

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OVERSIGHT BOARD MEETING
January 24, 2024
Summary Minutes
Miami-Dade County Stephen P. Clark Center
10th floor Conference Room 1011
10:00 am - Noon

1. Call to Order: Roll Call & Statement of Quorum Miguel De Grandy, Chair
The meeting was called to order at 10:22 a.m. Board members present Miguel De Grandy, Cecile Houry, Marlen Oria, Marivi Betancourt, Isabela Corzo, Major Luis Almaguer, Maria Santamaria, Rosa Kasse, Judge Migna Sánchez Llorens, Judge Elisabeth Espinosa. Members absent: Vanessa Joseph. Carrie Soubal. Staff/Guests: Sonia Grice, Director, CAHSD, Ben Salz, Finance Director, CAHSD, Office of Community Advocacy Staff: Alex Nicolas Alex Josprite, Vanessa Azzam, Assistant County Attorney: Leigh Kobrinski.
2. Reasonable Opportunity for Public Comment- None.
3. Chair's Report:
 - a. Welcome new board member Honorable Judge Elisabeth Espinosa 11th Judicial District, Domestic Violence Division. Mr. De Grandy welcomed Judge Espinosa and asked her to introduce herself to the board, followed by board members' introductions. Judge Espinosa handles DV criminal misdemeanor crimes of DV cases as well as DV restraining orders, injunctions repeat violence, stalking, sexual violence, Judge Espinosa began her career in the State Attorney's Office in Tampa. She is from Miami.
 - b. Beach Municipalities Food & Beverage Tax November 2024 elections. Mr. De Gandy provided the update to the board on the efforts of expanding the F&B Tax to the beach municipalities which include Miami Beach, Surfside and Bal Harbor. If the new chair elected today permits, Mr. De Grandy will be reaching out to Mr. Book to ensure messaging and advocacy coordination. Mr. De Grandy believes the communicating to voters the fact that the tax also benefits IPV/ DV survivors is better received. Ms. Corzo expressed an interest in supporting the efforts. Mr. De Grandy is happy to include Ms. Corzo, or any other board member in the discussions and planning of our efforts provided these follow the requirements of the Sunshine Law.
4. ***Approval of DVOB Meeting November 15, 2023, Summary Minutes****
Motion by Marlen Oria to approve the minutes as presented: Second: Marivi Betancourt. Minutes unanimously approved as presented. Mr. De Grandy asked Ms. Kobrinski if having the election in January and not in February per the bylaws required official action of the board /motion to hold the elections in January. Ms. Regalado noted the board acted on this at the November 15, 2023, board meeting where the motion successfully passed on holding the elections of officers to January 2024 - this meeting.

5. Public Engagement Committee Report Isabela Corzo
Ms. Corzo, Chair of the committee reported the committee's name change to the Public Engagement Committee (PEC) that better reflects the committee's focus on the pillars of education, outreach and development. The committee has agreed to hold its meetings following each board meeting, and that as customary of our board, all board members are invited to join. The committee is working on its charge, a description, and a communications plan to guide its work. These will be presented to the full board when finalized. Minutes will be included in each board meeting as they are approved at the committee level.

Ms. Regalado asked Ms. Kobrinski about attainment of quorum of committee. Ms. Kobrinski confirmed that the DVOB chair appoints members to all the board's committees and those are the official members of the committee. Quorum is attained accordingly, based on the number of committee members.

6. Center Facilities Visits Update Marivi Acuna Betancourt & Liz Regalado
Ms. Regalado informed the board that Ms. Betancourt and she are working with CAHSD to finalize the report to be presented at the March board meeting. Ms. Betancourt expressed her concerns about security and ensuring that the addresses to the facilities are undisclosed/blocked. She asked to see the respective 40-year Certifications for the facilities and the DV Shelter Certificates required by the other funder, DCF. Ms. Regalado stated that the unsafe structures issues found may be related to the 40-year certification. Mr. De Grandy emphasized that the address issue should be handled immediately.

7. CAHSD Domestic Violence Services: Below is a summary of the information provided by Director Grice and subsequent discussion: **Status of Salary Parity - Victim Advocates:**

- a. Salary range VOCA 1 Salary range \$40,167-\$70, 521.
- b. Salary range VOCA 2 \$48,160- \$85,180.
- c. VOCA 1 vacancies were reclassified to VOCA 2's ending in 8 VOCA 2 promotions.
- d. Department vacancies were approximately 130 and 50 temporary employees that had been temporary for over 10- 20 years. This included a vacancy in the Violence Prevention and Intervention Division (VPID) which is that of the Division Director. The VPID is where all the IPV/DV services are provided within the department including the Coordinated Victims Assistance Center (CVAC).
- e. The vacancies also impact overtime costs.

- f. Temporary employees were encouraged to apply for the vacant positions within the department.
- g. Currently, there are 50 vacancies in the department of which 5 are in no recruitment status.
- h. VPI Division status: 20 of the 50 vacant positions are in the Division and 19 of the 20 are in recruitment status, which means there is one vacancy; a clerk 3 position that was eliminated due to a grant reduction.
- i. Changes are taking place within the division to elevate the services currently provided.
- j. The new division director will begin next Monday. Director Grice will introduce her to the board.
- k. Interviews for the Assistant Director position is being conducted. This person will oversee the division and the substance abuse services, which encompass all the residential programs in the department. The Assistant Director that is estimated to begin in this role within two weeks will be the point person to liaise with and attend the DVOB meetings. Ms. Grice will continue to attend and expressed the importance of the partnership and relationship between the DVOB and CAHSD.
- l. Ms. Grice reassured the board that the complaints and concerns expressed not just by the DVOB, but all partners, are used as a learning tool.
- m. She is changing the culture of the department and specifically the VPID, and this takes time. Ms. Grice has personally done her research and conducted unannounced weekend, holiday, and regular hour visits including calling the hotline. Her focus is to support the staff in responding to services while implementing changes as needed.
- n. A roundtable with partners will be scheduled in the future and DVOB will be included along with all other partners.
- o. Mr. De Grandy commended Ms. Grice and thanked her for listening and responding to the issues raised. Ms. Grice has been a welcome and needed breath of fresh air. He is glad that Ms. Grice's approach is to take the concerns as constructive and only intended to improve the services. He assured her that this board is here to support her.

- p. Mr. De Grandy expressed this board can advocate on her behalf. Mr. De Grandy closed by thanking Ms. Grice for her work and professionalism. He asked the department to consider increasing or modifying the assigned salary range as it is still below the market range. He suggested the bargaining unit and HR consider expanding the scope of duties to increase the compensation range.
- q. Ms. Grice stated that Ms. Baker is helping her with the salary parity. She reminded the board they must also work with and through the collective bargaining units/unions. She feels confident the proposed changes create a succession path and structure for the VOCA 1 and VOCA 2 positions. She further informed the board that she believes in cross training and eliminating the "one person that knows everything" culture that exists. Staff are encouraged to embrace cross training. Additionally, cross training should be part of the employment/job description and in exchange the pay range is increased. Ms. Grice expressed her intention for the division director to have the opportunity to make the positive changes needed. The person hired stated they do not believe in leading behind the desk.
- r. Many of the units in the vacancy report were due to the units' conditions. She has made sure the units are available for the survivors as soon as possible. She is hopeful that the division director will make the changes she has observed are needed. Ms. Grice informed the board that the division director comes from outside the Miami-Dade County workforce.
- s. Miami-Beach Funding to DVOB- The program is moving forward. Funding expended and will be carried over to the next Fiscal Year (FY). Ms. Grice reported the program has assisted 5 clients expended \$35K in housing needs. VPI Division overtime payment report- Mr. Salz reported FY to date an expenditure of \$93K for the entire division. The last pay period reflected an expenditure of \$11K.
- t. Ms. Regalado informed the board she has learned in conducting the facility site visits with Ms. Betancourt and corroborated in conversations with Dr. Linda Parker with Women in Distress (WID) of Broward County, that homeless individuals not fleeing IPV/DV are accessing DV Shelters and rental assistance funding here in Miami-Dade County. Dr. Parker has assigned a member of her staff to attend the case staffing and homeless management and information system (HMIS) meetings with the Broward Homeless lead agency (continuum of care /CoC) to review their case list and cross reference it with WID's list. Ms. Betancourt stated this confirms the importance of knowing the length of stay of clients in our DV shelters.

- u. Ms. Regalado reminded Ms. Grice that Dr Parker is a resource for training on the helpline and Mr. Carlos Maxwell is an excellent resource for changing staff culture and identifying program performance measures. In addition, there is a National Coalition of Family Justice Centers (which is the best practice model used to establish and create CVAC) that provides technical assistance to local family justice centers across the nation. Ms. Regalado encouraged and reassured Ms. Grice she can use these valuable resources to her benefit.
- v. Judge Sanchez-Llorens asked Ms. Grice if she could provide the board with an updated Table of Organization.

The following business was tabled:

- a. Hotel Placements Budget, Policies and Procedures- tabled
- b. Shelter occupancy report-tabled
- c. Status of Additional CVAC Locations and Estimated Timeline- tabled Ms. Grice is working on this and will consult with the board. She has spoken to Ms. Susan Rubio (MUJER), Miami Gardens, and Hialeah to determine the best location. Mr. De Grandy suggested Ms. Grice explore possible space at the county courts, through Judge Espinosa, as it would especially address any security concerns.

New business/requests: Updated table of organization, length of stay of clients at all 4 shelters and transitional housing program. Include in facilities visits Inn Transition South.

8. F& B Tax DVOB Fund Report

Liz Regalado

Pro Forma and Budget with Expenditures and Revenues**

Ms. Regalado presented the fiscal documents submitted by the Homeless Trust, for the period of October 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023, included the unaudited expenses and revenues, the proposed and adopted FY 23-24 budgets, but did not include any of the shelter operations expenditures. The charge of \$30K is carryover from the construction of the Empowerment Center that was processed/ approved for payment by ISD. Ms. Regalado explained there were invoices for shelter operations submitted by CAHSD but were incorrect. The Homeless Trust has returned them to CAHSD, and they are waiting to receive the corrected invoices. Judge Sanchez Llorens would like to have at the March meeting a more detailed report and expressed her concern that this information does not provide the requisite information it needs. Mr. De Grandy agreed with Judge Sanchez Llorens and expressed his disappointment in the information received. He requested the board receive up to date, accurate and complete (including the proforma and detailed expenditures) fiscal reports for the board to do its job. Ms. Houry asked for more specific information about the \$5K operating expenses line item.

9. Executive Director Report

Liz Regalado

- a. * **Annual Report 22-23** – Ms. Regalado reported she is in the process of completing the modifications to the report given the action taken by the board to combine/include the work and business conducted in calendar year 2023. Mr. De Grandy asked Ms. Regalado to obtain input from Ms. Houry and Ms. Betancourt and complete this as a priority for the board to adopt at the March meeting and be up to date on submitting the required yearly report. Ms. Houry wants to address the concerns about the services at CVAC in the report.

Judge Espinosa asked for clarification about the concerns, as she has experienced some concerns about the services at CVAC in her capacity. Ms. Betancourt expressed her concern about the partners at CVAC and the collection of health and personal information being collected and how that information is safeguarded, considering the partners using the offices. Mr. De Grandy asked judge Espinosa to share the outcome of the tour at CVAC.

- b. **Miami-Dade County Domestic Violence Leave Ordinance Policy and Draft DVOB Resolution-** Mr. De Grandy asked board members to review the documents provided by Ms. Regalado (who detailed them for board members) regarding the leave policy, as well as the resolution drafted by Ms. Kobrinski who did a good job at capturing the chair's request at the November 24, 2023, board meeting. He would like the board to review the documents and come prepared to make specific recommendations, if any, to be added to the resolution of the board to the BCC. One of his recommendations will be to add IPV/DV training module mandatory for county employees and advisory board members, as is the sexual harassment training. Ms. Houry would like to know if the leave is identified as IPV/DV in any of the personnel/payroll records. Mr. De Grandy asked Ms. Kobrinski to add the suggestions of the board members to the resolution. **Summary of the recommendations: training module on DV/IPV and mandatory training for employees and advisory board members; raising awareness on IPV/DV leave to employees, other organizations and community, specifically: what to look for and how to identify potential IPV /DV situations, and available resources. Finally, create awareness of DV/IPV amongst county employees**

Ms. Santamaria suggested that during Domestic Violence Awareness Month board members use all available platforms (at least in Miami-Dade County) to raise awareness of DV/IPV and the leave. She offered the Miami-Dade County Police Department to help in this regard.

Mr. De Grandy noted that the board will defer action on the draft resolution until the March meeting. Ms. Kobrinski will make the modifications accordingly and

Ms. Regalado will distribute the revised resolution prior to the March meeting to finalize at the March meeting.

Ms. Regalado, through the chair, asked the board to consider inviting the appropriate person in HR to a future meeting for the board to be educated on the policy and its administration, and in turn offer more concrete and informed recommendations regarding the policy. The board agreed.

Ms. Regalado informed board members that she has been in contact with the Office of Fair Employment, whose director offered to present the policy at a board meeting and work with the board on possible and appropriate recommendations /modifications to the policy and or its administrative processes. Ms. Kobrinski noted the distinction between the implementing order and the code: the code applies to the county, and the code applies to companies/organizations with 50 or more employees.

10. **After Meeting Information:** Cost of Beds Homeless Trust and Women in Distress. Liz explained that due to the previous board meeting's extended agenda, she included this information requested by the board in the September meeting to ensure they are informed. Ms. Houry asked Ms. Regalado to obtain the actual cost for Lotus House beds. Ms. Regalado will also follow up with the City of Miami Beach who contracts with several of the homeless shelters to obtain what the City pays for their beds and provide the information at the March meeting.
11. **DCF Domestic Violence Office:** The DCF DV Office was scheduled to visit in January to meet with CAHSD and community partners. When that meeting is scheduled, Liz will attend and report back to the board.
12. **BCC Meetings:** Pending Commissioner Bastien, Commissioner Gonzalez Commissioner Steinberg, Commissioner Regalado, Commissioner McGhee. Ms. Houry and Ms. Regalado met with Commissioner Higgins and her Chief of Staff. On the board's recommendation regarding the processing of U Visas at the state level, Commissioner Higgins asked if we could obtain data on the time it takes law enforcement agencies in Miami-Dade County to process U Visas, then we can establish a baseline to measure our performance. We will, through staff, make every effort to obtain this information. Commissioner Higgins was appreciative of the visit and information received. The appreciation was reciprocal.
13. **Governance-** Ms. Regalado reminded the board of vacancies and member requirements: Board Vacancies**, Carryover: Commissioners Hardemon and Bermudez. Vacant seats: Commissioners Gonzalez, McGhee, Gilbert. Requirements: Sexual Harassment Training and Source of Income Statement.

14. **Board Officers Elections:** Chair and Vice Chair: Elections took place per established bylaws. Nomination for Chair: Miguel De Grandy nominated Ms. Cecile Houry. Second: Marivi Betancourt. The vote was unanimous to elect Ms. Houry as the new chair of the board. Marivi Betancourt nominated Judge Migna Sanchez-Llorens for the office of Vice Chair. Judge Sanchez Llorens was honored and values the work of the board. However, she recognizes the work ahead and declined the nomination. Mr. De Grandy opened the floor for nominations for the Office of the Vice Chair. Ms. Houry nominated Isabela Corzo for Vice Chair. Ms. Santamaria nominated Ms. Betancourt for the Office of Vice Chair. By a coin toss, Ms. Marivi Betancourt will serve as First Vice Chair of the DVOB and Isabela Corzo, Second. Vice Chair. Motion unanimously carried. Congratulations to the new officers of the board and the new Executive Committee.

15. Judge Espinosa offered her support in a meeting with commissioners.

16. Ms. Betancourt said she is very interested in learning about the work of each of the partners at CVAC is, their role as a partner and what their needs are. The board agreed this is important for them to know. Ms. Regalado suggested this be done as a workshop and open to all board members.

17. Next Meeting: March 27, 2024, Miami-Dade County Stephen P. Clark Center 10th floor Conference. Room 1011, 10:00 am-Noon. Followed by the Public Engagement Committee Meeting 12:30 pm same location. All board members are welcome to participate.

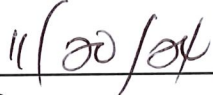
18. Adjournment - Motion by Mr. De Grandy to adjourn the meeting. Second: Marlen Oria. Motion unanimously carried. The meeting adjourned at 12:10 pm.

Legend: * Action items ** Meeting package documents

Meeting summary minutes prepared and submitted by Elizabeth Regalado, Executive Director, DVOB.

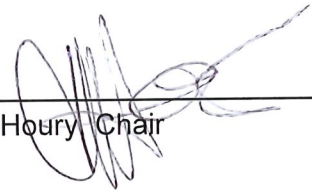


Elizabeth Regalado

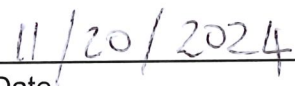


Date

Meeting summary minutes approved by Cecile Houry, Chair DVOB



Cecile Houry, Chair



Date