

NORTH CAROLINA HUMAN TRAFFICKING COMMISSION Meeting Minutes
December 9, 2021, 10:00 am-12:00 pm
Meeting Conducted In-person and by WebEx* through the NC Judicial Center

Commission Members in Attendance In-person or by Video or Phone:

Caitlin Brooks, Public-at-Large
Maggie Brewer, Department of Public Safety
Jennifer Haigwood, NC Department of Labor
Judge Claire Hill, NC Conference of Superior Courts (exits 10:05am)
Deana Joy, NC Child Advocacy Center
Jasmine McGhee, NC Department of Justice
Tina Pennington, Beloved Haven, Inc.
Caitlin Ryland, Legal Aid of NC (Joined at 11am)
Suzanne Mauney Smith, Assistant Police Chief, Gaston County Police Dept.(exits 10:25am)
William “Billy” West, Cumberland County District Attorney
Angelica Wind, NC Coalition Against Human Trafficking

Commission Staff Present In-person or by Video:

Christine Long, Executive Director
Dr. Nancy Hagan, Training Coordinator

*Members of the public were invited to watch the meeting and access meeting materials through a stream provided on the website.

Call to Order:

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:02 am.

Tina Pennington was sworn in by Superior Court Judge Claire Hill. It was stated that Tina Pennington had no actual conflict of interest, but the potential conflict of interest according to the State Ethics Commission. The potential conflict of interest does not prohibit her service on the commission and her biography was read to the committee.

Roll Call:

The Chair 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: October 28, 2021

The minutes were approved unanimously.

Committee Reports and Action Items:

Legislative Committee:

Legislative Committee Chair Brooks discussed the newly enacted State Budget FY 2021-2023.

- For Human Trafficking specific funding in North Carolina:
 - SBI – 8 positions for human trafficking
 - NCCWYI SeeNC Human Trafficking Program - \$625K
 - Direct awards to the following: (1) WORTH Court - \$300K; (2) Cry Freedom Ministries - \$250K; and (3) Rachel’s Refuge - \$200K
 - Waive expunction costs for victims of human trafficking – 16.4(a) G.S. 15A-145.9 is amended by adding a new subsection to read: “(k) Costs Waived. – The costs of expunging the records shall not be taxed against the petitioner.”
- North Carolina Human Trafficking Commission
 - \$250K recurring operating
 - \$200K nonrecurring operating
 - Five separate blocks of funds to issue grants to direct service nonprofits
- Sections specific to grants from the HTC
 - 16.20A - \$3,260,000; Direct Service grants to 23 named agencies through an application process.
 - 16.20B - \$1,400,000; Pass through grants to two named agencies after proposal process.
 - (\$220,000 of 16.20A can be used for administrative expenses related to these sections.)
 - 16.21 - \$4,400,000; Competitive Grants to nonprofits through an application process.
 - (\$300,000 per year can be used for administrative expenses related to this section.)
 - 16.22 - \$4,800,000; Facility Improvement grants to eligible DV/SA agencies. \$45K cap on first round grants. Allocated in FY 2022-2023. This is the only section of the five that is NOT American Rescue Plan Act funds.
 - 16.23 - \$15,000,000; Economic Assistance funds to eligible DV/SA agencies. \$7,500,000 to domestic violence organizations eligible to receive grants pursuant to G.S. 50B-9(b). Equal amounts. \$7,500,000 to sexual assault organizations eligible to receive grants pursuant to G.S. 143B-394.21. Amount based on formula.

Public Safety Committee Report:

Director Long reported that the Texas DPS Interdiction for the Protection of Children's train-the-trainer course was completed in November and was successful.

Public Health Committee Report:

There was no report.

Appropriations Committee Report:

Chair Haigwood said that the Commission would be reactivating the Appropriations committee. The role of the committee is to oversee the process, calendar deadlines, and approve paperwork. The committee would be active through next year and would consist of members and volunteers. Commissioner Angelica Wind would be the chair of the committee.

Staff Report:

Director Long and Training Coordinator Hagan discussed "A Year in Review" for the NC Human Trafficking Commission. There was the creation of three podcasts with NCJA, the creation of one podcast with AOC, and three webinar series that ran 10 trainings. The HTC conducted over 40 trainings and trained over 1,200 people throughout the year. The annual conference hosted 206 attendees and 24 workshops. Technical assistance was provided to numerous groups and agencies. The Public Awareness Campaign was promoted through TV, social media, and billboards. There is continued promotion of awareness signs/posters and continued partnership with the National Hotline.

In addition, data was reviewed for NC Court System charges in 2020 with revisions/feedback. There is continued participation in the National Compendium Steering Committee and several statewide or regional initiatives. The HTC secured operating funding for the Commission and grant funding to award to direct services.

The remainder of 2021 will focus on scheduling 2022 Commission and Committee meetings and setting up the HTC to receive the state budget funding. January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month, with the hopeful start of strategic statewide planning, and a look at revised standards for direct service providers.

Chair Remarks:

Chair Haigwood shared that next year's meetings would be readjusted back to the full three hours and stated how much the Commission has changed since she began serving in 2013. Chair Haigwood asked if there was additional business from Commissioners for discussion. Commissioner McGhee brought up the recent Shared Hope International Report Cards on States. Commissioner McGhee shared that there was a letter circulating among Attorneys General regarding a potential group response to the new format and scoring in the report.

Public Comment:

Several members of the public shared comments.

Adjournment:

| At 11:56 am the meeting was adjourned upon motion by Jasmine McGhee and seconded by Angelica Wind. The next meeting will be held on February 24, 2022 from 10 am to 1 pm.