

NORTH CAROLINA HUMAN TRAFFICKING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

October 22, 2020, 10:00am-12:00pm

Meeting Conducted by WebEx* through the NC Judicial Center

Commission Members in Attendance by Video or Phone:

- Danielle Carman, Administrative Office of the Courts
- Judge Claire Hill, NC Conference of Superior Court Judges (joined meeting at 10:05 and left meeting at 11am.)
- Jennifer Haigwood, NC Department of Labor
- Caitlin Brooks, Public-at-Large
- Caitlin Ryland, Legal Aid of North Carolina
- Angelica Wind, NC Coalition Against Human Trafficking (joined meeting at 10:10am)
- Suzanne Mauney Smith, Gaston County Police (exited meeting at 10:20am)
- Dr. Thomas Bernard, WakeMed
- William M. Nichols, Ret. Major NC Highway Patrol
- William West Jr., District Attorney
- Deana Joy, NCCAC (joined meeting at 10:40am)

Commission Staff Present by video or phone:

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

*This meeting was conducted through simultaneous communication. Members of the public were invited to watch the meeting live 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.

Presentation: Child Marriage in North Carolina:

Lyric Thompson from the International Center for Research on Women presented a power point presentation to discuss the issue of child marriage in North Carolina. Her organization has been looking at strategies to delay the age of marriage globally to ensure children, specifically females, have the opportunities to stay in school and thrive.

Their goal specifically in North Carolina is to raise awareness and provide research and data to supply policy makers with. The state of North Carolina has one of the youngest age of marriage laws in the country. Children can get legally married in N.C. at the age of 14, and this is making the state a destination for child marriage.

Her organization is recommending a policy change to increase raising the legal age of marriage to 18 in North Carolina order to set children up for success.

Approval of the Minutes: September 29, 2020

Due to new public meeting requirements for virtual meetings during the pandemic, the motion to approve the September 29, 2020 meeting minutes was approved through a roll-call vote. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Committee Reports and Action Items:

Legislative Committee:

Committee Chair Brooks reported that the committee has been hard at work and that their current goal is to have a legislative agenda ready for the December meeting. Chair Brooks discussed the important issue of child marriage and asked the commission what their opinions were on the best way the commission could help tackle this issue. The commission decided to support the efforts being made to raise the legal age of marriage but not to include it in the commission's legislative agenda since several other organizations are working on this.

The topic of commission funding was brought up and Marc Nichols suggested that the commission ask for a higher amount of funding. Danielle Carmen suggested including something about the impacts of COVID-19 when asking for funding due to the increased cases of domestic violence and possible human trafficking. Receiving reoccurring funding will be very important for the commission.

There will be a Legislative Committee meeting on November 5th via WebEx.

Public Safety Committee Report:

Committee Chair Nichols gave a summary of efforts the committee has been making. He discussed the efforts still being made on airport signs. They are hoping to get signs up in the Charlotte Douglas airport. The Public Safety Committee has been working hard with the Justice Academy on training for 2021.

Committee Chair Nichols played the Human Trafficking awareness video for the commission and said that they would review it once more before it becomes available and posted on the website.

Public Health Committee:

Committee Chair Bernard reported that they are working on using generalized human trafficking to create trainings that are more specific to someone in the medical field. They would like to make the information more pertinent to health care workers and include North Carolina specific information.

Ad Hoc Committee on Appropriations:

Chair Haigwood reported that this is currently a dormant committee.

Presentation: Digital Outreach Campaign

Liz Kline and Seth Crawford from WRAL Digital Solutions reviewed a power point to show the amount of web traffic Speak Up NC's campaign against human trafficking has received. The presentation showed the widespread attention the campaign has received from platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok. Seth Crawford explained the ways in which they gauge the amount of web attention by using methods like the click through rate.

Staff Report:

Executive Director Long discussed the public awareness grant that allowed the commission to hire content specialists who helped create messaging for campaigns. She also discussed the training and technical assistance grant which helped create online trainings and podcasts.

Executive Director Long discussed several mini projects that the commission has been working on such as a N.C. Human Trafficking Commission Resource Directory that is now available on the website. They have been working on material development like an updated fact sheet and an indicator card.

Chair Remarks:

Chair Haigwood announced that she was very excited and encouraged about all of the projects the commission is working on.

Adjournment:

At 12 pm the meeting was adjourned by Chair Haigwood. The next meeting will be held on December 10th, 2020.