (excused)

Council staff present: **Chris Ashenbrenner**, Interim Program Administrator; **Jo Griggs**, Administrative Manager; **Theresa Woelk**, Associate Coordinator; **Linda Hoven**, Associate Coordinator; **Michael Hildebrand**, Statistical Technician; **Ella Nierra**, Administrative Assistant

Others present (in person or by telephone): **Peggy Brown** and **Kari Robinson**, Alaska Network on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault; **Dragon London**, WISH (Ketchikan); **Brenda Stanfill**, IAC (Fairbanks); **Ginger Baim**, SAFE (Dillingham)

INTRODUCTION OF NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS AND STAFF

CDVSA Interim Program Administrator Chris Ashenbrenner made the introductions.

COUNCIL CONFLICT INQUIRY

Chair Stewart inquired if any Council members had a potential conflict with items on the agenda that they wished to disclose.

Kimberly Williams stated that she is on the executive committee of the Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation (BBAHC), and she noted in the reports that SAFE (Safe and Fear-Free

Environment) in Dillingham has a contractual arrangement with the (BBAHC) for the Child Advocacy Center. So to the extent that the Council may be discussing the request for proposal for a VAWA grant, she might have a conflict.

Chair Stewart said she did not expect that today's meeting would be dealing with any business or issues that would cause that to rise to the level of a conflict. She asked Williams to mention it again if the Council began discussing any financial or other decisions that actually might generate a conflict.

There were no other conflict of interest disclosures.

APPROVE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 8, 2006 & JANUARY 10, 2007 MEETINGS

BILL HOGAN MOVED THAT THE COUNCIL APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 8, 2006 REGULAR MEETING AND THE JANUARY 10, 2007 SPECIAL MEETING. BARBARA THOMPSON SECONDED.

Peggy Brown suggested a correction to the third paragraph of page 10 of the December 8, 2006 minutes, as follows: "...Cindy Southworth, from the National ~~Coalition~~ Network to End Domestic Violence,..."

Chair Stewart pointed out on page 6 of the December 8, 2006 minutes that the executive director of CFRC is Nicole Songer (not Singer).

The minutes were approved as amended.

Chair Stewart indicated that, without objection, the election of chair and vice chair would be postponed until Commissioner Monegan arrived later in the morning.

EXCERPTS FROM NEW "VOICES" VIDEO

Ashenbrenner played excerpts from a new "Voices" video that was produced cooperatively by the Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and the Council-funded program that Katie Tepas runs for the Alaska State Troopers. The video features Alaskan women describing their domestic violence experiences and is intended for law enforcement training.

Ashenbrenner said she played the excerpt because there were so many aspects involved: law enforcement, child abuse, drinking, suicide, financial support, courts, the shelter, etc. Some of the systems failed and some of them did not, but every system represented on the Council is touched upon in the woman's story.

CDVSA INTERIM PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS

Ashenbrenner acknowledged the efforts of CDSVA staff members Jo Griggs, Theresa Woelk

and Linda Hoven for keeping the office operating while very short-staffed before she came on board as interim program administrator. She said she would be seeking to fill the grant writer/program coordinator position next.

Legislative Activities: Ashenbrenner stated that many people worked to get the bill passed reauthorizing the CDVSA for four more years. She noted that quite a few legislators supported an eight-year extension, which was a good sign.

HB 215 was introduced this week that would establish a 15-member task force to review the CDVSA. Ashenbrenner passed around copies of the draft bill. Many questions arose last year as the sunset legislation got stalled — about the functioning of the CDVSA, its statutory mandate, appointment of Council members, and other issues. The bill's sponsor, Representative Anna Fairclough, has asked Ashenbrenner to write a letter of support for HB 215. Ashenbrenner said she intended to write the letter, unless the Council directed her otherwise.

Bill Hogan asked if the task force would be fundamentally different than what Legislative Audit either would normally do or has already done.

Chair Stewart replied that she thought it was more extensive but that it was a continuation of the issues brought up by Legislative Audit. She added that the bill contains questions that the Council has already discussed internally, such as problems with staff turnover and the need to do more effective grants management. She noted that there will be costs in time and possibly money for the CDVSA to be available for questions and the audit, but she did not have any objections to Ashenbrenner writing a letter of support.

Barbara Thompson said that after reading the draft bill language she did not understand the task force's purpose or what kind of results were expected from it. She said she was not afraid for anyone to ask questions or make suggestions but wondered where the task force would go that Legislative Audit has not gone.

Chair Stewart said the Council might use the task force as a springboard to address problems, such as the current language of the CDVSA's statutory mandate in terms of developing curricula that do not fit with the Department of Education's model.

Thompson stated that the Council already has the ability to seek legislative change for things that are outdated or do not line up with other agency requirements.

Ashenbrenner explained that Anna Fairclough had indicated she was able to get the CDVSA extension through with almost unanimous support by agreeing with the legislators who had concerns that she would work to establish a process to review those concerns. Also, it has been brought up again this year that Legislative Audit raised almost identical concerns in the last two audits (2001 and 2004), and there did not seem to be any response from the Council to make the recommended changes.

Thompson said that if the Council was going to support HB 215 it should bring up the things that it agrees need changing so the task force could support those changes. She added that she has not been one hundred percent in agreement with the some of Legislative Audit's findings and recommendations over the years. However, the Council needs to work on what needs done, whether it came from the audit reports or not.

With the concurrence of fellow Council members, Chair Stewart directed Ashenbrenner to prepare a letter of support for introduction of HB 215.

Ashenbrenner continued reporting on other legislative activities:

- A resolution to ask the Governor to proclaim April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month.
- Other bills that directly involve domestic violence and sexual assault (marriage broker bill, raise the age of consent for sexual assault from 16 to 18, suspend statute of limitation for sexual assaults, stiffer sentence for breaking into a shelter to go after a victim).
- Budget: \$100,000 increase to the victim services line in Governor Murkowski's budget is not in Governor Palin's budget. There are education efforts by victim services programs to put the increase back in.
- Arctic Women In Crisis (AWIC) in Barrow has been operating for many years under the umbrella of the North Slope Borough. As the Borough divests itself of more and more social services responsibilities due to its shrinking budget, there is an agreement for the AWIC program to become a separate nonprofit corporation. Apparently the Borough has told AWIC it will be backing off its budget by about \$250,000. There is no definite date for establishing this nonprofit but hopefully before the CDVSA's June funding meeting. Senator Olson has been contacted by advocates about getting additional funding in the budget for AWIC.

At 10:00 a.m. Kimberly Williams asked to be excused, saying she would try to rejoin the meeting later.

AWRC and AKEELA: Ashenbrenner reported that the Alaska Women's Resource Center (AWRC) in Anchorage is going to dissolve as a corporation and become a separate entity under the AKEELA umbrella. She said this matters because, unlike the Department of Health & Social Services, the CDVSA does not have the authority to transfer a competitively awarded grant from one entity to another. So AWRC is going to stay incorporated until the end of this year, and AKEELA probably will be applying for the next CDVSA grant on AWRC's behalf. As AWIC in Barrow becomes a nonprofit corporation, it might be the same situation in reverse.

Chair Stewart mentioned that this would be on the Council's to-do list to see if the regulations have to be upgraded to accommodate situations like this.

Grant Applications:

- Safe Havens grant application done, requesting federal funding for three demonstration projects for supervised visitation in instances where domestic violence is a factor.
- Applied for a Rural Domestic Violence Grant through the Violence Against Women

(VAWA) for six programs around the state that focus on teen activities.

- Grants To Encourage Arrest - to put on a series of nine state/tribal educational forums, which is a continuation from last year's forums. RFP expected out next week to hire a part-time contract program coordinator to manage the forums.

Request for proposal release for victim services program and batterers intervention

program two-year funding: The pre-proposal conference was held last Monday. Proposals are due April 13, 2007. The packets for Council members should be in the mail May 1, giving members about five weeks to review the funding proposals before the June 7-9 funding meeting in Anchorage.

2006 Annual Report: Will be out in a couple of weeks.

At 10:10 a.m. Rick Svobodny asked to be excused for a while to attend another meeting.

Ongoing Projects and Business Activities Update: Ashenbrenner stated that once a permanent executive director is in place the Council needs to review and update the CDVSA regulations. There is a commitment to review the grant management processes and put "best practices" into place. Finally, as the audits have noted, the Council has not been doing much statewide planning and coordination. This was discussed at the VAWA planning meeting of March 22, 2007. Ashenbrenner said she was recommending that she or the new executive director get started thinking about a strategic approach to statewide coordination and planning. She mentioned the earlier video clip as an illustration of what worked and did not work for the domestic violence victim and how the CDVSA should have a better statewide presence than it does now.

Victim Services & Batterers Intervention Program Quarterly Reports: Included in the packet. Ashenbrenner stated that staff reviewed the quarterly reports and did not see any trends going on. She noted that there is amazing coordination going on at the local level.

Commissioner Walt Monegan joined the meeting at 10:12 a.m.

Chair Stewart asked Brenda Stanfill, executive director of Interior Alaska Center in Fairbanks, to give a brief update on the presence of advocates in the Fairbanks court.

Stanfill, speaking by telephone, said the situation is still a bit challenging, and IAC continues to work with the court to find an acceptable solution. Currently, there is an advocate whom people are not aware is associated with the shelter, and this advocate screens people coming in and determines if IAC can do a higher level of service in terms of doing court accompaniment and assisting in other functions. If so, she calls the legal advocate over from the shelter to do it. It is not the best solution, but having an advocate sitting at the court doing nothing was not the best thing for the victim either.

Chair Stewart inquired about the status of the North Pole shelter. Stanfill replied that the shelter is no longer in service, and they transferred all those families to IAC. She said her understanding

is that the shelter will not be coming back. She added that IAC had not seen a drop in its numbers when the North Pole shelter opened.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

CDVSA Administrative Manager Jo Griggs reported that expenditures for the FY07 budget are on track. At the time she prepared the statements, 16 victim services programs and three batterers intervention programs had requested their third quarter funding. Everything is tracking with projections, and there don't appear to be any problems.

Griggs stated that the capital improvement projects funded by the Denali Commission are totally closed and all the reports have been submitted.

Ashenbrenner asked Peggy Brown to give an update on the Denali Commission funding for projects through the Department of Health & Social Services. Brown stated that STAR (Standing Together Against Rape) in Anchorage and TWC (Tundra Women's Coalition) in Bethel are in the process of submitting their business plans for new buildings to the Denali Commission.

Griggs said Council staff had asked the programs that are using VAWA funding to revisit their budgets and spend the money out in a timelier manner rather than holding so much back. All the programs have complied with that request, and the prior VAWA grant years have been spent out, except for last year's, which programs are holding in reserve. VAWA is so inconsistent with the grant award dates that holding some money in reserve allows the programs to continue providing services without a break.

Griggs reported that the Council had given staff permission to move the remaining balances of FVPSA (Family Violence Prevention Services Act) and VOCA (Victims of Crime Act) administrative monies into the victim services portion of the funding. The same was done for the VAWA grant, where unused money was put into discretionary funding. That is the figure that the executive director will be talking about later.

Chair Stewart asked about the status of CDVSA personnel costs, given the vacancies and the contract for an interim administrator. Griggs said that at the six-month mark of the fiscal year she moved all the unused personnel funds into one pot, and it looked like there would be at least \$150,000 remaining. She intended to swap the General Fund personnel money out with VOCA money in the last three months of the fiscal year so that VOCA money would be moved to the new fiscal year and be added to the amount for victim services programs.

BREAK

After a brief exchange among members about the agenda, the VAWA STOP Grants item was moved from 1:30 p.m. up to 10:45 a.m. Chair Stewart then called a break at 10:30 until 10:45 a.m.

VAWA STOP GRANTS

Ashenbrenner reported that there was a Violence Against Women STOP grant implementation planning meeting yesterday attended by many of those present at this meeting. The three-year plan is a requirement of the yearly VAWA STOP grant, and there will be follow-on meetings in the coming months to continue the planning process and to develop a draft plan. The CDVSA will be soliciting public comments on the draft three-year plan, as well as feedback from tribal entities.

Ashenbrenner explained that the CDVSA is also the recipient of a \$5 million earmark VAWA STOP grant spread out over three years that came about courtesy of Alaska's Congressional delegation. The earmark money is in the capital improvement project budget supplemental and is moving through the state legislative process right now. So the Council does not actually have authorization to obligate any of those funds right now, but the supplemental budget is generally approved in late April or early May.

Ashenbrenner said the CDVSA is waiting for the federal award to come through for the yearly VAWA STOP grant. The spending plan already approved by the VAWA Office has the Department of Law and the Alaska State Troopers (AST) components focused on improving the sexual assault response team (SART) efforts. The Council previously voted to follow the RFP process to get project proposals for the 30% of the grant specified for victim services, which is about \$150,000 this year.

Regarding the \$5 million earmark, Ashenbrenner said that the 30% component for victim services amounts to about \$475,000 annually for three years. The discretionary component is 15%, or about \$237,500 a year. One idea is to take the \$150,000 discretionary for this year, the \$475,000 from the earmark for victim services, and the \$237,500 from the earmark for discretionary and roll it all into one victim services RFP instead of doing separate proposal requests for each component. The total would be \$862,500.

Ashenbrenner reported that she met with Network program executive directors at their meeting last week to ask them what they felt the needs were. There was general agreement that the chances of getting another earmark in the future were slim, so funding ongoing services would mean the bottom would drop out after the three years was up. But the executive directors were adamant that they need to maintain current operations and they would like to see the earmark victim services money used for that, knowing that it is only three years. They described incredibly high fuel and electric bills, and having to leave legal advocacy and community outreach positions vacant in order to pay ongoing expenses.

Thompson asked if the spending plan for the earmark specified what the CDVSA planned to use the money for. Ashenbrenner said the plan only laid out project ideas for the Department of Law, AST, and the courts.

Hogan asked if there was any intent language related to the earmark that would preclude the

programs from using the money for operational expenses. Ashenbrenner said that she had not seen any language to that effect.

Brown said there was no intent language, although what got the earmark going was programs talking to Senator Lisa Murkowski and Senator Stevens about their needs.

Thompson indicated she agreed with rolling the victim services components into one RFP, but she had a little bit of heartburn with the earmark money being used strictly for ongoing operations. Most earmark grants require reporting what was accomplished, and earmarks usually are not given to support ongoing operations. She said she understood that programs have this great need, and she wasn't saying she wouldn't support it, but there is no sustainability.

Ashenbrenner said that the way the programs described it they were down to their core functions now, and they would like to use the earmark money for services that are just beyond the core functions and direct advocacy. So perhaps the Council could focus the earmark money on the next tier of services beyond the core functions.

Hogan stated that he was with Thompson on this, that he understood the dilemma the Network programs are in, but he would have a hard time returning to Alaska's senators in three years and saying the earmark money was spent on fuel or the like. He suggested a compromise where a certain percentage of the earmark money could be used to expand beyond core services or for a three-year project, and then spend some of the money to help with basic program operations or maintenance.

Brown said the Network's meeting this summer would examine what the programs define as core services. They will examine how important is it for every program to have a legal advocate and how important is it for every program to have community outreach. Operating costs are more than utilities and upkeep; it includes paying for positions. The idea for using earmark VAWA funding to pay for program operating costs, including paying for staff positions, entails tracking how those positions really enhance the services in a community. The Network has some core data to support what it takes to fund a program with two key positions (legal advocacy for the crisis, and community outreach), particularly when it comes to educating the community besides providing services to victims. Network programs see legal advocacy and community outreach as pretty core services, but those are the positions they have to let go when there isn't enough money.

Commissioner Monegan commented that earmark funding is a thing of the past and the CDVSA is unlikely to see another one in the future. He suggested first identifying the core structure that is common to all the victim services programs and then looking at the shared resources of legal advocacy and community outreach within the programs.

Hogan said it was the idea of creating some administrative efficiencies. For example, does every program need its own legal advocate. Brown said yes, pretty much. Hogan asked if there was a way to share that function among programs. He acknowledged that the impracticality is trying to

share that function among many communities statewide. But the point is to make the system work when the funding goes away.

Brown replied that conceptually it was a great idea, but it would be a problem to actually do. A lot of legal advocacy is about relationships that are built in a community. Another aspect is the travel expense. The Network is currently using the community outreach educators of certain programs to create a training network so that they are moving around. But that is more on a statewide level than really being entrenched in a community, teaching in the schools, and working with community groups.

Commissioner Monegan said that the best self-sustaining efforts in any community are when the community itself supports the efforts. So the shared trainers would organize and train volunteers (police, health, teachers, faith-based, etc.) in a community to do the public outreach. He said that in the past agencies built themselves as silos to help certain groups, and sometimes victims did not fit into any one box, and sometimes there were overlaps. People have noticed this, and the way the funding is being granted has changed, so that instead of becoming silos the agencies are to be a safety net to catch and help as many people as possible. With limited resources, the safety nets are going to be hubs to share and draw strength from, no matter what the agency is. So the VAWA earmark funding could be for some aspect of victim services that is common to every community and build from that to close the gaps and capture everybody.

Ashenbrenner said that a past example of that was STAR (Standing Together Against Rape) in Anchorage got a grant to do rural outreach. STAR had a team that went all over the state doing training on sexual assault, in coordination with the local agencies.

Commissioner Monegan stated that the point is for agencies to extend and support each other in order to help others. He cited an example in the mid-1980s when he counted 56 different agencies in Anchorage and the Mat-Su Valley that assisted people with alcohol issues. The point now is for everyone to be rolling in the same direction, using their monies in a cooperative manner to get heightened awareness of an issue across the state, rather than trying to run their own race.

Brown explained the Network's successful efforts to share training resources. She said that it is different, for example, if a community outreach person in Valdez goes to Seldovia to try to work with the Russian Believers. There is a very local aspect to community outreach, although a lot could be done with community outreach positions. She saw legal advocate positions as being so specific. The CDVSA funds the Legal Advocacy Project, which is constantly training advocates. Programs have a very difficult time keeping staff because of the salaries; an advocate starting at eleven-something an hour can make more working at the gas station. So that is what the programs are thinking when they talk about having the significant positions funded across the board.

Thompson stated that the Council has a one-time funding opportunity to create a system that could possibly be sustaining after the grant is gone. There is not enough money to fund the

positions in all the victim services programs only to see them have to be cut in three years.

Brown replied that that happens now, that the positions come and go at programs depending on funding sources and increases.

Thompson noted that the Council is responsible for allocating the VAWA earmark funding, and she hoped that after the three years are up there would be something remaining to show for it.

Commissioner Monegan observed that every federal administration gears up about some vision or other, and just when everyone gets skilled at whatever the program is, it drops off with the next administration and something else pops up to replace it. He said his background as a police officer showed him that law enforcement resolves an issue for the moment, but it is up to the agencies to help heal a situation long term — and that is the government's job. He urged the Council to work on an aspect of healing that is more sustainable and not dependent on earmark grants.

Hogan asked Brown if most programs have the time, energy or resources to develop their local community network, including the mental health and substance abuse providers, the Office of Children's Services, public health, courts, law enforcement, etc.

Brown replied that the programs definitely have relationships with those agencies. The programs could not function as well as they do with as little resources as they have if they did not have those relationships. People no longer come to a shelter just for safety; they have other concurrent issues so there are referrals to various agencies in the community. There is competition for funds in the small communities as well. Of note is that many programs lose their staff to the agencies that pay a lot more and have health insurance and retirement benefits.

Rick Svobodny rejoined the meeting at this point.

Ashenbrenner related her discussion with Senator Murkowski a couple of years ago about recognizing the need for outreach to rural communities, to educate and provide supportive services. The conversation was not in the context of intent for the earmark. Ashenbrenner said that is the type of services that the victim services programs have told her they want to be able to pay for. She acknowledged that she has some bias for the wishes of the programs because she is so impressed with the people there doing whatever needs to be done every day as part of providing services to victims. Then there is the escalating operating costs related to rising fuel prices. So she understood the comments about where the CDVSA should be going conceptually with this one-time VAWA earmark, and she can see that it is the right thing to do. But she is divided in that part of her recognizes the reality of what is happening in the programs. The CDVSA probably has not quantified well enough with data just exactly what is happening to the program budgets with the high fuel costs in the last couple of years and made a case in the Legislature for an increased budget. The programs really feel that the situation is bordering on very urgent, if not quite a crisis. So the programs are asking the Council for help, and she supported using at least part of the VAWA funding to help fill that operating need.

Thompson stated that everyone wants to meet the programs' needs, but the question is whether to do it quickly, knowing that the money will run out in three years, or whether to explore some other way of meeting the needs that might be more sustainable. She said maybe a subgroup or committee, with representation from the programs, should begin looking at different options to carry the discussion further.

Commissioner Monegan mentioned that programs could use more of their current budgets for basic operations, such as fuel costs, so that earmark funding could be clearly shown as going to continue legal advocacy and community outreach services.

Hogan asked how close the Network was to identifying what are the core services and where each program is in relationship to providing those core services. Brown stated that the Network did a survey a few months ago, and 75% of the programs were "in the red" budget-wise. That is what prompted plans to discuss this at a Network meeting this summer and then present some budget numbers and backup data to CDVSA and the Department of Public Safety. It is not possible to get those numbers to the CDVSA before the summer meeting.

Chair Stewart related how her agency created a tier structure for magistrate salaries based on the work required of them in each community. A similar analysis could be done for the victim services programs because some offer shelters and others don't, for example, and population makes a difference too. Some communities have a superior court and some don't. Some communities have a Trooper location and/or a local police department and/or a village police officer, etc. This type of analysis helps evaluate how a program functions — a shelter in Fairbanks is not going to be operating the same as a part-time program in Cordova. There is a model for something like this that has been done in the state in the past.

Brown said she would love to work with the CDVSA on an analysis of core services.

Hogan asked how many programs have worked with the Foraker Group, and specifically related to sustainability. Brown said almost all of them.

PUBLIC COMMENT

At 11:30 a.m., Chair Stewart inquired if anyone wished to address the Council.

Brenda Stanfill, executive director of Interior Alaska Center for Non-Violent Living (IAC) in Fairbanks, spoke by teleconference. She said that she hears about wonderful projects in other states that are helping make a difference, and then here comes the VAWA earmark that is a great opportunity to pursue some of these projects. However, the funding from the CDVSA is not increasing, other than the one-time grant last year to help with operations. So the programs are stuck with the question of how to do a project when they cannot sustain the basic service of providing safety. This year there was an additional \$1 million in the budget from the permanent fund dividend money, and to balance that out the programs stayed flat funded. The Department

of Health and Social Services no longer is giving inter-agency transfers, so there is no TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) funds or anything else. The shelter in Fairbanks is providing shelter for people who previously were getting housing assistance. There is no other housing option for them, which means that they go back into an unsafe situation — which means they return to the shelter eventually. And the cycle continues.

Stanfill said she was so excited to hear there was earmark funding coming because there are so many wonderful projects that the programs could do with the money. But the reality is that the programs don't have the money to keep their operations going, so it was very disheartening. Network programs employ 270-300 people statewide in domestic violence shelters, yet there are no additional funding increases. There are eight people employed at the CDVSA office, and there is a \$100,000 budget increase in the personnel line this year. Stanfill said she felt those things don't make sense. She said she did not understand why there wasn't more Council interaction with the legislators. In closing she apologized for her bluntness but said she came back from her sabbatical with a whole different philosophy and renewed vigor.

There was no other public comment.

VAWA STOP GRANTS (Continued)

Chair Stewart said there was agreement earlier on having one RFP for the VAWA victim services grant money, but the question was what type of request the Council would be asking the programs to submit.

Ashenbrenner said another question is what kind of RFP evaluation process the Council wishes to use. She noted that the timing of the VAWA grant RFP would butt up against the Council's two-year funding RFP this year, which is another consideration when picking an evaluation process. So there are a number of issues that a subcommittee could work on.

Commissioner Monegan indicated he liked Chair Stewart's earlier idea of an analysis of core services in each program to create a "tier" structure for evaluating the services provided in each community. He thought it would also be helpful when it was time for the Council to evaluate programs; a "Cadillac" program may sound great but it might not be appropriate for the community.

Chair Stewart remarked that there are frequently troubling questions like that at the two-year funding meetings. She asked the program administrator when the VAWA RFP should be out on the street. Ashenbrenner said as soon as possible. She said staff discussed that idea and came up with dates from May through July, but there are some projects supported by VAWA discretionary funds right now that end June 30. She felt it was incumbent upon CDVSA to keep the money rolling out, so she urged getting the RFP out by the end of April or early May at the latest. That means a subcommittee to look at the process would have to be active right away.

There was a brief discussion about the RFP requesting some information about what core

services the programs are providing, which would also serve to focus the RFP responders on how effective their programs are being.

Ashenbrenner said the Council could use VAWA discretionary funding to do the type of analysis that the chair was talking about. She suggested allowing some time for the Council to think about the whole VAWA STOP grant topic over the lunch hour and then taking it up again in the afternoon.

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Chair Stewart indicated that her second term as a public member of the Council would end in August. The Council should take action at this meeting to elect a new chair who would take over following this meeting.

Referring to a discussion he read in the December minutes, Commissioner Monegan asked if anything more had been done on the idea of expanding the Council membership to nine. Ashenbrenner said there is a draft bill before the legislature that would create a task force to examine multiple CDVSA issues, and the size and makeup of the Council membership would be one of those topics.

Ashenbrenner mentioned that as the interim program administrator she thought keeping Janna Stewart on as chair until the end of her term in August would be helpful during this transition period.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MONEGAN TO NOMINATE JANNA STEWART AS THE CHAIR OF THE CDVSA UNTIL THE END OF HER TERM IN AUGUST 2007. KIM WILLIAMS SECONDED.

There were no other nominations, and nominations were closed.

The motion carried by unanimous consent.

Chair Stewart noted that the vice chair has normally been the representative from the Department of Law.

MOTION BY CHAIR STEWART TO NOMINATE RICHARD SVOBODNY AS VICE CHAIR OF THE CDVSA FOR THE NEXT YEAR. SECONDED BY BARBARA THOMPSON.

There were no other nominations, and nominations were closed.

The motion carried by unanimous consent.

Both Stewart and Svobodny were present and accepted the positions to which they were elected.

Kimberly Williams indicated that she had to catch a plane and would not be participating in the afternoon session.

LUNCH BREAK

Chair Stewart recessed the meeting for lunch shortly before noon. Council members Stewart, Thompson, Monegan and Hogan were present when the meeting was called back to order at 1:15 p.m.

ALASKA NETWORK ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ASSAULT REPORT

Network executive director Peggy Brown provided a written report, which is on file at the CDVSA offices. She also handed out the Network's 2006 Annual Report, as well as information about upcoming trainings (also on file at the CDVSA offices).

Brown informed the Council that Michelle DeWitt of Tundra Women's Coalition in Bethel is the new chair of the Network. The new vice chair is Saralyn Tabachnick from AWARE in Juneau.

Brown referred to a national news release printed in the *Anchorage Daily News* that talked about domestic violence and sexual assault programs across the country. What came out about Alaska is that in a 24-hour period, with 80% of the programs participating, about 191 Alaskans went to emergency shelters, 36 adults and children were in transitional housing, and there were about 109 hotline calls.

In terms of legislation, the Network has asked for reinstatement of the additional \$100,000 for CDVSA that was cut from the Governor's budget.

Brown requested Council participation and financial assistance for the statewide biannual Train the Trainer Conference scheduled for Spring in Anchorage. She said the Council has helped in the past with \$20,000 to \$30,000. The training will cover children's issues, sexual violence, SART, and disabilities.

Ashenbrenner indicated that there were funds available and that the training conference is a worthwhile project. She recalled that she was working for the Network last year, and the whole cost of the training conference was about \$55,000. So a \$25,000 Council contribution would be significant.

MOTION BY BILL HOGAN THAT THE COUNCIL ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT CONTRIBUTE \$25,000.00 TO THE 2008 TRAIN THE TRAINER CONFERENCE IN ANCHORAGE IN LATE APRIL. SECONDED BY BARBARA THOMPSON.

Hogan requested that the CDVSA's name appear as a sponsor of the training conference. Brown

said absolutely.

The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

Brown mentioned a May 9-11 conference on human trafficking in Alaska. There was legislation passed last year regarding human trafficking but it did not address juveniles. Apparently teen arrests for prostitution have become a huge issue in Anchorage. The victim services programs are working with the Anchorage Police Department to figure out what they can do with these teens. The Network assumes that if the trafficking is happening in Anchorage it is probably happening in other places as well.

Brown reported that Alaska is headed toward being a mandatory Continuing Legal Education (CLE) state. Pro bono service would transfer for the CLEs. Under consideration is that retired attorneys may no longer have to pay dues if they choose to do pro bono cases. The Legal Advocacy Project puts on a CLE every year, which the CDVSA helps pay for with VAWA victim services funds. This year it was two days and focused on domestic violence and sexual assault, as well as child sexual abuse. The Legal Advocacy Project used another pot of money this year to pay for child custody investigators and guardians ad litem to attend the CLE, and there was an amazing turnout. Apparently there is no central coordination for this group, so the Network plans to continue inviting them in the future to get consistent training on how to work with victims of violence.

In terms of the Network's work with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Brown said a statewide steering committee met in early February. They are going to integrate local community work into a state level intimate partner violence progress report and prevention plan, which will be published in September 2008. They will start by doing a statewide assessment in May 2007.

Brown reported that the Network executive directors met last week to discuss several items but spent quite a bit of time on the CDVSA database. The group authorized the Network to spend about \$25,000 to proceed with modifying the Department of Justice Access database that the Network has been studying. The database will meet all the requirements for the federal funders — FVPSA, VAWA, and VOCA. It is possible there will ultimately be two databases, one that all the Network programs will enter their data into, and then whatever data system the Council comes up with. The Network will be unable to afford maintaining the database and technical assistance. One of the things the group talked about was a contract with someone to do some maintenance, but actually having the CDVSA's Michael Hildebrand work on the Network's data system with the contract person in case there is a blending of the two systems at some future point.

Hogan addressed Ginger Baim, executive director of SAFE (Safe and Fear-Free Environment) in Dillingham, who was listening by telephone. He said he had heard that Baim might be leaving, and he was interested because of the Department of Health and Social Services effort to develop a level III kids residential facility in Dillingham and rumors that SAFE might be interested in

hosting it.

Baim said she has been thinking about leaving for a long time. SAFE has been working with the people who have been putting together the level III facility. The Bristol Bay Native Association will be taking over operations a year after it is begun, but it is the Alaska Family Center Services that are actually putting it all together. So SAFE will not be managing the facility, but it will continue to have a strong role in its development and operation.

Hogan reported that Melissa Stone, executive director of Seaview Community Services in Seward, would be joining DHSS as the director of the Division of Behavioral Health effective May 1.

Ashenbrenner said she asked the Network, and they readily agreed, to put the CDVSA name on all the training materials for conferences the CDVSA helps to fund. She mentioned the Charting Change Conference, April 30-May 4, as one that brings agencies together that the audit report said were not working together enough (DEED because it's a Head Start initiative, OCS, domestic violence, etc.). She encouraged Council members to attend any part of the trainings that they are able to.

Brown invited Council members to visit any program if they happen to be in a service area.

Ashenbrenner reported that the FVPSA grant will start following the VAWA grant confidentiality requirements.

DATABASE UPDATE

Ashenbrenner reviewed the history of the CDVSA database, which collects statistics that the victim services provider agencies report to the CDVSA. The CDVSA has traditionally used this data to identify trends and the services provided, as well as to report to the federal funding agencies. The most recent database was called ServicePoint. About this time last year the Network pointed out to the Council that the 2005 VAWA reauthorization passed federally contained some much tighter provisions on confidentiality and releasing identifying information at the program level. The Network believed that the information being gathered on ServicePoint did not meet the requirements of confidentiality, that is, the information came to the CDVSA in a format that might allow an individual to be identified. The Network further made the case that gathering that individual information violated state law on confidentiality. There have been many subsequent discussions on database issues in the past year. The Council agreed with the Network's opinion that the information was not appropriate for sending to the CDVSA in its current format. In August 2006 the Council sent a letter to the programs informing them they no longer needed to enter the information on the ServicePoint system. But the programs were instructed to keep filling out the pink and blue paper forms.

Ashenbrenner said that both the CDVSA and the programs still have to be able to complete reports for federal grants, to say what the money was used for. Also, it is incumbent on the

Council to be able to monitor what the services were and to report how the State funding was used to the Legislature. Right now the CDVSA does not have any data.

Ashenbrenner said that when she started work in January she sought a legal analysis from the State Attorney General's Office because the Council was making decisions based on the legal opinion of an advocacy group.

Svobodny said a draft opinion from the AG's Office would be forthcoming next week.

Ashenbrenner stated that the Network only wants the CDVSA to gather what they call aggregate information. Brown said the purpose is that no personally identifying data leaves a shelter program.

Ashenbrenner said CDVSA staff has looked at what other states are doing. Washington State uses a statewide web-based data system and the information gathered is relational. The state extensively trains the advocates who are entering the information to recognize when two or three pieces of information together will identify a client. They then have something that masks some of the data or they figure out some way to report so the client is not identifiable.

Ashenbrenner stated that the question in Alaska is whether the State is going to give up wanting some relational information, which truly provides much better statistics and information about the work being done. It would be a huge training effort to teach people to recognize when the data being entered into the data system might be identifying information and to do something different.

Michael Hildebrand, CDVSA's statistical technician, stated that the decision on that point wouldn't be fully answerable just on a legal basis. If the law ends up too generous at this point there is still no way that on a practical basis the CDVSA will accumulate information in such a form that it would actually put a client at risk. The crux is going to be what the Council and staff think as professionals, what statistical people and data people have to say, and what workers in the field say is going to be potentially dangerous to a client.

Ashenbrenner stated that in addition to the legal piece and the policy issues, there is also a technical problem in that she and Hildebrand are not information technology (IT) experts. So the CDVSA needs some expert advice about data systems — for instance, on the Access database that the Network wants to move toward, where every agency would have a stand-alone Access system and then report some information to the State of Alaska. The question is would that information go into a State Access system, and what type of information would the CDVSA get out of that data. So staff is waiting to tap into the State enterprise technology work order system in order to quickly procure some consultation. Unfortunately, that work order system went down at the first of the year and is still not available. The Department of Public Safety IT staff is a little thin right now, so CDVSA staff has not been able to use that resource.

Commissioner Monegan suggested contacting the University of Alaska system for some

suggestions. Hildebrand said he checks the UAA website periodically, and he tried to call Bob Langworthy about ten days ago and hasn't followed it up. He agreed it was a good potential source of information to check into.

Hogan asked about the deadline for the federal grant reporting. Griggs indicated the end of October. Hogan said that he was almost certain the Council would not have the data issue resolved by October.

Brown said that was why the Network was going ahead with its own database in order to get some data collected.

Hogan asked if there was some way to collect at least the basic information the CDVSA needs. Ashenbrenner said yes. She explained that there is the short-term solution, which is collecting this year's data. Then there is the long-term solution, which is a new database system — either the Network's proposed system that will not be ready until the end of summer at the earliest, or a different system from someplace else. She said that even if there was a new database system in place by the end of August, there was no way the CDVSA would ask the victim services programs to go back at that time and enter a year's worth of data. She said Hildebrand has been surveying all the programs to find out how they are capturing the information from the pink and blue forms for this year. He found out that quite a few of them are storing data using some sort of spreadsheet database, usually Excel. Hildebrand has developed a spreadsheet to capture information, and he field-tested it at the Juneau shelter earlier this week. So the short-term solution for this year's data is a spreadsheet of some sort.

Hildebrand stated that the CDVSA will accept a program's tools that they have been using to accumulate but not report the data in this interim period, so long as it covers the basic data fields that are needed for reporting. For those programs that want it, CDVSA staff will send out the simplest electronic tool possible. For those that feel overwhelmed by that or have a guarded approach to it, staff will send out manual monthly forms for hash marks. He said he had a negative response to the local field test, which is going to lead to some very positive results. He is making progress in cutting away huge areas of disagreement on this, and he felt things would move along briskly for the old data.

Ashenbrenner said that even in the areas in which the Network and the CDVSA may not be in complete agreement, both have been working very collegially. She said she recommended to the Network that they delay making a decision to purchase the Access database because she thinks the Council may come up with a different solution before too long. The possibility of implementing two different systems concerns her.

Brown explained that the reasoning behind the Network developing its own database system is not only the historical issues, but that the programs don't know who the next CDVSA executive director will be, they don't know who the Council chair will be, and they don't know what the next federal administration will be. So the Network's database system is the bottom line, and everybody has agreed to do this themselves in the interim. Of course the programs would love

the CDVSA to use the database so there would be just one database. But they entered into the decision knowing there might be two databases, and that the Network's system would be a baseline safety net should there be upheaval again at some point.

Chair Stewart said the Council recognized that data could be merged from one database system into another without having to do manual entry twice. It is just another technical step in the process.

Ashenbrenner said she thought it would be quite complex.

Hildebrand mentioned the need for a unique identifier in the data system in order to see trends and whether intervention is having the desired effect, otherwise the system may be counting a person multiple times.

Chair Stewart asked if ServicePoint is still being used. Hildebrand said no programs that he has talked to are using it, although he heard there might be a couple of programs that were still using it. Chair Stewart said there was a question in terms of maintaining the ServicePoint contract. Griggs indicated she thought the contract ended in December. Hildebrand stated that there are few, if any, domestic violence programs in the nation that are still using ServicePoint.

Ashenbrenner said staff is starting to think of other ways to get data, such as requesting relational information from the programs at the local level on an as-needed basis, and by standardizing the goals and objectives so that the programs are reporting on a web-based format whether they are meeting their numbers. She commented that her queries have indicated that other states are in the same muddle as Alaska. Washington State is just this year implementing Infonet. Oregon had some counties that used ServicePoint, which they have discontinued, and they now are looking at what Washington State is doing.

Hogan asked if it was possible for CDVSA to adopt the Department of Justice Access database system rather than trying to think of something else. Ashenbrenner said it was possible, but she needed some technical people to explain how that database system would work with the State. She added that the Network is taking the Department of Justice Access database system and modifying it into a self-contained system at each victim services program. That is a bit backward, because then the CDVSA will be getting aggregate information periodically in a printed report. She has to ask technical people if Access is an appropriate database when the information starts coming into the State from the programs.

Brown said a short-term solution might be for the CDVSA to use the Network's database system, once it has been customized, tested, and is operating later in the year. The long-term solution would be selecting one of the other database options.

Ashenbrenner commented that one of the big complaints from programs was how long it took to enter data on the web-based ServicePoint data system. She said she hesitated about the Network's request to have Hildebrand help with the implementation, training and support for the

Network's Access system. If it was going to be the CDVSA's system, that would be fine. But if the Council were going in a different direction, she would be unable to commit the CDVSA's one data person to the Network's project.

Commissioner Monegan said there are so many philanthropic organizations that have skills and assets that could benefit an agency like CDVSA. He asked if staff had approached the Rasmuson Foundation or the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation about donating their knowledge and resources to agencies to help stem domestic violence and sexual assault.

Chair Stewart said that to some extent that is what Cindy Southworth's National Network to End Domestic Violence is. Brown said the organization has donations and has worked with the Gates Foundation and several other foundations. She said it has not happened with the database idea yet, probably because so much is still happening and changing. She also thought that even if a foundation were willing to help it would take years.

Commissioner Monegan stated that somebody has to knock on the door and ask the first time, and at least it would be a start. He said it harked back to his earlier comment about people operating in small silos; the country is operating 50 or more silos. To truly address the database issue, it should be done all at once.

Ashenbrenner agreed that someone should talk to Cindy Southworth about a broader approach. She said that Southworth wants Alaska to be the model for the nation by establishing the locally based Access databases that will have the highest level of client confidentiality in the country. What it gives up is relational data.

Commissioner Monegan said he could see why Southworth would select Alaska because the state is notorious as far as national domestic violence and sexual assault statistics go. Another reason is that the State has a lot smaller population than other states.

Chair Stewart stated that the DPS IT people have been worried about the limitations of Access. When CDVSA used an Access database system before it could not handle the volume. So if Access was reaching its capacity in an Alaska system, how could it function for states like New York and California. Those are the types of IT issues that the Council needs technical assistance on.

Ashenbrenner said that staff and the Council have made a lot of progress, and staff is probably very close to coming up with one or more recommendations for the Council to move forward on the data issue. She asked that the Council be prepared to hold an ad hoc teleconference meeting in the next month or so to hear that recommendation and make a decision.

VAWA STOP GRANTS (Continued)

Chair Stewart recapped the discussion so far today: there was agreement to combine the victim services allocations and the discretionary allocations from the VAWA yearly grant and the three-

year earmark; there was possible agreement to form a subcommittee; still considering what types of projects to allow the RFP responders to propose for the grants; still considering the duration of the proposed projects; and still considering doing an analysis of core services that victim services programs provide in each community (tier structure).

Chair Stewart said she and Brown had been talking about whether an analysis was something the Council could actually pay to get done rather than by people already here.

Ashenbrenner proposed setting aside some of the VAWA money to do projects that would help inform the Council over the next couple of years.

Chair Stewart agreed, saying that a year from now the Council would know what it was going to spend on such projects or roll the money back into a second year grant.

Commissioner Monegan noted that Bob Langworthy and the Justice Center do studies on how effective a project or program is. He suggested approaching them about doing an unbiased analysis of the core services. Chair Stewart said the CDVSA could at least brainstorm with them and ask who could do this type of analysis.

Ashenbrenner recalled that it came up at yesterday's VAWA planning and implementation meeting that evaluation of the domestic violence and sexual assault services in the state was not being done very well. It has been many years since a comprehensive statewide evaluation was done. So there are good reasons to set aside some of the VAWA funding until the Council makes decisions on some of the projects that may come out of the VAWA planning process, as well as the task force process that may come out of the Legislature.

Hogan volunteered to participate on the subcommittee. Thompson indicated her interest to serve as well, but not as chair.

Chair Stewart noted that Kimberly Williams has a lot of experience with this type of thing, and she would ask her to be on the subcommittee as well. Brown also agreed to be on the subcommittee.

MEETING SCHEDULE

The funding meeting will be held in Anchorage on June 7, 8 and 9, 2007.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECRUITMENT

Chair Stewart indicated that the Council would go into executive session to discuss the executive director recruitment. The teleconference was terminated and staff and others present were excused from the room.

The Council met in executive session from 2:40 p.m. to 3:40 p.m. and did not report any action

before adjourning.

ADJOURNMENT

The chair adjourned the meeting at 3:45 p.m.

Note: The summary minutes are extracted from a tape recording of the meeting and are prepared by an outside contractor. For in-depth discussion and presentation details, please refer to tapes of the meeting and staff reports on file at the CDVSA office.

Confidential Office Services
Karen Pearce Brown
Juneau, Alaska