



**Commission on Human Trafficking Prevention and Survivor
Support Minutes
Official Government Business
07/13/2022**

Call to Order

- Chair Mike Lamonea: Welcome and appreciation of members for being here

Roll Call

P- Present

A-Absent

Mike Lamonea, Chair	P
Michael J. Brown	A
Brittany Dunn	P
Sarah-Beth Evans	P
Keith Farmer	P
Michael Feinmel	P
Pamela Hock	P
Tyller Holden	P
Michael Miller	A
Deepa Patel	P
Mea Picone	A
Susan Young	P
Ex-Officio Members	
Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security Bob Mosier	P

Thomas “March” Bell	P
State Trafficking Response Coordinator Angella Alvernaz	P
Major Caren Sterling, VSP	P
Tanya Gould, OAG	P
Secretary of Education Aimee Guidera	A
Secretary of Labor Bryan Slater	A

10/12 Voting Members Present
Quorum Met

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- Motion to Approve 06/08/2022 Meeting Minutes: Dunn
 - Second: Young
 - Unanimously approved
- Motion to Approve 06/30/2022 Meeting Minutes: Feinmel
 - Second: Evans
 - Unanimously approved

Remarks from State Officials or Designees

- **Secretary Bob Mosier:** Appreciates everyone’s dedication and attention to detail.
- **Tanya Gould:** Honored to be on the commission and carry on the work of those who have come before her.
- **Angella Alvernaz:** Apologies for missing last meeting. Glad to see everyone and looking forward to the work we will do today.
- **March Bell:** Glad to meet everyone in person. Don’t hesitate to contact him for support.

Information on Virtual Meetings and FOIA

- Joshua Lief
 - Introduction of role as civil counsel to the commission.
 - Starting September 1, new law allows for full virtual meetings. Will need to follow FOIA council best practices and adopt a policy for virtual meetings.
 - One to one communications are permissible under FOIA. Emails are subject to disclosure under FOIA. Group texts and group emails are “meetings” under FOIA and are therefore impermissible.

Discussion and Vote on Proposed Subcommittee Structure

- Chair: Intention is not to limit participation. Members can participate in multiple subcommittees. Three subcommittees would be law enforcement/legal, victim services, and education.
- Motion to create three subcommittees: Hock
 - Second: Dunn
 - Unanimously approved
 - Motion approved
- Chair: Tanya Gould appointed as chair of the education subcommittee. Email McKayla Burnett with your subcommittee preference.

Brainstorming EO7 Duties Related to Law Enforcement/Legal Initiatives

- Traficant: Passes to Feinmel to facilitate law enforcement/legal discussion.
- Feinmel: Trafficking enforcement experience started in 2012. His experience is centered around Henrico County and being a prosecutor. Encourages input from everyone.
- **Point A: Increase prosecution and jail time for buyers**
 - Feinmel: Has not seen success with getting judges/juries to put buyers in jail for long sentences. Need to look at how we can present laws to general assembly.
 - Patel: Virginia is advanced in working with sex offenders. We have an entity approved by Board of Psychology. Cannot be a single cookie cutter approach.
 - Evans: John School allows buyers to understand impact of their actions.
 - Feinmel: Commonwealth Catholic Charities runs John School in Henrico. Others?
 - Patel: Trauma and Hope has a program.
 - Alvernaz: John School is listed in my code section. We have put a RFI out to gather information about programs throughout the nation.
 - Feinmel: Henrico structure is one all day class on Friday paired with community service on weekend. Curriculum includes prosecutor, victim/witness, health department, skill building. Also banned from Henrico County hotels. For first offenses only. Next charge is 6-months. Very low recidivism rate.
 - Alvernaz: Devil's advocate- In some programs second arrest leads to intensive therapeutic services. Do need increased penalties of some kind for each offense. Will need an advisory team to determine John School procedures.
 - Hock: Therapeutic piece is missed with John School. Without services to understand addiction, mental health, they cannot process impact on survivors or possibility of jail time.
 - Feinmel: Court system is not provided mental health background. Unsure how to determine if psychological issues are present that motivate behavior.

- Hock: Psychosexual evaluations using evidence based practice and qualified professionals are used to make these determinations. Prosecution is based on evaluation findings and recommendations.
 - Patel: Underlying factors are often disregarded. [§ 19.2-300](#) is the code for sex offender evaluations. Her office does these evaluations.
 - Gould: Term “John School” needs to be reconsidered. The name downplays the issue.
 - Feinmel: Patel, what should happen in court?
 - Patel: If the buyer comes through treatment, we should look at them as successfully completing a treatment program that addresses factors that contributed to that behavior.
 - Evans: Look at Texas House Bill 1540 that makes sex buying a felony.
 - Hock: Making felony means putting people with mental health issues on the Sex Offender Registry (SOR). Rehabilitation programs do not expunge the felony. They will still have life altering barriers leading to possibility of reoffending.
 - Patel: Making it a felony wouldn’t automatically put them on SOR. That can be added in. For juveniles, they put out an adjudication until they complete treatment. Same could be applied to adults. Monitoring by court system can help with assessing risk.
 - Bell: Historically, longer sentenced offenses are taken more seriously which can lead to officers letting people off because they don’t want to ruin their lives. In favor of making misdemeanor with felony after repeated offenses.
 - Feinmel: Criminal justice reform means changing the way people look at their jobs and moving from punitive to community safety. This could be an awesome opportunity to come up with a road map but must present in comprehensive way.
- **Point B: Target illicit massage businesses**
 - Feinmel: Potential for great work on this topic. Biggest hindrance is lack of resources for victims and ability to build trust with them. Need support network for victims in massage industry. Plan to work on this in a subcommittee meeting.
 - **Point C: Social media and tech companies fight trafficking on their platforms**
 - Feinmel: Frustrating topic. Unless victim is juvenile, social media is required to notify their client that the information is being provided to law enforcement for investigation.
 - Dunn: On state level, could focus on public access points, more control of what is accessible. Age verification on porn sites. More platforms are going to cloud storage, inhibiting investigation.

- Chair: Potential for Virginia to be a leading voice on this due to access to tech companies in Northern Virginia's. Legislative piece is first forge forward. We can provide Governor ammo to create change on larger level.
 - Dunn: Platforms don't do their own content moderation. Idea to train content moderators. Another idea- using CRM platforms as data gold mines.
 - Young: What if Governor was able to recommend that these platforms receive education on impacts of victims. May open their eyes to shared liability of what they allow on their sites.
 - Chair: Love that idea.
 - Dunn: Need to leverage parental liability as well. More education for parents.
 - Sterling: Social media companies putting privacy concerns ahead of providing information to protect victims.
- **Point D: Training for officers on identification and working with victims**
- Feinmel: Training is currently all over the place. Alvernaz is working hard on training for law enforcement. Need to build on what is being done.
 - Gould: Agree. It is important to streamline this training.
 - Patel: Messages victims receive are not consistent which impacts their development and functioning. Systems of change need to be disseminated from government level - checks and balances. Need evidence based practices.
 - Alvernaz: Training for law enforcement is included in my code section. Started with Interdiction for the Protection of Children (IPC) course- nationally recognized course that targets patrol officers. Detective level training is in the works. Intention is comprehensive message starting with patrol to detectives to the courts. Would like to be able to prosecute in state rather than pushing everything to the federal level.
- **Final Remarks**
- Feinmel: Appreciates this discussion. Wanted to present points A, C today. Points B, D will be worked on during subcommittee meetings.
 - Farmer: Several hotels are used for trafficking in Roanoke area. Truckstop was closed, but it pushed trafficking into the city.
 - Sterling: Recommend that DCJS be responsible for training for Commonwealth's Attorneys so it is consistent with law enforcement training. Advantage of placing in DCJS over AG's office is that DCJS takes political aspect out of it.
 - Chairman: Thank you for this discussion. We will break for lunch and then resume.

Break for Lunch

Brainstorming EO7 Duties Related to Survivor Support Initiatives

- Point A: Increase resources for mental and behavioral recovery

- Alvernaz
 - DCJS would appreciate funds to pass through to our providers. Successful at launching SETTS as foundational course for providers. Increase in law enforcement attend this training. Seeing success in cross training. Unethical to push identification without solid services base.
 - Idea to use a wing of mental health facility for victims. Can fulfill need for middle of the night placement.
 - Need legislation for services. Standards and guidelines is in my code section. Without legislation behind this, it is a suggestion. Need to standardize care and ensure trauma-informed, ethical care.
- Evans: If survivor does not have access to appropriate care, 80% will be revictimized.
- Patel: When survivors go into agencies that do not meet their needs, the likelihood of them reaching out to law enforcement, other resources is low.
- Feinmel: Throw addiction into the mix. Programs often cannot address this.
- Hock: These facilities use buzz words, like trauma informed. Not following through to provide services they say they will provide.
- Alvernaz: Cannot just build capacity. Must improve what we have to ensure quality services.
- Patel: Standards must be top down and sustained from state level.
- Evans: Even in worst case, it is still a bed away from trafficker. Still have resources- need to teach them how to use them.
- Gould: Survivor leadership and empowerment is needed. Propose that we include survivors in this topic.
- Dunn: Dunn: Safe House Project last year worked with survivors, professionals to create national certification program. Have seen strong early success. Programs that haven't certified are getting support to improve. Identify challenges, put them on path to success. Survivor complaint line built in. Site visits done by lived experience experts and certification experts.
- Bell: Even if we improve facilities, we don't have enough beds.
- Gould: We have to send them to other states.
- Sterling: Part of planning raid day, need to have planned where victims will go.
- Patel: Agencies do not understand that better practices can increase their capacity.

- Point B: Education, training, and empowerment for survivor career paths

- Alvernaz: Point B was conceptualized in general assembly this session. Bill 755 was not approved. We should look at this and figure out what needs to be tweaked before representing.
 - Bell: T Visas?
 - Dunn: They are nearly impossible to get. Cap on the number provided annually.
 - Bell: Current law for eradicating charges for victims?
 - Evans: Just prostitution related charges. Not others related to the victimization like if trafficker forced victim to steal.
 - Alvernaz: Understanding that they are bringing it back next session to open it up to all charges.
 - Bell: We need legislation on that.
 - Alvernaz: We need a lot of different types of legislation. Without teeth behind what we develop, it is a suggestion.
- **Point C: Temporary and long-term housing**
- Traficant: Is there a way to figure out a target number of beds needed?
 - Dunn: Each survivor will need different type of beds. Need for different levels of care.
 - Hock: To Dunn, are you suggesting a triage process to evaluate level/type of care?
 - Dunn: Yes. Cannot be one size fits all.
 - Gould: Needs assessments happening in medical care but not law enforcement.
 - Bell: Need to be prepared to answer questions about capacity and need in Virginia.
 - Chair: Will need to come up with numbers of need.
 - Traficant: Breakdown of different types of services is helpful.
 - Dunn: Can law enforcement numbers help with need calculation?
 - Sterling: If we want to do this work well, we need to be prepared to say that it is too soon to provide that information but the commission has put it on the table and will work on recommended figures.
 - Traficant: We are happy to have that conversation. We want to do this right and so will the Governor.
 - Sterling: Would be hard to get numbers from law enforcement right now. No centralized reporting mechanism currently. Working on that. Need support services in place so officers can be more active in identifying.
 - Chair: Thrilled that this is being worked on.
 - Gould: In meantime, could use funding for research to gather this information.
 - Alvernaz: The VAST system's next phase is to get real time data from VSP.
 - Patel: When looking for a placement, have to look at potential risks. Example cannot put multiple survivors from one gang in the same facility.

- Alvernaz: There are no mandates for agencies to provide data for VAST. MOUs only. Would be helpful to say these agencies shall provide data for VAST.
- Feinmel: It is a circular patter. We need victim services to encourage enforcement. We need resources for law enforcement across the state to do the operations to understand the need.
- Chair: We can include and highlight these issues in the education piece. We need to educate law enforcement. Not an immediate fix.
- Sterling: Need investigative training. Can partner with Henrico in state, but can also look outside Virginia.
- Patel: The experience of Henrico can build on IPC by bringing Feinmel in to teach how to build cases. Use existing plans that are working.
- Chair: Consider that each locality has different organization, personnel, capacity. Going out of state can give ability to compare numbers to similar cities. Utilize our in state resources and use out of state for data, research to justify need.
- Alvernaz: I communicate with counterparts in other states to learn.
- Gould: Each state is different and we can learn from them.
- Sterling: Compare alike cities. Example look at cities with casinos now
- Chair: Get local best practices from around the state. Get state best practices from around the nation.
- Young: Federal level staff are mandated to take training every two years. Should do this in Virginia. Specalized training for identification and response.
- Chair: Reminder to include labor trafficking in conversations.

Brainstorming EO7 Duties Related to Education Initiatives

- **Point A: Awareness of signs of trafficking and how to intervene**
 - Evans: Safe House Project has a free community based HT training [OnWatch](#) - survivor informed.
 - Sterling: Likes virtual training for law enforcement but need test for accountability. Checklist of something they can carry would be helpful.
 - Chair: We could all help with this as immediate result of commission.
 - Evans: To Sterling, what trafficking training do law enforcement get?
 - Sterling: IPC provided at VSP academy for new officers. Pushing it out to older officers. IPC is available to local agencies but not mandated.
 - Alvernaz: Some academies are DCJS accredited, not all. DCJS provides skeleton of training curriculum. Working on that now.
 - Evans: Recommendation that there should be mandated continuing education for law enforcement.
 - Sterling: Recommend that the training is every two years.

- Alvernaz: I present for SRO Basic training. Established SROs do not get this training unless they attend the School Safety Conference that the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety (DCJS) hosts annually.
- Gould: Survivor input is needed when creating promotional materials. Billboards and other materials can be triggering.
- Evans: Think “Is it empowering for everyone involved?”
- Bell: Experience in past, related to labor trafficking, identified a list of people who referred cases, used this list to determine who to target for training.
- Dunn: Safe House Project developed an in-home service provider training.
- Patel: Need to ensure providers are properly trained, sustained, feel safe before spreading information to the masses.
- Alvernaz: Some local DSS offices need education on legislative responsibilities.
- Patel: What else can be pushed from DSS to ensure safety of minor survivors? And to ensure they get the service they need.
- Feinmel: DSS trafficking evaluations are not valuable for making determinations in court.
- Alvernaz: DSS at state level understands what is needed. It is state guided, county run. Counties interpret the way they want.
- Evans: Texas implementing CSE-IT screening tool throughout DCFS.
- Alvernaz: CSE-IT is preferred choice for statewide screening tool in Virginia. The owner of the tool has not agreed to a statewide roll out the way we need it to get everyone trained effectively. If we cannot use this tool, need to create our own.
- Gould: Recommend seeing how different localities are doing it because it is working for some DSS local offices.
- Patel: Screeners need to have relationships and rapport with survivors prior to screening to get accurate results.
- **Point B: Requiring online safety training in schools**
 - Holden: What can we do to make education in the school systems mandatory?
 - Evans, In August, OnWatch is rolling out a module for the educational setting.
 - Gould: Not a fan of pushing prevention in schools. Important to have a position within the schools, like a trafficking specialist. Need to dig deeper than providing curriculum and phone numbers victims likely will not use.
 - Patel: Conversations with students about trafficking will illicit triggers. Curriculums for schools should be vetted by the state through VDOE. The programs need to be comprehensive, including the specialist within the school, relationships with LE.
 - Bell: Need to be able to meet needs of different communities where trafficking looks different.

- Patel: Trafficking survivors are already coming in with vulnerabilities and trauma. In their eyes, the trafficking relationship is positive. Need to use our resources - school counselors social workers, psychologists - for education and support.
- Evans: Different perspective- even just modules or video could have helped me in school.
- Alvernaz: Identifying victims without providing support piece is unethical. Lessons trigger students who have experienced childhood sexual abuse, trafficking. School staff must be trained to support the students and refer them to the specialist within the school system. Education should be done in a classroom setting, not an assembly. Process needs to be very intentional. Without triage component, students do not receive support they need. VDOE is working on e-module for teachers and staff.
- **Point C: Awareness of national hotline and other resources for reporting**
 - Evans: The national hotline is not always accurate or timely, can be dangerous for survivors.
 - Alvernaz: DCJS human trafficking page has a resource directory. We are hiring an ISD who will keep it updated.
 - Sterling: VSP is creating a state hotline. Current phone number is #77- goes to state police dispatch.
 - Chair: Sterling, are the dispatchers trained?
 - Sterling: Not yet. It would be good to have a statewide checklist for identification. Trauma-informed, victim centered approach is relatively new to law enforcement. Will need training on how to work with victims, what to offer.
 - Gould: DHS works well with survivors at federal level. Important that state hotline reports to national hotline for funding, data collection.

Public Comment

- No Public Comment

Adjournment

- Chair: We will work out next steps for subcommittees with subcommittee chairs. Next meeting will be either last week of July or first week of August.