

NORTH CAROLINA HUMAN TRAFFICKING COMMISSION Meeting Minutes
February 27, 2020, 10:00am-1:00pm
NC Judicial Center
901 Corporate Center Drive, Raleigh NC, 27607

Commission Members Present:

Caitlin Brooks, Public at Large
Danielle Carman, Administrative Office of the Courts
Judge Sherri W. Elliott, NC Association of District Court Judges
Jennifer Haigwood, NC Department of Labor
Monika Johnson-Hostler, NC Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Jasmine McGhee, NC Department of Justice
Caitlin Ryland, Legal Aid of North Carolina
Angelica Wind, NC Coalition Against Human Trafficking
Suzanne Mauney Smith, Gaston County Police
Thomas Bernard, WakeMed North
Pamela Cashwell, NC Department of Public Safety

Commission Members Not Present:

William "Billy" West, Cumberland County District Attorney
William M. Nichols, Ret. Major NC Highway Patrol
Judge Claire V. Hill, North Carolina Conference of Superior Court Judges

Commission Staff Present:

Christine S. Long, Executive Director

Members of the Public Present:

Please see public sign-in sheet.

Call to Order and Welcome:

The Chair called the meeting to order and read the following State Government Ethics Act reminder:

- In accordance with the State Government Ethics Act, it is the duty of every North Carolina Human Trafficking Commission (HTC) member to avoid conflicts of interest. If any HTC member has any known conflict of interest in respect to any matter coming in front of the HTC they must identify the conflict and refrain from any participation in the particular matter involved.

Approval of the Minutes: December 12, 2019 meeting

A motion to approve the minutes of the December 12, 2019 meeting was made by Commissioner Bernard, seconded by Commissioner Mauney-Smith, and passed with no amendments.

Chair Remarks:

Chair Haigwood expressed her excitement and gratitude about the opportunity to serve as the new Chair of the Human Trafficking Commission. She acknowledged the work that was done during Human Trafficking Awareness Month in January and the good coverage and social media presence that came of this. Chair Haigwood announced that subcommittees still need to be filled and to let her know if there is a committee that members are interested in being a part of.

Committee Reports and Action Items:

Legislative Working Group:

Committee Chair Brooks announced that the Legislative Committee needs more members if any Commissioners would like to volunteer. She is currently brainstorming for funding ideas for administration costs and human trafficking SBI positions. Committee Chair Brooks announced that the first committee meeting will be on March 20th at 10:00 am at the AOC.

Public Safety Committee Report:

Commissioner Mauney-Smith gave a summary of efforts the committee has been making. She discussed the digital human trafficking awareness signs that are rotating on the screens at RDU airport. They will be rotating on 24 monitor screens throughout the year. The Public Safety Committee will be presenting in March at the State Emergency Management Association Conference and will be presenting in July at the NC Emergency Management Forum. The committee will also be presenting in June at the Annual Conference for the NC Public Transportation Association. Commissioner Mauney-Smith announced that the NC-DOT received a federal human trafficking grant and that they will be working with them on the grant specifics. The next Public Safety Committee meeting is being planned now for March.

Public Health Committee:

Committee Chair Bernard reported that they have been performing research on other states that have human trafficking training programs for health professionals. They have reached out to people from these states to discuss what went well. Committee Chair Bernard says he hopes that this will help them figure out what avenue they wish to pursue in terms of training medical workers.

Ad Hoc Committee on Standards:

Committee Chair Johnson-Hostler announced that she is looking for members of the Ad Hoc Committee which can extend beyond commission members. She needs help redrafting the standards and needs members for the review team.

Update on NC DHHS Prevention Conference Panel

Commissioner McGhee shared updates about the conference panel she participated in. Commissioner McGhee spoke about labor trafficking and promoted the awareness posters during the panel.

Staff Report:

Director Long gave the staff report on the events that went on in January for Human Trafficking Awareness Month. She presented pictures of the display that is currently at the RDU airport. Director Long announced that the Governors Crime Commission grant opened last month. This money will fund the training coordinator position that was posted. Director Long will begin conducting interviews for this position soon and announced that she would love the help of anyone who is interested in being part of the interview team. Lastly, Director Long gave an update on the signs that have been sent to court houses, health departments, the DOT, NGOs, the ABC Commission, and other organizations. The remaining poster funding will be used to print posters for ABC-permitted facilities and to keep a stock of posters in reserve for future requests and needs.

Introductions:

Chair Haigwood asked the members of the Commission to introduce themselves and the organization they represent. The Chair also thanked Christine Long for her excellent and dedicated work as Executive Director of the Commission.

Grantee Presentation: Gaston County Child & Family Services

Hannah Hopper, a Human Trafficking Social Worker for Gaston County, shared a presentation on the goals that Gaston County has for spreading awareness about Human Trafficking. She shared the strategies they have been using to increase awareness in the county which include community forums, educational presentations, and a local multi-disciplinary team. Hannah also shared the outcomes and successes of their work. They have trained all child welfare staff and public health staff and have improved child-specific outcomes. They have identified 8 victims and are monitoring their safety and exploring appropriate placement options. Lastly, Hannah shared some of the barriers that exist. She said that HT is largely misunderstood, many victims/survivors often do not self-identify, they can be distrustful of people and services, and problems arise when victims are almost 18.

Presentation: Randolph County Case

Colonel Aundrea Azelton, Chief Deputy Randolph County Sheriff's Office, shared updates on the State V. Salvador Escobar case. She shared the successes of the case as well as barriers in the case that could be improved. One of these barriers is the

relationship between the Department of Social Services and law enforcement. They are already taking steps to improve communication between both entities.

Presentation: S.L. 2019-245's New Universal Mandated Reporting Law for Victims of Crime

Sara DePasquale, Associate Professor of Public Law and Government at the UNC School of Government, shared information about a new mandatory reporting law. Please see presentation attachments for more details.

Activities Review and Continued Presence Discussion

Special Agent in Charge of SBI, Carl Wall, shared what the SBI has done over the past year in regard to human trafficking. He shared statistics and discussed different operations they are currently conducting, including outreach operations. This year, they have already encountered 28 cases of human trafficking. In Durham, 18 individuals were given misdemeanors for attempting to purchase sex. Special Agent Wall discussed the misdemeanor charge and how harsher punishment would likely reduce these numbers. Special Agent Wall also discussed a test program they are conducting with an online robot in order to collect information about individuals attempting to purchase sex online.

Director Long then introduced the topic of Continued Presence and showed meeting attendees two training videos produced by the Blue Campaign/Department of Homeland Security.

After the videos, Special Agent Wall discussed the topic of continued presence and that the SBI is taking a victim-centered approach. He stated they will sign continued presence on a case by case basis. Attorney Joy Strickland spoke about liability issues for individuals that are granted continued presence.

Public Comments:

Commissioner Ryland read a letter to Commission members regarding Continued Presence. The letter asks the Commission to adopt a resolution supporting the use of Continued Presence by the SBI and other law enforcement agencies.

Several members of the public asked questions and made statements in regard to law enforcement's use of Continued Presence.

Adjournment:

At 1 pm the meeting was adjourned by Chair Haigwood. The next meeting will be held on April 16, 2020 from 10am to 1pm at the NC Judicial Center on Corporate Center Drive in Raleigh.