

NORTH CAROLINA HUMAN TRAFFICKING COMMISSION Meeting Minutes
April 22, 2021, 10:00am-12:00pm
Meeting Conducted by WebEx* through the NC Judicial Center

Commission Members in Attendance by Video or Phone:

Jennifer Haigwood, NC Department of Labor
Caitlin Brooks, Public-at-Large
Jasmine McGhee, NC Department of Justice
Caitlin Ryland, Legal Aid of North Carolina
Suzanne Mauney Smith, City or Town Police
Tommy Bernard, Healthcare Representative
William West, District Attorney – exited meeting at 11:50am
William Nichols, County Sheriff Designee
Tammy Harris, Faith Based / Benefits Organization- joined at 10:15 am

Commission Staff Present by video or phone:

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

Commission Seats waiting for appointments:

NC Department of Public Safety
NC Administrative Office of the Courts

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

Call to Order and Roll Call:

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.

Statement of Commitment: Overcoming Racial Injustice and Discrimination:

Commissioner McGhee provided a background and overview of the statement. Commissioners will be asked to provide feedback and comments on the draft statement over the next few weeks.

Approval of the Minutes: February 25, 2021

Due to public meeting requirements for virtual meetings during the pandemic, the motion to approve the February 25, 2021 meeting minutes were approved through a roll-call vote. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Committee Reports and Action Items:

Legislative Committee:

Legislative Committee Chair Brooks discussed progress on Commission-recommended legislation as well as other legislation of interest. She announced that the next committee meeting will be May 13th from 10:00-11:30 am.

Public Safety Committee Report:

Public Safety Chair Nichols discussed the need for education and training in law enforcement and criminal justice departments. He is looking forward to working with DPS to further educational training plans. The committee is in the early stages of working with data software sources to figure out the best way to develop software that can detect HT cases. The goal for using this software is to enable agencies to link investigations together to provide real time data on crime linked to HT in the state of North Carolina.

Public Health Committee Report:

Committee Chair Dr. Bernard updated the Commission on the committee's recent work. They are working on launching pilot training programs at Wake Med in order to see what adjustments can be made, the committee is working hard on training modules and power points for the test pilot.

Expunction Law Update:

Ayana Robinson of Legal Aid of NC discussed their goals of expanding criminal record relief specifically for HT survivors. She introduced Tolu Adewale who now works as an adjunct professor at Campbell Law. He is the faculty supervisor for all clinic cases related to criminal record expunction. Tolu gave an update of the expunction law of NC. Currently under NC law, dismissed charges can be expunged regardless of whatever else is on your record. Even if a person has multiple misdemeanors, they still may be eligible for expunction.

Victims and Women at Risk of Human Trafficking: Identifying and Responding in North Carolina Adult Corrections:

Nicole Sullivan, Deputy Secretary of NC Division Adult Correction, introduced herself and discussed the prevalence of incarcerated woman having HT related situations in their past. She is currently working to identify individuals in prison who may have had these experiences. Dr. Rebecca Macy from UNCCH School of Social Work shared a

PowerPoint presentation to explain how trafficking may be part of women's lives before entering correctional settings. They may be contacted by traffickers or recruiters while they are in correctional facilities or as they are re-entering communities after. The question they want to answer is: How can we best support correctional leaders to be aware of these issues in order to ensure that victims are identified and provided resources and help. They will be working to develop identification materials and training modules for correctional facilities.

Staff Report:

Director Long and Training Coordinator Nancy Hagan gave the HTC Staff Update and highlighted some of the trainings that have occurred in the last couple of months. She discussed the contracts that the HTC has right now for training and the technical assistance grant. She also announced that there is a contract pending for the symposium for September 15-16, 2021 and to be on the lookout for a save the date soon.

Chair Remarks:

Chair Haigwood announced that there are 2 vacant positions for the commission and that hopefully by the June meeting we will be swearing in the new members. Carl Wall has retired, and Kellie Hodges has been promoted into his position. Jennifer introduced her and Kellie said she was looking forward to being involved.

Public Comment:

The Chair offered an opportunity for public comments, but no comments were received.

Adjournment:

At 11:55 am the meeting was adjourned by Chair Haigwood. The next meeting will be held on June 24, 2021.