**Minutes for Pinellas County Domestic Violence Task Force**

**January 17th, 2017**

Chair: Bobbie Hodson- **Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office**

Vice Chair: Christine Warwick- **Retired (Haven)**

Location: Suncoast Hospice

The Gathering Place (Room C)

5771 Roosevelt Blvd.

Clearwater FL

Time: 2:00 PM-4:00 PM

VISION:

To have a peaceful and just community;

PURPOSE:

1. To promote the prevention of domestic and sexual violence.

2. To enhance victim safety.

3. To hold batterers accountable.

GOALS:

1. To develop and implement primary preventative strategies.

2. To facilitate and implement a coordinated community response to domestic violence,

3. To provide ongoing education and assessment of the coordinated community response.

The Task Force agrees to use the principles of Trauma Informed Care in conducting our meetings by creating a safe, trustworthy, collaborative and empowering environment. This supportive culture of shared decision making and choices for all involved will enhance our advocacy efforts.

Bobbie Hodson called the meeting to order by reading the Vision, Purpose and Goals of the Task Force at 2:03 PM

Bobbie opened the floor for Kelly from Empath Health to introduce their agency and what resources they have for the community. Bobbie also allowed Erica Wiedemann, Haven of RCS Director to introduce the new CEO of RCS, Kirk Smith, and he spoke briefly as well.

D. Swindall proposed approval of the minutes and B. Holmes seconded the motion.

1. **Primary Prevention Report** – Frieda Widera /Ellen Woll

There was not a meeting in January. They are still waiting on the Coaching Boys to Men curriculum to use and train in the community. They have the DVD they shared previously regarding dating violence available for presentations and to take back to our agencies. They are still looking for schools to be able to present the information about Dating Violence Awareness to. Please share any leads you may have with Jennifer at [Jennifer.Saulpaugh@rcspinellas.org](mailto:Jennifer.Saulpaugh@rcspinellas.org). They have secured a date for the Yellow Dress presentation on 10/19/17 at SPC. Details will be shared as they are solidified. JAEDA and PCDVTF are sponsoring. It is a Boston-based one person presentation on teen dating violence. It is very impactful and they will be looking for trained volunteers to be available for the audience members as needed. Students will be free and it will cost $10 in advance, $15 at the door.

1. **Fatality Review** –Frieda Widera, Chair

Two cases were reviewed on 12/1/16. They were St. Pete Police and Pinellas County Sheriff cases. Both were short term relationships and men with possible personality disorders. One case did not find intervention opportunities while the other had family tried to intervene and there could have been court system accountability. There are not any cleared cases for the February meeting so they will be working on the annual Fatality Review report that is distributed in the spring.

1. **BIP Committee Report** – David Swindall, Chair

The Committee met for their quarterly meeting and discussed and started to create a table to address the differences between anger management and BIP. It is a reminder that BIP is designed for intimate partner relationships and anger management does not have requirements and standards. This will be provided to court system personnel so that they know the difference for sentencing.

1. **Advocacy Committee Report** – Sherry Clester, Chair

On 1/10/17 several individuals attended a free strangulation training through FCADV. Sherry reported that in 2016, there were 7 DV homicides and victims were in each of the age ranges starting with the 20’s and ending with someone in their 80’s. For misdemeanor domestic advisories defendants are now being brought to court, not showing the perpetrator on the TV monitor as they were previously. Assistant state attorney Alexis Upton will check on the status of why this was changed but it was possibly to directly hand them the no contact order. The committee is starting a Victim Advocate newsletter with two reports each year. This will help update everyone in the field related to domestic violence and what is happening in our community. It will be filled with educational information as well as supportive and uplifting stories. If anyone has any ideas or thoughts on this, please let Sherry know [sherry.clester@aaapp.org](mailto:sherry.clester@aaapp.org) . Also, they are looking for people that should be recognized for their hard work to be featured. They are also looking to have either another awards event or a walk in October.

1. **By-Laws Committee Report** – Susan McMillan, Chair

Susan reported that they are looking to revise some of the by-laws to make sure that they are more concrete. Susan got loads of feedback from members and is sorting through it all. She has been asking for additional feedback especially with the rules to follow to change the by-laws, including feedback from an Alpha Phi Omega member. She will share the proposed changes with the steering committee in February and then bring them to the entire task force at a future meeting. The committee wants to make sure it is done correctly as the by-laws are not just for those of us that attend now but also to set the ground work for the future of the task force.

1. **Statistics Committee Report** – Sherry Clester, Co-chair

They have met and are trying to create a training for prosecutors. It is scheduled for 4/7/17 and CLE’s will be provided. Assistant state attorney Alexis Upton is assisting with this. They are also trying to implement DV cards to place in the State Attorney’s Office (SAO) investigation rooms for prosecutors. They include information on better understanding DV and how to best approach a victim. Erica Weidemann has offered to laminate them at the Haven of RCS. Request made to add a list of contacts for victim advocates and the DV centers for the SAO to share with victims. They also were asked to look at the language used so that it is more a team oriented approach that it is encourages working together. The committee is sending out letters and the strangulation report (previously approved by the task forc) to SAO prosecutors this week and they will also be mailed to the police departments and school board. One thing they have discovered with speaking with the SAO and researching the statistics is the strangulation statute is hard to prosecute due to the wording. They are looking at how to change the wording of the statute. Sherry suggested asking for assistance from FCADV as they are more experienced with this. Their next meeting is 1/26 @ 10:30.

1. **Steering Committee Report**  – Alexis Upton, Chair

Katy Connor-Dubinahas stepped down as chair and Alexis has agreed to step in. The committee is working on the DVTF website and what would be the best way to do it cost effectively. They discussed where to move forward with the DVTF and the roles of the new chairs of the DVTF and sub-committees. Melissa Andress is working on a list of what trainings are available in the community. The committee is also working on the by-laws.

1. **Chairs Report** – Bobbie Hodson

Bobbie has been chair for 17 days and still learning. She attended the Pinellas County Alliance meeting for the first time and it was eye opening. She was surprised by how many players were involved but their biggest focus was on Trauma Informed Care. She feels our group should model those ideals. They are starting back with the training for new hires at Eckerd based on the interagency agreement from 2009. Several people felt there was a newer version that was signed and they will go back to their agencies to find a copy to share. Bobbie shared a Health Dept. Resource update with the help of Jocelyn from the Health Dept. They are looking for questions to ask around the subject of DV and wanted our input. They will be doing random calls in the community and wanted dv questions to be a part of it. She will keep in contact with Bobbie. The Sheriff’s office received a grant and will be providing a mobile command bus in the community. Bobbie provided them with palm cards from both DV centers and other resources.

1. **Announcements:**

If you have any requests for the education piece in the coming months, contact Alexis Upton [hokieupton@gmail.com](mailto:hokieupton@gmail.com) or Bobbie [bhodson@pcsonet.com](mailto:bhodson@pcsonet.com).

DVTF has a new Website address:

pinellasdvtf.weebly.com

Next Meeting: 3/21/17 @ Suncoast Hospice

5771 Roosevelt Blvd. Clearwater

Please contact Bobbie Hodson if you wish to be on the agenda

Meeting Minutes Submitted by: Courtney Hendrickson