



NC Human Trafficking Commission: General Meeting
Thursday, June 23rd, 2022, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
WebEx through the NC Judicial Center / Hickory Boardroom (A1-101)

10:00 AM – Call to Order & Roll Call Attendance

Committee Chair, Haigwood

Committee Chair Haigwood opened the meeting. She then conducted a verbal roll call to document attendance. Commissioners in attendance at the meeting were Jennifer Haigwood, Amy Auth(10:06am), Caitlin Brooks, Marc Nichols (exits 10:30am), Tina Pennington, Caitlin Ryland, Suzanne Mauney Smith, and Angelica Wind. Jasmine McGhee (10:18am) and Deana Joy (10:25am) joined a few minutes into the start of the meeting. Also in attendance was Commission Executive Director, Christine Long. Members of the public were also able to view or listen to the meeting via WebEx.

10:05 AM – Ethics Reminder & Approval of the Minutes

Committee Chair, Haigwood

Committee Chair Haigwood read the required ethics statement and thanked all in attendance before asking if there were changes to the minutes from the April 28th meeting. No changes were noted, and the minutes were passed.

10:10 AM – Committee Reports and Action Items

Legislative Committee – Caitlin Brooks

Committee member Brooks discussed a request from a member of the General Assembly. The Senator wants to partner with us and work on some potential legislation. Committee member Brooks has reached out to the committee and worked with Executive Director Long to prioritize a list of ideas. The meeting is not scheduled at this time, but the committee wants to continue to build partnerships like this for the purpose of moving along legislation. Committee Chair Brooks plans to include the draft legislation to close the custody loophole that was not able to be adopted due to COVID-19. The legislative committee helps provide ideas and feedback, working with Committee Chair Wind and the Appropriations Committee to distribute grant funding. Both Committees want to get grant distribution correct on the front end as far as distributing, monitoring, and recording everyone required.

Public Safety Committee – Marc Nichols

At a recent sheriff's meeting, Committee Chair Nichols was able to discuss future operations in human trafficking for the different counties with several sheriffs. There is so much support from law enforcement for these future operations and training. They have agreed to summer operations and are working with Rick Hoffman. They want to start slow and involve numerous law enforcement agencies. Summer operations are beginning to start across the state. Committee Chair Nichols also touched base with Director Trevor Allen with the NC Justice Academy and is working on some other items.

Public Health Committee – Thomas Bernard

No public health committee update.

Appropriations Committee – Angelica Wind

Committee Chair Wind present using a PowerPoint, which can be found on the meeting section of the website. The committee issued RFPs for facility improvement grants at the beginning of June. HTC staff sent out a

reminder of the program, who is eligible, and the amount agencies are allowed to apply for. The commission has received 8 proposals to date and expect to receive far more next week. There have been numerous questions and feedback from agencies asking what is acceptable for this grant. HTC staff and the Committee Chair has tried to remove as many barriers as possible to encourage those that need this money to apply. This pool of money is state funding and must be expended by June 30, 2023. The committee anticipates a second round of funding to be issued due to the \$45,000 cap on round one. AOC has confirmed that the HTC can use up to 10% of funding for administrative costs. The committee plans on addressing section 16.20 next and will need specific Terms and Conditions for that section. Fiscal research is working to interpret the language in the appropriations act for this section and the others. While we are approved for the 10% of these funds for administration, AOC guidance is to only apply direct administration expenses. New guidance came out this week from NC PRO. AOC staff and HTC staff viewed a demo of NC DOT's grant management system. The Committee is requesting feedback from anyone who has used this system. There are many steps left in the entire process to issue these grants and everyone is working to develop budgets for the admin cost, positions, RFP draft, risk assessment tool, proposal forms/templates, and standards self-assessment tool.

11:00 AM – Presentation: Financial Sextortion

Kory Williford, FBI Victim Specialist

Kory Williford with the FBI talked about a recent news release by her agency around sextortion. The media release was about teen boys that have been targeted in sex schemes- financial sextortion. What is sextortion? Sexual exploitation occurs by coercing a minor to produce images and videos of themselves and then using those images/videos to threaten them for more product. Financial sextortion has seen a recent uptick specifically in teenage boys online. The actors present as teenage girls and illicit videos or images and then use those to blackmail the teen boys into sending money or the actors will share their images with friends/family/post them on social media. Ms. Williford shares behaviors you may see in teenagers that this has happened to such as withdrawal, dropping grades, anxiety, etc. and also mentions there is an increased risk of suicide. This scheme is a form of cyberbullying. Talking with your kids about internet safety and reinforcing safe practices is a good habit.

11:30 AM – Staff Report

Christine Long and Nancy Hagan

The HTC has a new employee- Lauren Amato! Christine Long and Nancy Hagan shared a PowerPoint presentation on training conducted / requested, contractor progress on goals, and the upcoming Annual Conference. This report can be found in the meeting materials on the website.

11:45 AM – Chair Remarks

Jennifer Haigwood

We are very excited about our annual conference and part of what we do is present awards to people who have worked exceptionally hard in this area. Chair Haigwood would like to streamline the process of making award decisions and requests any commissioner interested in forming a very brief working group to create a process of around how we consider and select those nominations. Please send an email to Jennifer or Christine if interested. The HTC podcast with WORTH Court was featured in the state bar quarterly publication and includes the full transcript of the podcast during January (HT awareness month).

11:50 AM – Public Comment

Pam Strickland, the founder of NC Stop human trafficking, helped to form the NC Demand Reduction Task Force and has broken up into several different teams, one of which is law enforcement engagement. It would be helpful to have training specifically for law enforcement for demand reduction operations. The LE conference is planned for 9/6 at the same location as the conference. The two speakers are Rick Hoffman and Stephanie Powell. Registration is not yet available. Ncdemandreduction.org (website for task force). Please share this information with your law enforcement colleagues.

11:40 PM - Adjournment

Jennifer Haigwood

Committee chair Haigwood adjourned the meeting. The next meeting is on August 25th, 2022. If you're interested in helping with awards, commission members please let Jennifer know.

Future 2022 Meeting Dates: August 25; October 27; and December 15