

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OVERSIGHT BOARD**

**Stephen P. Clark Center
111 NW 1st Street, 18th Floor
Conference Room 18-1
Miami, Florida 33128**

***BOARD MINUTES
November 29, 2007
9:30 A.M.**

Domestic Violence Oversight Board Members Present

Chair Lucia Davis-Raiford
Sharon Aaron
Sophie Brion
Judge Rosa Figarola
Margaret Henghold, Esq.
Chief Therese Homer
Ivon Mesa
Major Grace O'Donnell
Brenda Rivera, Esq.
Migna Sanchez-Llorens, Esq.
Cynthia Sinclair

Domestic Violence Oversight Board Members Excused Absent

Vice-Chair Genna Marx
Craig Darr, Esq.
Rev. Frances McCray

Domestic Violence Oversight Board Members Not Excused Absent

Visitors

Jose Acuna
Angela Diaz-Vidaillet
Doris Maya
Dr. David McGriff
Suzanne Quinn
Wilfredo Seda
Patricia Sims
Dr. Maxine Thurston-Fischer

Staff Present

Vaughn Tooley, Executive Director
Sarah M. Lenett, Victim Services Analyst
Mandana Dashtaki, Esq., Assistant County Attorney

*Staff Summary/Not a Verbatim Transcription

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Agenda Item No. 1 – Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:45am and went directly to a presentation from Alberto Parjus, Budget Analysis, Miami-Dade County Office of Strategic Business Management. Mr. Parjus provided a context for the pro formas most recently developed based on 10-year projections of performance of the Food & Beverage Tax. The projections reflect the affects of economic factors on the Food & Beverage Tax, which have resulted in a reduction in the growth rate from between 5 & 6% to 3.5%. A more conservative interest rate projection of 4.2% on the fund's balance was also used because of the greater accuracy that would be needed if we go out for bond financing.

A summary of four construction funding scenarios was presented:

**New Center Construction Funding Scenarios
(Based on Construction Cost of \$8,767,200)**

Percent Construction Costs Paid by DVOB	100%	50%	25%	0%
Maintenance of Effort Needed for Construction & Operations	\$23 Million (\$1M each year from 2008-09 thru 2030-31)	\$13 Million (\$1M each year from 2008-09 thru 2020-21)	\$5 Million (\$1M each year from 2008-09 thru 2012-13)	\$3 Million (\$1M each year from 2008-09 thru 2010-11)
Construction Costs Paid from GOB and/or Other Sources	-0-	\$4,383,600	\$6,575,400	\$8,767,200
Total from Other Sources	\$23 Million	\$17,383,600	\$11,575,400	\$11,767,200
Cost to DVOB Trust Fund	\$19.1 Million (Debt Service @ 6% for 30 Years)	\$9,553,905 (Debt Service @ 6% for 30 Years)	\$4,776,960 (Debt Service @ 6% for 30 Years)	-0-

Agenda Item No. 2 – Items for Approval

Excused absences were offered for Vice-Chair Genna Marx, Craig Dearth, and Rev. Frances McCray. The minutes from the July 26, September 27, and October 25, 2007 meetings were approved.

Motion by: Margaret Henghold
Second by: Ivon Mesa
Approved: 11-0

Agenda Item No. 3 – Chair's Report:

The pro forma was the main issue for the Chair's Report. Each scenario requires support for maintenance of operations; otherwise the fund goes into negative balance quickly. Options are being looked at for financing and leveraging funds and there is willingness in terms of sensitivity and politics of support, but no one is willing to fund an operation that will be unable to sustain itself, and that's the problem.

The Board was encouraged to think creatively and engage in discussion on what potential next steps could move us toward solutions for the financial deficits projected by the pro formas. Each member was encouraged to spend time going over the numbers in the pro formas in much more depth than could be done in the meeting. The bottom line is that we need more money to construct a second center and operate both, and a new plan is needed to accomplish that.

Building relationships with other organizations that have similar focus to partner with us on funding for construction and operation, such as private, philanthropic and social organizations should be strongly considered by the Board. Members are asked to stay alert for opportunities to partner with such groups.

The Chair has continued to work with the Homeless Trust on laying groundwork for support with construction or operations. The Homeless Trust has money that could be applied to our efforts if we can propose the right scenario that would maintain the programmatic integrity of both entities, linked to our both serving a common cause of providing assistance to alleviate problems resulting from homelessness. She added that the Homeless Trust has a very proactive board and a proactive foundation that supports the board.

The Office of Capitol Improvements, which is in charge of the Building Better Communities General Obligation Bond Program, continues to support the idea of helping with the construction of the SW Center but sustainability remains as the chief hurdle at this point. The Mayor's Office is still supportive and one suggestion is for holding a summit that brings together the corporate and business world with government and other likeminded and interested people to come up with a monograph describing a vision for domestic violence services in the future and how they can be funded. This would be a blueprint for bringing in corporate funding and support.

The Board should also give consideration to thinking differently about what to do with the \$9 million plus that is currently in the trust fund. The County Attorney was asked about whether or not the Board has the authority to contribute to the operations of existing shelters.

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In an effort to reduce construction costs, the Chair has spoken to the Miami-Dade Libraries Director, the Homeless Trust and the Mayor's Office on the possibility of using the prefabricated building process for the shelter. The County has used the prefabricated method to build libraries in a shorter time and the Homeless Trust is considering whether or not this would be a feasible method to build housing for their clients. If the Board considered this a good option a presentation would be arranged. The Chair also directed staff to set up presentations from Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) [an organization that provides capital technical expertise, training and information to support development of local leadership and the creation of affordable housing, commercial, industrial and community facilities, businesses and jobs], Miami-Dade County's General Obligation Bond Program and Finance Department.

The Chair called for a review of the Board's Committee structure toward making them function more effectively so that the majority of work will be accomplished within committee settings. The majority of analysis and information gathering should be done at the committee level. Each member would be assigned to at least one committee. The importance of attendance at both committee and Board meetings was emphasized.

A motion to *study* holding committee meetings prior to Board meetings was seconded and passed unanimously.

Motion by: Sharon Aaron
Second by: Sophie Brion
Approved: 11-0

Agenda Item No. 4 Staff's Report:

Mr. Tooley reported that the Government Facility Hearing process is ready to move forward but we need to have means of demonstrating the ability to sustain operations in both centers in order to get the approval of the Board of County Commissioners. As the pro formas showed in each scenario, alternative sources of funding will have to be secured in order for the trust fund to remain solvent.

The Dial-A-Life Board has a dedicated seat for a DVOB member that is currently vacant. An appointment will be made at the next Executive Committee meeting.

Ms. Lenett reported that the Alliance for Human Services Social Services Master Plan is currently being updated and encouraged greater involvement from the DVOB in the development of the Special Needs Cluster, which includes domestic violence services. Participation in the process can afford opportunities for funding recommendations for domestic violence services. The Executive Committee will discuss DVOB participation in the process and report back to the Board.

Agenda Item No. 5 – Presentations:

The Thurston Group

Dr. Thurston presented the Executive Summary of the Year 3 Final Evaluation Report, which included a brief review of Year 1 (2005) and

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Year 2 (2006) efforts as the context for the Year 3 Report. Major issues and recommendations follow:

- Increasing length of stay in shelter. Efforts should be continued by the DVOB to increase emergency shelter beds. In addition, the DVOB should actively explore various resources for additional transitional housing as well as permanent affordable housing for victims of domestic violence.
- Large proportion of children in residential services. The DVOB and other stakeholders should increase collaborative efforts with Dade County Public Schools to facilitate the school retention and adjustment of children exposed to violence in their homes; accommodations for homework as well as indoor and outdoor recreation areas should be a major consideration in plans for future domestic violence centers.
- Immigration status of victim. Targeted efforts to reach immigrants and other underserved subgroups of domestic violence victims have proven to be successful and should be continued. For example, a special community education and outreach program at the North Center resulted in increasing the number of Haitian victims using shelter services.
- Negative perceptions of the domestic violence shelter. The domestic violence centers should continue to consciously strive to ensure the shelter environment is culturally appropriate for all victims with respect to staffing, services, and activities; Presentations to community groups and other public education activities should more clearly describe the shelter environment and client profile.
- Underserved adolescent needs. An orientation session for teens should be developed to address issues and concerns specific to this group; in addition, more attention should be given to planning activities that may be more beneficial for adolescents, e.g., music, drama, poetry, and other expressive arts.
- Mental health needs of children. Counseling services should be expanded beyond the basic accreditation requirement, to include more intensive therapeutic counseling for children receiving residential and non-residential services. For example, a model of family therapy could be adopted and implemented in all centers.

The report concluded that: "In spite of the challenges and opportunities for enhancing the domestic violence services system, the services provided by Miami-Dade's certified centers have resulted in positive outcomes for victims of domestic violence. Most importantly, victims in these centers experience a period of safety for themselves and their children."

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The Advocate Program

Dr. David McGriff announced that the Service Partnership for Children in High Conflict Families was formally approved by The Children's Trust and funded at \$1.18 Million per year for the next three years. This relates directly to findings and recommendations in The Thurston Group's report that services for children need enhancements. The Partnership will be targeting children between the ages of 0-13 years in domestic violence shelters. The program is ready to move forward, with interviews beginning in December and operations to begin in January.

Advocates for Victims

Ms. Pat Sims reported that the Department Director of Human Services, Phyllis Tynes-Saunders, has demonstrated commitment to providing for the needs of Advocates for Victims. New computers have been purchased for employees and others are on order. The shelters are moving from the r-base system to software common to most of the certified shelters in the state that was provided by the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence. The software has been installed and the next step is training for staff in its use. The program is expected to be fully operational before the end of the year.

Regarding the shooting at Inn Transition South, a lot of incorrect information was circulated by the media and by hearsay. The shooting victim was a resident of Inn Transition South, but this was not a domestic violence incident. Channel 7 reported incorrect information and also publicized the location, identifying it as a domestic violence shelter. Channel 7 was asked by staff on the scene to not show the address of the facility but went ahead and showed it anyway. In spite of objections from the County Manager's Office through Miami-Dade Communications, channel 7 continued to show the story complete with pictures of the facility with the address. The Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence was alerted and is informing media outlets across the state that locations of domestic violence shelters should not be aired.

Upon admission to Inn Transition South, if residents do not have their own personal cell phones a phone is issued to them for emergencies. A decision was made when the facility opened that the 55 apartments would not be provided with land line telephones because of the cost and the lack of money for the phones. At this point, that decision is under review and preliminary inquiries have been made with AT&T about specifics.

Ms. Sims reported that Advocates for Victims is collaborating with The Lodge on a five year primary prevention grant through the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence. They also continue to work together on training and recently conducted core competencies training collaboratively.

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The Lodge

Ms. Angela Diaz-Vidaillet announced the upcoming Fourth Winter Social for The Lodge on December 7th at the La Puerta del Sol at the Douglas Entrance in Coral Gables. Great Calypso Music and great food were on the agenda and she invited everyone to come and enjoy a fabulous evening.

Committee Reports – (Agenda Item #6)

Community Education & Collaboration

The committee engaged in dialogue about developing a web page that reflects the advisory role of the Board. Clear distinctions from other web pages would include emphasis on domestic violence policy, case law, legislative news, and relevant articles related to domestic violence issues. There would be links also to information and services, such as how to get an injunction and the Hotline. It could be utilized for highlighting domestic violence initiatives by elected officials (i.e., the Mayor and Commissioners) and others. This meeting will have follow-up opportunities for additional input on developing the web page.

The idea of developing protocol for recognizing the service of members on the Board was discussed, as well as protocol for enforcing attendance requirements and mechanisms for replacing chronically absent members.

Agenda Item 7 – Old Business/Action Items:

None

Agenda Item 8 – New Business:

None

Agenda Item 9 – Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 11:45am.