



**Fourth Judicial District  
Family Violence Coordinating Council  
Serving Hennepin County**

**Present:** Stephanie Avalon, Katie Brey, Patrick Chelmo, Nick Cichowicz, Rumna Chowdhury, Robert Davis, Dr. Deborah Eckberg, Melissa Fraser, Judge Tamara Garcia, Christina Gibbons, Kristin Hays, Michelle Jacobson, Angela Lewis-Dmello, Pamela Maldonado, Lisa McNaughton, Aaron Milgrom, Melynda Nelson, Erin Osborne, Rachel Ratner, Christy Snow-Kaster, Jennifer Taylor, Margaret Thunder-Solorzano, Maggie Vickerman, Michael Weinstein, Kate Wilson.

**1. Welcome from Judge Tamara Garcia**

**2. Approve April 13, 2017 Minutes**

**3. FVCC member profile: Rachel Ratner, Sojourner Project**

Rachel Ratner gave a presentation on behalf of the Sojourner Project, where she works as an advocate. Sojourner project is based in Minnetonka and serves western Hennepin County. They take women and children into the shelter to provide them with immediate safety. They work in criminal, family, and civil court and help to write orders for protection and HROs. There are currently 6 advocates at Sojourner Project, many of whom have worked there for a number of years.

**4. Domestic Assault Prosecution in the Hennepin County Attorney's Office:**

**Judith Hawley, Sue Fite and Al Harris**

Judith Hawley, Sue Fite, and Al Harris gave a presentation on domestic assault prosecution in the Hennepin County Attorney's Office. There are currently 8 domestic violence advocates who work to keep victims informed and prepared for trial. Advocates are available during trial to work with victims and prosecutors. They are organized in 24 trial teams, with 4 attorneys to the case. They also discussed how the mindset on domestic violence has changed over time and dispositions.

**5. Fatality Review Board Annual Report: Deena Anders**

Deena Anders presented on the Fatality Review Board annual report. Each year they look at homicides within Hennepin County that fall under domestic violence homicide statutes in Minnesota. They wait for at least a year before they review the case. In 2016 they reviewed one family annihilator, one bystander, and one near death case. They research the case and its

chronology. A team member reports their findings and observations to the group and there is discussion on missed intervention opportunities

Opportunities for greater intervention identified in their report include offering education on how domestic violence affects kids through the courts, probation, advocacy organizations, and CPS. They also suggest that regular training for medical and mental health practitioners on family dynamics present in situations involving domestic violence and ways to integrate those questions into existing screening mechanisms.

The Board would like to develop a process/case law so traumatic brain injuries are classified as great bodily harm, making them chargeable as 1<sup>st</sup> degree assault. The challenge is that the nature of TBIs can be cumulative and it could be difficult to pinpoint the origin of the TBI to a domestic violence event.

6. **Committee Reports:** See attached summary.
7. **Announcements/Open Forum:** None.

**Future presentations/agenda items**

Sex Trafficking – June 8

MCBW Legislative Update – July 13

Use this link to find us on the web.

[http://www.mncourts.gov/Find-Courts/Hennepin/Family-Violence-Coordinating-Council-\(FVCC\).aspx](http://www.mncourts.gov/Find-Courts/Hennepin/Family-Violence-Coordinating-Council-(FVCC).aspx)

Use this link to access our Google Calendar of events.

<https://www.google.com/calendar/embed?src=fvcccalendar%40gmail.com&ctz=America/Chicago>

**Next meeting: Thursday, June 8, 2017.**