



Women's Council
· Wisconsin ·

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**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Wisconsin Women's Council – June 3, 2015
WI Dept. of Administration, 101 East Wilson St., Madison, WI**

Mary Jo Baas, Chair

Board Members Present: Mary Jo Baas, Cindy Block, Representative Brandtjen, Karen Katz, Michelle Mettner, Katie Mnuk (by phone), Kim Nickel, Jessie Nicholson, Janel Brandtjen, Senator Janis Ringhand. **Not Present:** Representative Mary Czaja, Senator Dave Hansen, Carrie Richard, Heather Smith. A quorum of Board members was present.

Others present: Christine Lidbury, Executive Director; Julie Braun (DOJ), Rachel Sanderson (WWC Intern), Charles Schultz (Office of Senator Hansen).

1. Welcome and Introductions. The meeting was called to order at 11:30AM.
2. Welcome Representative Brandtjen to the Board.
New Women's Council Board Member. Representative Janel Brandtjen was introduced. Representative Janel Brandtjen was elected to the Assembly in 2014 and represents the 22nd Assembly District. She serves on five Assembly Committees including Corrections, Children and Families, Public Benefit Reform, State Affairs and Government Operations, and Workforce Development. She previously served in local government, elected to the Waukesha County Board in 2008. Representative Brandtjen lives in Menomonee Falls with her husband and their two daughters. She and her husband founded and own a marketing company in the Menomonee Falls area.
3. Approval of Minutes. Mary Jo Baas moved to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2015 Board Meeting. Second by Karen Katz. Approved unanimously.
4. Program Updates Program Updates (Lidbury)
 - Human Trafficking Happens Here, June 18, 2015, in Wausau, in partnership with The Women's Community, local domestic violence/sexual assault shelter and advocacy organization. A copy of the event program and invitation was distributed.

- ConnectWI local government website transparency project, in partnership with the Wisconsin Newspaper and Broadcaster's Associations, will announce the first set of recipients on July 15, 2015. Twelve local governments have applied to be recognized. Applications are under review.
- The Council has published a Spanish-language version of the Financial Tips for Women Brochure, which is being distribute through the Council's partnership with the EMPOWER project with the Office of Employee Trust Funds (ETF) and the state's Deferred Compensation Program (DCP).

5. Project Proposal (see handout, attached)

Lidbury explained a proposal to partner with the WI Department of Justice's Crime Victim Council to connect victims of human trafficking to services by identifying and connecting existing services for trafficked victims to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center. Council Members received a copy of the written proposal, developed by Julie Braun, Wisconsin Department of Justice. (Handout attached to minutes.)

The Council welcomed Julie Braun, Office of Crime Victim Services Policy Analyst and Crime Victims Rights Board Operations Director (WI Department of Justice). Braun went through the proposal. She explained the rationale behind using the national Human Trafficking Hotline and Resource Center (NHTRC), noting that the Polaris Project has a Federal grant to manage the program and has developed infrastructure to maintain, vet and update organizational listings. Braun described how she is working with National Hotline staff to develop an MOU about following up on referrals to Wisconsin service providers through the Hotline and to provide data back to the Department of Justice.

Lidbury and Braun talked about the Human Trafficking Hotline Poster being developed at the Department of Justice, in response to Act 5, a new law aimed at helping the victims of labor and sex trafficking, which requires the Department of Justice to create and make available posters with the national human trafficking resource center hotline. The poster will be provided to establishments such as truck stops, hotels, salons and hospitals to display the poster. The goal is to make it easier for victims to know there is help readily available and for law enforcement and "first responders" to find appropriate local services for victims.

Lidbury and Braun talked about developing a plan to proactively identify services providers statewide and provide technical assistance to complete the forms to register with the NHTRC. Braun also noted that DOJ has grant money to show the documentary "Very Young Girls", from Rachel Lloyd/GEMS as part of implementing in-person and organizational NHTRC registration events. Outreach will be used to also make the public aware of the initiative both for the purpose of identifying organizations and resources and having people use the hotline and resource list.

Board members raised several issues and suggestions, including:

- Request to keep track of groups beyond the hotline, e.g., programs that may focus on human trafficking through policy or other means but that are not “hotline” type services.
- Suggestion to connect with local law enforcement task forces both to identifying local resources and as a metric for whether the NHTRC provides useful.
- Concern was raised that posters are not an effective means of getting information to trafficking victim and other marketing methods should be evaluated.

Lidbury recommended that the Council approve this partnership, noting that it is in line with the Council's issue priorities, as determined by the Council, and in serving a statewide constituency reaching out to convene events and dialogues and serve as a clearinghouse.

Michelle Mettner moved that the Council approve the partnership through 2015 and then re-evaluate the Council's role. Second: Jessie Nichol. Approved.

Council members asked for some direct ways for each to support the project. A request was also made to develop a list of “5 things you can “ to have an impact in your local community. Braun noted that she as a “think you can do” factsheet and would share it with the Council.

6. Women's Council Budget Overview. Lidbury distribute a handout of the Council's operating budget and anticipated steps for reducing discretionary spending. This presentation was for information only to inform the board and the likely impact of budget on programs.

Issues highlighted:

- significant increase in rent
- growing non-discretionary spending through fees and assessment
- available program funds has shrunk to about one this of total operating funds
- reduced program funds puts pressure on need for external funds for Trailblazer

Potential budget cuts:

- re-negotiate office space and rent
- eliminate GovDelivery digital mailing list and newsletter service
- eliminate organizational memberships
- severely limit sponsorships and non-travel not directly related to programs

Motion to Adjourn. Moved Jessie Nichol; second, Cindy Block. Approved.

Respectfully submitted, Christine Lidbury

PROJECT PROPOSAL

Project to Connect Victims of Human Trafficking to Services The Wisconsin Women's Council and Wisconsin Crime Victims Council

- This project proposal has been presented to Attorney General Schimel and he is very supportive of this initiative.
- June 3rd, presented to the Women's Council Board for discussion and approval.
- June 10th, presented to the Crime Victims Council for discussion and approval.

Many victims of human trafficking believe their only resource for getting what they need to survive is a human trafficker. Let's change that.

The Challenge:

The criminal justice system is more prepared than ever to identify victims of human trafficking. However, it is not prepared to meet the survival needs of victims, leaving victims with another false "choice"-- cooperate with the system with uncertainty about food, shelter and services or return to the trafficker. Once victims are identified, often their access to local services is delayed or not achieved at all due to lack of knowledge about which organizations offer services to trafficked victims. Victims must be connected to local emergency, short-term and long-term assistance.

In Wisconsin, newly enacted Act 5 (supported by the Women's Council) requires the WI Dept. of Justice to create and make available posters with the national human trafficking resource center hotline. Under the bill, the DOJ shall encourage establishments such as truck stops, hotels, salons and hospitals to display the poster. The goal is to make it easier for victims to know there is help readily available. The National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) and NHTRC Hotline is a federally funded resource created for exactly that purpose. However, service organizations must follow an onerous registration process to be included on the NHTRC hotline list and actual referral practices of the NHTRC are not well-known.

Objective: Make information about existing services for trafficked victims easily accessible to victims, law enforcement and others who serve victims of trafficking. We will use the NHTRC for this purpose if it is determined that the NHTRC is the best option.

Strategies will include:

- Through in person contact and research, vet the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline (NHTRC) to ascertain whether the NHTRC is engaged in practices and information-sharing that will best support anti-trafficking and data collection efforts in Wisconsin. Communicate any Wisconsin-specific needs.

- Seek collaboration with the NHTRC to streamline the registration process for WI victim service organizations so that the NHTRC Hotline is able to facilitate referrals within Wisconsin.
- Seek out and conduct outreach to organizations that offer services to human trafficking victims.
- Communicate with state and regional human trafficking task forces and coalitions to encourage collaboration and to avoid duplication of efforts.
- Hold informational meetings/events with WI service representatives (in local and regional areas) to demystify and facilitate registration with the NHTRC (or another entity) to expedite the creation of a WI directory for referrals.
- Provide an online method for agencies to send information to the CVC and WWC concerning the services they provide victims of trafficking.

Tentative Timeline:

- May: NHTRC research and fact-finding re: how the hotline works and what information, if any is shared with states, opportunities to collaborate, etc.
- June: Present information and project concept to the members of the WWC and the CVC for input and feedback; refine goals and strategies.
- 3Q and 4Q: Implementation of in person and online registration events at which agencies are connected to NHTRC or an alternative system, if NHTRC is not the best option.
- Ongoing: Make the public aware of the initiative both for the purpose of adding to the resource list and having people use the resource list.