

Special Meeting Minutes

Idaho Council on Domestic Violence and Victim Assistance

Via Zoom

September 6, 2024

11:00 a.m. MST

Members Present: Wes Somerton-Chair, Amber Moe, Jennifer Beazer, Jona Jacobson, Clint Lemieux, Rachel Kaschmitter

Members Absent: Jessica Uhrig-Vice Chair

ICDVVA Employees: Dana Wiemiller, Amy Duque, Erin Vlamis, Jessica Marshall

Guests: Lea Kear, Julie Luchetta (Boise Public Radio), Jaxon Holmes (Boise Public Radio)

This agenda is subject to change in accordance with the provisions of the Idaho Open Meeting Law. Items may be addressed in a different order than appears on this agenda. Individual items may be moved from one place on the agenda to another by the Council. Time frames on the agenda are approximate. The Council will continue its business in the event that an agenda item is resolved in less than the allotted time.

Call to Order – 11:00 a.m. MT

1. Action Item: Community Outreach Behavioral Health Services Status/Next Steps

Presentation by ICDVVA staff and discussion of next steps, questions

Dana summarized the situation with the COBS FY25 funding award – that the Council agreed to fund COBS; however, another article was released the following week alleging that a federal investigation of Medicaid fraud had been initiated with assistance from the state AG’s office. ICDVVA then decided to withhold an award letter until further information could be gathered. Staff was advised that an investigation and subsequent findings and/or resolution could take months to years, and no one at the state or federal level would confirm or deny that an investigation was underway. Dana and Amy provided information on the activities, to date, to evaluate the allegations included in the article, including multiple meetings and conversations with COBS staff, community partners, and clients. COBS confirmed they no longer share office space with ACTS and that one of their three safe houses will be closing due to reduced donor support. No clients will be displaced due to the closing. Dana provided information about a second public records request submitted by InvestigateWest and fulfilled with assistance from the Attorney General’s office.

The VOCA grant administrator for ICDVVA confirmed that funding decisions are at the sole discretion of ICDVVA as the SAA for Idaho’s grant award. Dana explained that today’s agenda

item is intended for the Council to make a final decision about FY25 funding for COBS – to fund, not to fund, or to set conditions for funding – however, they may also choose to defer taking action at this time. Council members need more time to consider the information presented and the potential ramifications. No action taken.

2. Action Item: Idaho Anti-Trafficking Coalition Status/Next Steps

Presentation by ICDVVA staff and discussion of next steps, questions

ICDVVA staff members presented historical details of complaints against COBS submitted by IATC, reimbursement issues, collaboration issues, and issues relating to rumors circulated among other funded programs. There was extensive discussion about the importance of collaboration in this work, and the disruption and impact to clients, service provision, and community collaboration as a result of the ongoing issues between the two anti-trafficking programs.

Council members discussed the funding of both anti-trafficking agencies and decided that no action is ready to be taken in either case at this time. Both action items were tabled and will be agendaized for the September 20, 2024, Council meeting.

Note: the meeting was disrupted by outside entities at 11:40 a.m. with inappropriate images and material shared on screen. The meeting was temporarily suspended and resumed using the original link at approximately 11:50 a.m. with no further disruption. The incident was reported to ITS.

The meeting adjourned at 1:27 p.m. MT