



Family Violence Coordinating Council  
June 8, 2017 Minutes  
Hennepin County Government Center  
Hennepin County Government Center – C1291

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

**Present:** Stephanie Avalon, Verona Boswell, Jackie Braun-Lewis, Katie Brey, Patrick Chelmo, Nick Cichowicz, Judge Lois Conroy, Robert Davis, Deborah Eckberg, Judge Martha Holton Dimick, Michelle Jacobson, Ann Kaul, Pamela Maldonado, Aaron Milgrom, Melynda Nelson, Erin Osborne, Rachel Ratner, Ellen Sackrisson, Jennifer Taylor, Maggie Vickerman, Shannon, Wachter, Sandra White, Kate Wilson, Eva Wood.

1. **Welcome from Judge Martha Holton Dimick.**

2. **Approved - May 10, 2017 Minutes**

3. **Family Court Enhancement Project update – Shannon Wachter, FCEP Coordinator**

Shannon Wachter, FCEP Coordinator, updated the committee on project accomplishments and successes since February 2017.

- The April 14 multi-disciplinary training was very successful. Over 300 people attended this all day event focused on how providers can work together so victims aren't re-traumatized. The FCEP hopes to plan another half day event broken out by different disciplines and focusing on stakeholder accountability.
- In June, Justice Anne McKeig, Referee Mary Madden and Shannon Wachter attended an AFCC convention in Boston and presented on DR calendar lessons learned and Native outreach efforts.
- With the FVCC Civil Committee, the project conducted a brown bag listening session with advocates so they could gather feedback to ensure victim needs are being met and the DR calendar is meeting its goals.
- Liza Garcia, FCEP Tribal and State Court liaison, participated in the MN Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition's annual conference. She connected with 10-12 community members/providers and learned the Mdewakaton Sioux community recently started providing services to victims.
- FCEP leadership hosted two roundtables in May.
  - May 1 MAIBA: The roundtable focused on three questions: enforcement challenges; barriers to family court; recommendations for family court practices to consider cultural norms. Reoccurring themes included victim trust of the system; training to address inconsistent enforcement practices. The State Ombudsperson is seeking outreach funding for ICWA training in the community.
  - May 17 BIP: This roundtable continued the discussion of what Native specific resources are available for batterers. Reoccurring themes included the need to address family and juvenile court

relationships together in order to make change; court should analyze the rate in which Native families seeking protection orders are referred to child protection; need for non-native culturally specific resources; institutionalized women and families (welfare, social services, etc.); women, families and native culture have differing definitions of safety and accountability; recognize that many victims want violence to stop but do not want to separate from their partner.

**4. FVCC member profile continued: Rachel Ratner, Sojourner Project**

Rachel discussed the role of advocate and services provided by Sojourner. They provide shelter for 18-22 people and have 5-6 people who do legal advocacy (write petitions, connect with agencies, safety planning, etc.). Rachel reminded everyone there's an app (YSNMN) through Bridge for Youth that shows how many shelter beds are available for youth at any given time. She also reminded everyone about the number (1-866-223-1111) for victims who need emergency help.

**5. WATCH – Member profile and update on sex trafficking project – Nick Cichowicz and Ellen Sackrison**

Nick Cichowicz, WATCH Director, and Ellen Sackrison, WATCH Program Manager, reviewed the role of their agency. WATCH is a non-profit agency using volunteer monitors to observe the behavior, demeanor and decisions of all parties (including the judicial officer) in cases involving domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse and sex trafficking (Appendix A). Mr. Cichowicz and Ms. Sackrison also reviewed their December 2016 report on sex trafficking and recommendations for improving how cases are handled (Appendix B).

**6. Committee Reports:**

Advocates – Stephanie Avalon reported that Vernona Boswell attend a recent meeting and brainstormed with advocates on how they could work together more efficiently.

Civil – Jennifer Taylor discussed the recent roundtable/listening session and an upcoming training in September on emergency filings.

Child/Juvenile – Katie Brey read an update from Anne Taylor. The annual resource fair will be held on October 4<sup>th</sup> on the Hennepin County Government Center Public Service Level. The theme for this year's CLE is sex trafficking.

Criminal – Michelle Jacobson invited everyone to attend a June 28th training about batter intervention programs. HC Probation and a variety of non-profits will also be presenting.

**7. Announcements/Open Forum: None.**

**Future presentations/agenda items**

MCBW Legislative Update – July 13

Meeting cancelled - August 10

FCEP Update – September 14

District Court Leadership (Chief Judge and Administrator) – October 12

Strategic Planning – November 9

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[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=fvccalendar%40gmail.com&ctz=America/Chicago>