

Social Service Human Relations Board

Minutes of the Regular Meeting, Thursday, August 27, 2009

1. **CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL**, President Wasko called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. Present were Villareal, Nielsen, Soglin, Dailey, and James. Absent was Biggs. Staff: Franz

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** Minutes of June 25, 2009 meeting were approved as presented. M/S Dailey/Soglin.

3-A. **PRESENTATION OF FAMILY VIOLENCE LAW CENTER SERVICES** --
CHERRI ALLISON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ó

President Wasko explained that this item is on the agenda as an Action Item, with the intention of us talking about how we would like to support efforts and activities in October for Domestic Violence Awareness Month, such as Alice Lai-Bitker's Day of Remembrance event. Since our meeting occurs so late in the month, she felt it best that we are able to approve participation in and sponsorship of activities tonight.

Speaker: As with most non-profits agencies, FVLC is currently experiencing extreme financial difficulties, including taking a \$180,000 cut in funding. This is a 20% cut, and it has necessitated freezing 2 staff positions, having a furlough day, and a cut in staff benefits. Dealing with possible cuts in services is very difficult for staff that does not want to refuse assistance to anyone asking for help.

This year, instead of having their traditional fundraising dinner, they are having a "Celebrating Families Night" on October 30. They are inviting people to stay at home and talk about ways they can raise awareness around Domestic Violence issues. If someone gets ten or more people to come to their house, the agency will arrange for someone to come to their house to make an in-person presentation on FVLC's services.

FVLC is hosting and participating in a number of events in observance of Domestic Violence Awareness Month. As they have for the past 10 years, they will host a lead off activity at Frank Ogawa Plaza, at noon, on October 1. Partner agencies will be on hand to provide information, as will participants in their youth program. Both local and national DV information will be available. This year they are doing something different than in the past. They are now gathering sponsors for a campaign called "What about Jane" (name may change). They already have a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. They will be producing 1,500 T-Shirts that have "ASK JANE" or "What About Jane?" on the front. FVLC staff, community and agency partners, and others will wear the T-shirts on the 1st and when attendees ask the about Jane, they will tell the story of a Domestic Violence Victim. This will be a more personal way for the stories to be told. Alameda and other communities are being invited to host local events using the T-Shirts to tell the stories. While the T-shirts will be provided at no cost, FVLC would welcome donations to help support this effort. Photos of the Oakland and local events would be placed on FVLC's website to help raise awareness and show the countywide support of their programs. A goal of the campaign is to "put a face" on the victims and to "make it real".

Over the past year, FVLC has seen statistics (number of DV incidents reported) are going through the roof, and the severity of violence is overwhelming.

FVLC works with the City of Alameda Police Department and responds to all of their DV police Reports. They call the victim and offer Crisis Counseling, are available to come on the scene. They have assisted with motel vouchers while victims undergo then screening necessary to enter a DV shelter, but this funding is also being cut back.

Members asked questions related to services provided by FVLC.

Ms. Allison distributed a flyer and outlined the agencies services, which include:

Crisis line assistance, referrals, information and advice.

Legal assistance obtaining restraining orders, dealing with child custody, visitation and spousal support. Also an in Court assistance project support by a lawyer from Clorox.

Case-management services for 6 months to 1 year.

A weekly presence at Alameda Hospital that includes counseling and access to their other services.

Support services for CalWORKS clients, advocacy, support groups for abused women, teen violence prevention education, and the ONERT program.

The ONERT (**Overnight Emergency Response Team**) program provides overnight and weekend support to domestic violence victims in Alameda County.

- 24-hour telephone crisis counseling, including safety planning
- Coordination with collaborative shelters to facilitate immediate shelter placement when possible
- Transportation to shelters, local motels, or other safe locations
- Motel and food vouchers when necessary
- Police-assisted relocation where available
- Next day follow-up to facilitate shelter placement or relocation
- Six-month follow-up to track client progress toward attaining self-sufficiency

Member Villareal asked if, given the downturn in the economy, there has been any increase in DV incidents.

Speaker: They have documented a 28% increase, but people are coming in so fast, it's been hard to keep up with. The violence has been more extreme and there have been more incidents of murder. One murder victim still had a tattered FVLC advocate's card with her when she was discovered. It's difficult, because they have no happy stories. Victims that recover and get over it don't check in.

Member Soglin asked if one particular service being provided is affected more than others because of the budget cuts.

Speaker: While requests for services have increased across-the-board, the big increase is for legal services.

Member James asked if there are any prevention programs available in addition to intervention services.

Speaker: They have a "Relationship of Youth Prevention Project" and a "Start Strong" project, which is funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. These programs work with children in middle and high school, showing them what dating violence looks like and how to start a strong, positive relationship.

President Wasko noted that FVLC participated in a Social Service Fair at Alameda High School and their participation was well received. Alameda High Schools are following up with the information provided by the agency.

Speaker: In spite of all the challenges, she wanted us to know that she loves what she does, and she knows that she's making a difference.

President Wasko thanked Ms. Allison for her presentation and for all that she and her agency does for the community. She added that we continue to be "cheer leaders" for DV programs, especially the relationship between FVLC and APD.

Speaker: FVLC responded to 144 police reports in the City of Alameda, which is 28% above their CDBG contract goal.

Discussion:

President Wasko opened discussion for suggestions on activities or actions the Board might take in support of Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Staff: Supervisor Lai-Bitker's office has informed us that the Day of Remembrance event will be on October 30 this year. Details will be announced as soon as they are available.

President Wasko: Since Alameda no longer has a Domestic Violence Taskforce; it would be appropriate for SSHRB to help raise awareness during October.

Member Nielsen suggested inviting a speaker from FVLC to make a presentation at the September 30 ASC meeting.

Staff: This can be arranged. We may also want to invite a representative from Midway.

M/Amended/ Wasko M/S Soglin/James and unanimous.

Support activities during Domestic Violence Awareness Month that would increase awareness around domestic violence in collaboration with other agencies as deemed appropriate, including but not limited to events planned by the Family Violence Law Center and Supervisor Alice Lai-Bitker.

M/S Dailey/James and unanimous.

President Wasko and Member James will follow up in determining which activities are appropriate for the Board to support.

Discussion followed in support of asking staff for City Council to issue a Proclamation Declaring October Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and that the authorization for this action was included in the motion that had been passed.

3-B. **WORKGROUP PROGRESS REPORTS**

- *Alamedans Together Against Hate* - Villareal

There is no real progress at this time regarding the plan to conduct a Forum on Profiling by the Alameda Police Department.

ATAH/SSHRB was a part of the 4th of July Parade. Thanks to Cyndy, Jono, and Jim for their involvement in planning and coordinating SHHRB's entry. Also thanks to Sam for his help with the construction. There was a very positive crowd response to our entry that is a re-enforcement to the work we do. President Wasko added that participation in the parade was a high point for her families as they were able to represent their culture in a very visible way. It also brought a visual representation to how diverse Alameda is.

- *Assessment and Awareness Workgroup* - Nielsen

The Dental Clinic will be opening before the end of the year and the funding for the case-management component. was allocated to the Department of Public Health's Dental Services Division. They have invited me to a meeting on September 7 to help put together a plan for marketing and community outreach, including identifying which agencies to target. Terri Wright will also be meeting that day. I'll have more to report at the next meeting.

The needs assessment will not be happening until 2010/2011, but the Youth Collaborative Survey has underscored the need for an updated version of our Resource Guide. Plans for the new one including having it on the website with links to languages and service agencies. On the website there will also be a 2-sided 8 1/2 X 10 version that can easily be downloaded and folded in quarters to make it pocket-size.

HINJHC initiative has pretty much been transferred to the ACCYF at this point and along with the survey is helping build a plan for a healthier community, with good data on where the gaps are.

- Family Services Workgroup - Wasko

There is nothing to report at this time.

- Sister City Workgroup - Wasko

Group is finalizing details in preparation for spinning off as a separate 501 c3.

The next step is submitting the application to Sacramento. There is a conference in China in September, but it is too late for us to participate.

- Resource-Sharing Workgroup - Dailey

The workgroup met with staff and also attended the Survey meeting on August 19th. The meeting helped provide information on the types of information being collected and evaluated.

Doug will touch base with Jeanne Kettles regarding any additional data she may have available. The workgroup is also very interested in the on-line plans for data sharing.

4. **BOARD/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS, NON-AGENDA**

Member James: There is an article regarding a rape on the West End that he was thinking about during the presentation. He had a small block party on National Night Out. He hopes to grow the event.

Staff: Current and proposed AC Transit bus line maps were distributed. A flyer misrepresenting some of the changes is being distributed.

Member James: There will be a series of community presentations in September, followed by two Public Meetings on the proposed changes. On September 12, there will be two community meetings, one in Oakland and one at Independence Plaza.

5. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS** None

6. **ADJOURNMENT** - M/S to adjourn at 8:55 (Villareal/Soglin Unanimous.)

Respectfully submitted,

DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED

Jim Franz

Community Development Coordinator

July 2, 2009

Office of Head Start
Administration for Children and Families
Department of Health and Human Services

The Community Needs Assessment of the City of Alameda has identified a need for increased childcare for families that live in our city. The need is especially great for infant/toddler care in families with low-income and limited education. The Social Service Human Relations Board for the City of Alameda identifies childcare as a high priority need and advises the Mayor and the City Council to leverage funds from Community Development Block grants to help support childcare. The need extends far beyond what we are able to address with limited funds. Because we believe that the need for early intervention and childcare is so great we have voted unanimously to support the Early Head Start proposal of Alameda Family Services.

The addition of Early Head Start services will increase the overall slots available to infants and toddlers in Alameda. The new services will provide continuous and coordinated care for children and families from pregnancy through five years of age, and it will increase a family's access to needed resources. By partnering with the infant/toddler/preschool programs of the Alameda Unified School District, we will strengthen the network of supports and services available to low-income families with children from birth to five.

We believe that Alameda Family Services has the capacity to implement an Early Head Start program based on the complex array of services they have provided to the City of Alameda residents since 1970. We strongly encourage the Department of Health and Human Services to award the Early Head Start grant to Alameda Family Services. We are confident that the services provided will make a difference in the City of Alameda.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Wasko
President
Social Service Human Relations Board

CW:JF:sb